

Registered Political Parties Unrecognized Political Parties

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In news- The Election Commission of India has recently delisted 86 non-existent RUPPs and declared additional 253 as 'Inactive RUPPs'.

What are Registered Unrecognized Political Parties(RUPPs)?

- Either newly registered parties or those which have not secured enough percentage of votes in the assembly or general elections to become a state party, or those which have never contested elections since being registered are considered unrecognized parties.
- To form a political party, any association or a body of individuals has to get themselves registered with the Election Commission of India under **Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951**. After this, a party could fall in one of two categories: **recognised and unrecognised**.
- As per the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968, **a party can be recognised either as a national party or a state party** depending on the number of votes or seats they secure in elections.
- **Recognised political parties get to reserve a symbol** and use it exclusively, whereas **unrecognised parties have to choose from a list of free symbols**.
- **Recognition also comes with other benefits, such as** free broadcast facilities over Doordarshan and All India Radio, more allowances for campaign expenditure and free copies of electoral rolls before elections.
- However, **some entitlements, like collecting donations that are fully exempt from income tax, are available to all parties** after registration, whether recognised or not.

Conditions for recognition-

To be recognised as a national political party, a party has to satisfy either of the following conditions:

- Secure a minimum of 6% of the valid votes polled in at least four states in the previous Lok Sabha election or state Assembly election. In addition, it needs to have won four seats in the Lok Sabha.
- Win at least 2% of Lok Sabha seats (11 seats given 543 members presently) from a minimum of three different states.

For recognition as a state party a party must satisfy any of the following conditions:

- Secure at least 6% of valid votes polled in the previous Assembly election and win at least two seats.
- Win at least 6% of valid votes in the previous assembly election and have one Lok Sabha member from the state.
- Win at least 3% of the seats, or three seats, whichever is more, in the previous Assembly election.
- Win at least one out of every 25 seats in the Lok Sabha elections allotted to the state.
- Secure at least 8% of the valid votes polled in the state in the previous Assembly election or the Lok Sabha election.

Why delisted?

- As per statutory requirements under section **29A of the RP Act**, every political party has to communicate any change in its name, head office, office bearers, address, PAN to the Commission without delay.
- **86 RUPPs have been found to be non-existent.**
- **The decision against 253 non-compliant RUPPs has been taken based on reports received from Chief Electoral Officers of seven states.**
- **These 253 RUPPs have been declared inactive,** as they

have not responded to the letter/notice delivered to them and **have not contested a single election** either to the General Assembly of a State or the Parliament Election 2014 & 2019.

- These RUPPs have **failed to comply with statutory requirements** for more than 16 compliance steps since 2015 and are continuing to default.
- In **the 13 (ii) (e) guidelines for registration of political parties issued by the Commission for condition of registration, a party must contest an election conducted by the Election Commission within five years of its registration** and thereafter should continue to contest. (If the Party does not contest elections continuously for six years, the Party shall be taken off the list of registered parties).
- Hence , the commission has declared that 86 non-existent RUPPs shall be deleted from the list of register of RUPPs and render themselves liable to be **not entitled to have benefits under the Symbols Order, 1968.**
- **253 RUPPs are marked as 'Inactive RUPPs'** in the register of RUPPs maintained by the commission **under the section 29A of Representation of People Act, 1951.**