

6. Elections to Rajya Sabha

Prelims Syllabus: Polity & Governance- Constitutional Bodies, Regulatory Bodies

Mains Syllabus: GS-II Parliament and State Legislatures - Structure, Functioning, conduct of Business, Powers & Privileges and Issues Arising out of these.

Why in News?

- The Election Commission has announced that elections to 55 Rajya Sabha seats will be held on March 26, 2020.

Highlights:

- Since Rajya Sabha MPs are elected by state MLAs, political parties with more MLAs are likely to send more MPs to the Upper House.
- Major changes, therefore, are expected in states that have seen a change of power in the last Assembly election.
- Therefore, the BJP is expected to lose seats in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan where it lost state elections.
- However, it will gain in Uttarakhand and Karnataka, where it came to power in 2017 and 2019 respectively.
- Overall, the BJP's current strength in Rajya Sabha will likely remain undiminished.
- The Trinamool Congress and YSR Congress Party are expected to make significant gains in the 245-member Upper House after the elections.

Vacancies:

- These seats will be filled by representatives from 17 states.
- The terms of 51 members will end in April, 2020.
- The other four seats are already vacant.
- The strength of Rajya Sabha is 238 currently.
- As of now, the BJP has 82 Members in the Rajya Sabha, and the Congress 46. Of the retiring MPs, 18 are from the BJP, and 11 are from the Congress.

Eligibility:

- A member of the Rajya Sabha must:
 - ✓ Be a citizen of India;
 - ✓ Be at least 30 years old;
 - ✓ Possess such other qualifications as may be prescribed in that behalf by or under any law made by Parliament.

System of election in Rajya Sabha:

- Rajya Sabha also known as Council of States consist of not more than 250 members of whom:
 - ✓ 238 members are elected by MLAs of various States and Union Territories
 - ✓ 12 members nominated by the President.
- Rajya Sabha is a permanent house because one third of members retire every 2 years and same number of members are elected.
- Its members are elected by the Legislative Assembly of States and Union territories by means of Single transferable vote through Proportional representation.

