



Power to annul an Election

Why in news?

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The Chief Election Commissioner is seeking powers to annul an entire election.

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What happened recently?

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- CEC has said that seizures of cash and liquor during the ongoing Assembly elections are three times as much as was seized in the 2012 iterations of the polls.

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- This is a signifier of the magnitude of the bribery problem, even after the demonetisation was supposed to have crippled the ability of political parties to court favour with voters in this manner.

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Why the demand must not be granted?

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- Voter bribery is a slippery a concept to be enshrined in law.

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- Voters can be bribed in different ways at different times.

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- So, a law against such bribery will become difficult to implement.

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- Proof of bribery will also be difficult to find.

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- And, even if there is proof, linking it to a candidate will require lengthy

investigation. This is difficult in the compressed time-scale of election.

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- Also, many poor Indians think their vote is a crucial and large part of their worldly wealth. They treat it with respect and deploy it to their greatest advantage.

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- So, to think that most voters can be easily bribed into giving away their only lever of power is disrespectful of Indians' ability to make rational decisions.

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- Therefore, elections cannot be canceled merely on the basis of accusations.

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Source: Business Standard

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