

Ensuring Electoral Integrity in India

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Context

- The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** has acknowledged concerns about **multiple voters with the same EPIC number**.
- Broader electoral issues include **electoral roll anomalies, EVM trust deficit, and transparency in Form 17C data**—collectively termed as the **“Infernal Trinity.”**

Key Issues & Solutions

1. Electoral Roll Anomalies

- **Unexplained voter deletions and additions** raise concerns about manipulation.
- In **Maharashtra (2024)**, voter registrations spiked, while in **Delhi**, mass deletions were reported.

A possible solution is for **Electoral Registration Officers (EROs)** to **publish polling station lists where voter changes exceed 2-3%** of the previous roll, making data accessible for scrutiny.

2. Transparency in Form 17C Data

- **Delays in voter turnout publication** create doubts about election fairness.

Ensuring **timely online publication of polling station-wise data** after official verification can enhance transparency.

3. Trust Deficit in EVMs

- Courts have upheld **EVM reliability**, yet skepticism persists.
- The debate continues between **“whether EVMs have been manipulated”** and **“whether they can be manipulated.”**

Possible solutions include conducting **random 100% VVPAT counts in select constituencies**, publishing **EVM source codes**, and fostering **open engagement with critics** to build trust.

Strengthening the Election Commission

- The ECI must reinforce **public confidence** by ensuring:
 - **Impartial enforcement** of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).
 - **Greater transparency** in voter registration and turnout data.
 - **Proactive reforms** to address electoral concerns.
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Conclusion

- Electoral transparency and accountability are **essential for safeguarding democracy**.
- **Strengthening public trust** through systematic reforms will uphold the credibility of India's electoral process.



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