

20-YEAR-OLD LEGACY ISSUE OF SIMILAR EPIC NUMBERS RESOLVED

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In its effort to sanitize the electoral rolls and keep them updated, Election Commission of India (ECI) has resolved a nearly 20-year-old legacy issue of similar EPIC numbers which got erroneously issued to genuine electors just because similar series were used by different EROs in such cases since 2005.

To resolve this long pending problem, the entire electoral database of over 99-crore electors was searched by CEOs of all the 36 States/UTs and EROs of all the 4123 Assembly constituencies across India in all the 10.50 lakh polling stations. On an average there are about 1000 electors per polling station. The number of similar EPIC numbers found were miniscule, i.e. averaging to around 1(one) in 4 (four) polling stations. During the field level verification, it was found that holders of such similar EPIC numbers were genuine electors in different assembly constituencies and different polling stations. All such electors have since been issued new EPIC cards with new numbers.

The genesis of the issue has been traced from 2005, when various States/ UTs were using Assembly Constituency-wise different alphanumeric series in a decentralized manner. These series had to be changed again in 2008, after delimitation of the constituencies. During this period, some ACs erroneously continued to use either the old series or because of typographic errors they used the series allotted to some other constituencies.

Every voter's name is in the electoral roll of the Polling station, where he/she is an ordinary resident. Having had an EPIC of similar number never enabled any such person to vote at any other polling station. Thus, the issue of a similar EPIC could not have impacted the results of any elections.

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