



Poll Spend Limit

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Why in News

A **Private Member's bill** was introduced in the Parliament which intends to **do away with the cap on election spending by candidates.**

- The Bill has been introduced on the ground that the **ceiling on election expenses ends up being counterproductive** and encourages candidates to under-report their expenditure.
- Also, the **ceiling currently** prescribed by the **Election Commission of India (ECI)** is meant for **legitimate expenditure**. A lot of money in elections is being spent for illegitimate purposes.

Current Scenario

- At present, under **Rule 90 of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961**, a candidate contesting **Lok Sabha polls** can spend **up to Rs 70 lakh** and **up to Rs 28 lakh** in an **assembly election** depending on the state in which s/he is contesting polls.
- Under **Section 77 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951**, every candidate shall keep a **separate and correct account of all expenditure** incurred between the date on which he has been nominated and the date of declaration of the result.
- All **candidates** are required to **submit their expenditure statement** to the ECI **within 30 days of the completion of the elections.**
- An **incorrect account or expenditure beyond the cap** can lead to **disqualification of the candidate by the ECI for up to three years**, under Section 10A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- It can be noted that **there is no cap on a political party's expenditure**, which is often exploited by candidates of the party. However, all **registered political parties have to submit a statement** of their election expenditure **to the ECI within 90 days** of the completion of the elections.

Source: TH