

# Voting Rights to NRI



## Why In news?

The Election Commission has said that the postal ballots facility would not be extended to NRIs for the upcoming elections to the Assam, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and West Bengal Assemblies.

## How does the Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System work?

- ✓ It was developed for the convenience of Service voters. It is a secured system with a two-layer security system.
- ✓ Secrecy is maintained through the use of OTP and PIN and no duplication of casted Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot (ETPB) is possible due to the unique QR Code.
- ✓ The entitled service voters can cast their votes electronically from outside their constituencies as well.
- ✓ ETPBS has empowered and ensured all eligible service electors with their constitutional power to vote while performing their duty for the nation.
- ✓ This system has been set up in line with the existing Postal Ballot System and is an easier option for facilitating voting by the electors as the time constraint for dispatch of the postal ballot has been addressed using this system.

## What is the current process of voting for Indian citizens living abroad?

- ✓ Voting rights for NRIs were introduced only in 2011, through an amendment to the Representation of the People Act 1950.
- ✓ An NRI can vote in the constituency in which her place of residence, as mentioned in the passport, is located.
- ✓ She can only vote in person and will have to produce her passport in original at the polling station for establishing identity.

## What is current strength of NRI voters?

- ✓ According to a UN report of 2015, India's diaspora population is the largest in the world at 16 million people.