



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Association of World Election Bodies

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Why is in news? India & Panama signs MoU on Electoral Cooperation

The Election Commission of India and Electoral Tribunal (ET) of Panama signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Panama City to **establish the institutional framework for their ongoing cooperation in the field of election management and administration.**

This MoU reflects the ECI's ongoing commitment to engage with electoral bodies across the globe and strengthen the democratic processes worldwide.

While learning from best election integrity practices from world over, ECI is committed to sharing its expertise and knowledge in conducting free, fair and transparent elections with its counterparts in other countries.

ECI has been expanding its links and cooperation with foreign Election Management Bodies (EMBs) through its **'International Cooperation Programme'**

Having signed MoUs with Mexico, Brazil and Chile in the past years, this is the fourth MoU signed by ECI with an EMB in the Latin Americas region, with an overall 31 MoUs with EMBs and international organisations across the world

The Election Commission of India and the Electoral Tribunal of Panama are members of the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB).

Officials from ET of Panama also attended the international conference on 'Inclusive Elections and Elections Integrity' organised by ECI in March 2023 as the lead for **'Cohort on Elections Integrity' under the aegis of 'Summit for Democracy'**

Officials from ET of Panama also participated in the **'International Election Visitors Programme'** hosted by ECI during State Assembly elections in April 2021 and attended a training course on Election Planning under ITEC Programme at IIIDEM in June 2021.

The signing ceremony was attended by representatives from both organisations. The ECI delegation will be attending the 11th Executive Board Meeting of A-WEB and an International Conference at Cartagena, Colombia.

Association of World Election Bodies:

The Association of World Election Bodies, commonly referred to as 'A-WEB', was established on **October 14, 2013** in **Song-do, South Korea.**

A-WEB is the **first global organization of election management bodies**, and the membership currently consists of 118 EMBs as members and 20 Regional associations as associate members.

It aims to foster **efficiency and effectiveness in conducting free, fair, transparent and participative elections** worldwide.

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Under the **slogan of ‘Democracy to Grow for All Worldwide,’** the A-WEB Secretariat provides training programs for election officials of member nations and undertakes country programs at the request of member organization, providing support during the election cycle to boost election management capacity.

The **current chairman** is **Sushil Chandra from Republic of India.**

Election Commission of India:

The Election Commission of India (ECI) is a **constitutional body**. It was established by the Constitution of India to conduct and regulate elections in the country.

Article 324 of the Constitution provides that the power of superintendence, direction, and control of elections to parliament, state legislatures, the office of the president of India, and the office of vice-president of India shall be vested in the election commission.

Thus, the Election Commission is an all-India body in the sense that it is **common to both the Central government and the state governments.**

The body administers elections to the **Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies, State Legislative Councils and the offices of the President and Vice President** of the country.

The Election Commission operates under the authority of Constitution per Article 324, and subsequently enacted **Representation of the People Act.**

The commission has the powers under the Constitution, to act in an appropriate manner when the enacted laws make insufficient provisions to deal with a given situation in the conduct of an election.

Constitutional Provisions:

Part XV (Article 324-329) of the Indian Constitution: It deals with elections and establishes a commission for these matters.

Article 324: Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission.

Article 325: No person to be ineligible for inclusion in, or to claim to be included in a special, electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex.

Article 326: Elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assemblies of States to be based on adult suffrage.

Article 327: Power of Parliament to make provision with respect to elections to Legislatures.

Article 328: Power of Legislature of a State to make provision with respect to elections to such Legislature.

Article 329: Bar to interference by courts in electoral matters.