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THE PRESIDENTIAL AND VICE-PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTIONS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1974

No. 5 OF 1974

[23rd March, 1974]

An Act to amend the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Twenty-fifth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

Short
title.

1. This Act may be called the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections (Amendment) Act, 1974.

Amend-
ment
of sec-
tion 2.

2. In section 2 of the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952 (hereinafter referred to as the principal Act),—

(a) in clause (d), for the words "a member of either House of Parliament", the words and figures "a member of the electoral college referred to in article 66" shall be substituted;

(b) after clause (f), the following clause shall be inserted, namely:—

'(ff) "public holiday" means any day which is a public holiday for the purposes of section 25 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881;'

26 of 1881.

(c) in clause (g), for the word "authorised", the word "competent" shall be substituted.

3. In section 4 of the principal Act, for sub-section (1), the following sub-section shall be substituted, namely:—

Amendment of section 4.

“(1) The Election Commission shall, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint for every election—

(a) the last date for making nominations, which shall be the fourteenth day after the date of publication of the notification under this sub-section, or, if that day is a public holiday, the next succeeding day which is not a public holiday;

(b) the date for the scrutiny of nominations, which shall be the day immediately following the last date for making nominations or, if that day is a public holiday, the next succeeding day which is not a public holiday;

(c) the last date for the withdrawal of candidatures, which shall be the second day after the date for the scrutiny of nominations or, if that day is a public holiday, the next succeeding day which is not a public holiday;

(d) the date on which a poll shall, if necessary, be taken, which shall be a date not earlier than the fifteenth day after the last date for the withdrawal of the candidatures.”

4. For section 5 of the principal Act, the following sections shall be substituted, namely:—

Substitution of new sections for section 5.

“5. On the issue of a notification under sub-section (1) of section 4, the returning officer for the election shall give public notice of the intended election in such form and in such manner as may be prescribed, inviting nominations of candidates for such election and specifying the place at which the nomination papers are to be delivered.

Public notice of election.

5A. Any person may be nominated as a candidate for election to the office of President or Vice-President if he is qualified to be elected to that office under the Constitution.

Nomination of Candidates.

5B. (1) On or before the date appointed under clause (a) of sub-section (1) of section 4, each candidate shall, either in person or by any of his proposers or seconders, between the hours of eleven o'clock in the forenoon and three o'clock in the afternoon, deliver to the returning officer at the place specified in this behalf in the public notice issued under section 5 a nomination paper completed in the prescribed form and subscribed by the candidate as assenting to the nomination, and

Presentation of nomination papers and requirements for a valid nomination.

(a) in the case of Presidential election, also by at least ten electors as proposers and at least ten electors as seconders;

(b) in the case of Vice-Presidential election, also by at least five electors as proposers and at least five electors as seconders:

Provided that no nomination paper shall be presented to the returning officer on a day which is a public holiday.

(2) Each nomination paper shall be accompanied by a certified copy of the entry relating to the candidate in the electoral roll for the parliamentary constituency in which the candidate is registered as an elector.

(3) The returning officer shall not accept any nomination paper which is presented on any day before eleven o'clock in the forenoon and after three o'clock in the afternoon.

(4) Any nomination paper which is not received before three o'clock in the afternoon on the last date appointed under clause (a) of sub-section (1) of section 4 or to which the certified copy referred to in sub-section (2) of this section is not attached shall be rejected and a brief note relating to such rejection shall be recorded on the nomination paper itself.

(5) No elector shall subscribe, whether as proposer or as seconder, more than one nomination paper at the same election and, if he does, his signature shall be inoperative on any paper other than the one first delivered.

(6) Nothing in this section shall prevent any candidate from being nominated by more than one nomination paper for the same election:

Provided that not more than four nomination papers shall be presented by or on behalf of any candidate or accepted by the returning officer.

Deposit.

5C. (1) A candidate shall not be deemed to be duly nominated for election unless he deposits or causes to be deposited a sum of two thousand five hundred rupees:

Provided that where a candidate has been nominated by more than one nomination paper for the same election, not more than one deposit shall be required of him under this sub-section.

(2) The sum required to be deposited under sub-section (1) shall not be deemed to have been deposited under that sub-section unless at the time of presentation of the nomination paper under sub-section (1) of section 5B, the candidate has either deposited or caused to be deposited that sum with the returning officer in cash or enclosed with the nomination paper a receipt showing that the said sum has been deposited by him or on his behalf in the Reserve Bank of India or in a Government Treasury.

Notice of nominations and the time and place for their scrutiny.

5D. On the presentation of a nomination paper, the returning officer shall—

(a) sign thereon a certificate stating the date and time of presentation of the nomination paper and enter thereon its serial number;

(b) inform the person or persons presenting the nomination paper of the date, time and place fixed for the scrutiny of nominations; and

(c) cause to be affixed in some conspicuous place in his office a copy of the nomination paper as certified and numbered under clause (a).

5E. (1) On the date fixed for the scrutiny of nominations under sub-section (1) of section 4, the candidates, one proposer or one seconder of each candidate and one other person duly authorised in writing by each candidate, but no other person, shall be entitled to be present at the time of scrutiny of nominations and the returning officer shall give them all reasonable facilities for examining the nomination papers of all candidates which have not been rejected under sub-section (4) of section 5B.

Scrutiny of nominations.

(2) For the removal of doubts, it is hereby declared that it shall not be necessary to scrutinise on the date fixed for the scrutiny of nominations the nomination papers already rejected under sub-section (4) of section 5B.

(3) The returning officer shall then examine the nomination papers and shall decide all objections which may be made to any nomination paper and may, either on such objection or on his own motion, after such summary inquiry, if any, as he thinks necessary, reject any nomination on any of the following grounds:—

(a) that, on the date fixed for the scrutiny of nominations, the candidate is not eligible for election as President or Vice-President, as the case may be, under the Constitution; or

(b) that any of the proposers or seconders is not qualified to subscribe a nomination paper under sub-section (1) of section 5B; or

(c) that the nomination paper is not subscribed by the required number of proposers or seconders; or

(d) that the signature of the candidate or any of the proposers or seconders is not genuine or has been obtained by fraud; or

(e) that there has been a failure to comply with any of the provisions of section 5B or section 5C.

(4) Nothing contained in clauses (b) to (e) of sub-section (3) shall be deemed to authorise the rejection of the nomination of any candidate on the ground of any irregularity in respect of a nomination paper, if the candidate has been duly nominated by means of another nomination paper in respect of which no irregularity has been committed.

(5) The returning officer shall not reject any nomination paper on the ground of any defect which is not of a substantial character.

(6) The returning officer shall hold the scrutiny on the date appointed in this behalf under clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 4 and shall not allow any adjournment of the proceedings except when

such proceedings are interrupted or obstructed by riot or open violence or by causes beyond his control:

Provided that in case an objection is raised by the returning officer or is made by any other person the candidate concerned may be allowed time to rebut it not later than the next day but one following the date fixed for scrutiny, and the returning officer shall record his decision on the date to which the proceedings have been adjourned.

(7) The returning officer shall endorse on each nomination paper his decision accepting or rejecting the same and if the nomination paper is rejected, shall record in writing a brief statement of his reasons for such rejection.

(8) For the purposes of this section, a certified copy of an entry in the electoral roll for the time being in force shall be conclusive evidence of the fact that the person referred to in that entry is an elector for that constituency, unless it is proved that he is subject to any of the disqualifications mentioned in section 16 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950." 43 of 195

Amend-
ment of
section 6.

5. In section 6 of the principal Act,—

(a) in sub-section (1), for the words "by his proposer or seconder", the words "by any one of his proposers or seconders" shall be substituted;

(b) for sub-section (3), the following sub-section shall be substituted, namely:—

"(3) The Returning Officer shall, on being satisfied as to the genuineness of a notice of withdrawal and the identity of the person delivering it under sub-section (1), cause the notice to be affixed in some conspicuous place in his office."

Amend-
ment of
section 14.

6. In section 14 of the principal Act, for sub-section (2), the following sub-section shall be substituted, namely:—

"(2) An election petition calling in question an election may be presented on one or more of the grounds specified in sub-section (1) of section 18 and section 19 to the Supreme Court by any candidate at such election, or—

(i) in the case of Presidential election, by twenty or more electors joined together as petitioners;

(ii) in the case of Vice-Presidential election, by ten or more electors joined together as petitioners."

Amend-
ment
of sec-
tion 18.

7. For sub-section (1) of section 18 of the principal Act, the following sub-section shall be substituted, namely:—

"(1) If the Supreme Court is of opinion,—

(a) that the offence of bribery or undue influence at the election has been committed by the returned candidate or by any person with the consent of the returned candidate; or

(b) that the result of the election has been materially affected—

(i) by the improper reception or refusal of a vote; or

(ii) by any non-compliance with the provisions of the Constitution or of this Act or of any rules or orders made under this Act; or

(iii) by reason of the fact that the nomination of any candidate (other than the successful candidate), who has not withdrawn his candidature, has been wrongly accepted; or

(c) that the nomination of any candidate has been wrongly rejected or the nomination of the successful candidate has been wrongly accepted;

the Supreme Court shall declare the election of the returned candidate to be void."

8. In Part IV of the principal Act, before the existing section 21, the following section shall be inserted, namely:—

Insertion of new section 20A.

"20A. (1) The deposit made under section 5C shall either be returned to the person making it or his legal representative or be forfeited to the Central Government in accordance with the provisions of this section.

Return or forfeiture of candidates' deposit.

(2) Except in cases hereafter mentioned in this section, the deposit shall be returned as soon as practicable after the result of the election is declared.

(3) If the candidate is not shown in the list referred to in clause (b) of section 8, or if he dies before the commencement of the poll, the deposit shall be returned as soon as practicable after the publication of the list or after his death, as the case may be.

(4) Subject to the provisions of sub-section (3), the deposit shall be forfeited if at the election where the poll has been taken, the candidate is not elected, and the number of valid votes polled by such candidate does not exceed one-sixth of the number of votes necessary to secure the return of a candidate at such election."

9. In section 21 of the principal Act,—

Amendment of section 21.

(1) in sub-section (2),—

(a) in clause (b), for the words "members of both Houses of Parliament", the words and figures "members of the electoral college referred to in article 66" shall be substituted;

(b) after clause (c), the following clause shall be inserted, namely:—

"(cc) the form and manner in which public notice under section 5 shall be given by the returning officer;";

(c) for clause (g), the following clause shall be substituted, namely:—

"(g) the place and hours of polling, the manner in which votes are to be given both generally and in the case of illiterate voters or voters not conversant with the language in which ballot papers are printed or voters under physical or other disability and the procedure as to voting to be followed at elections;";

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(2) after sub-section (2), the following sub-section shall be inserted, namely:—

“(3) Every rule made under this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or both Houses agree that the rule should not be made, the rule shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form, or be of no effect, as the case may be; so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.”