



Should Paper ballot system be restored?

Description

Theme :-

- There is a widespread demand from opposition parties to replace Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) system with paper ballot system to prevent EVM tampering.

What is Paper ballot system :-

- In paper ballot system, voters mark their choice on the pre-made ballot papers and drop the voted ballot in the ballot box. After casting votes, ballot papers are counted and the number of votes will be declared.

What is EVM :-

- Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) is used to cast and count votes using electronic systems. Using this method, voters have to press the button indicating their choice and the votes will be electronically registered.

In Favor :-

- The main disadvantage of EVM is that it is prone to tampering. With paper ballot system, this can be prevented.
- Paper ballots are more secure compared to EVMs.
- Digitalization is on rise in every field. But not all sectors are same. For example, fraud in elections is not same as a fraud in e-commerce sector. If voting system is not secure, entire nation will be in the hands of the non-deserving leader.
- Germany, Netherlands, Japan and some other developed countries reverted to paper ballot after trying EVMs.

Against :-

- Reverting to Paper ballot system will be a contradictory step to encouraging cashless transactions.
- Election Commission (EC) announced that EVMs will be replaced with advanced M3 machines in 2019 general elections. M3 machines stop working if they are tampered. So, there is no need to restore paper ballot system.
- EVMs have a lot of advantages like faster results, cost-effective, accurate, portable, reducing the role of people, saving a lot of paper etc. So instead of going back to paper ballot system, it is much better to make EVMs tamper-proof.
- In June 2017, Election commission threw an open challenge to tamper with EVMs. But no one could succeed in doing that.
- Though many developed countries went back to paper ballot, for them it won't take much effort because of their small population, and hence we cannot say that it is apt for all countries. Decisions should be taken based on all the factors involved. Brazil is also successfully using EVMs for elections.
- Paper ballots are susceptible to violence and booth capturing. Hence going back to paper ballots will be a retrograde step.
- In paper ballot method of voting, if the stamp is not put properly it will be counted as an invalid vote. With EVMs this problem will be eliminated.
- When voter cast vote through EVM, he can get a "Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail" (VVPAT) which is a printout of his vote. This VVPAT came into effect with Supreme court order of 2013. And hence everyone can be sure of who got their vote.

Facts :-

- India is using EVMs since 1999.
- USA, and some other developed countries are still using paper ballot system.

Conclusion :-

Elections are the most important thing for any country. Trust of voters in the voting system is the most important thing than convenience or cost-effective solution. Either a "secure digital voting system" or a "paper ballot system" will ensure the confidence of voters and prevents the failure of nation.

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Your Turn!

Do you think paper ballot system is better than EVM? Express your thoughts in the comment section below. And subscribe to our blog to read answers to trending GD topics.

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