

Star campaigner

November 6, 2020

In news:

SC has stayed the EC order revoking Kamal Nath's star campaigner status.

More information:

- As the Congress leader Kamal Nath remarked on a woman candidate in Madhya Pradesh Assembly bypolls the Election Commission revoked his star campaigner status recently.
- However, the Supreme Court stayed the Election Commission's order observing that the poll body "has no power" to decide who is a star campaigner.

Who is a star campaigner?

- A star campaigner is a celebrity vote seeker in an election for a party.
- This person can be a politician or even a film star.
- There is no law governing who can or cannot be made a star campaigner.
- They are **nominated by the concerned political parties** specifying their constituencies and duration of the status.
- **Election Commission has issued guidelines on the Model Code of Conduct** regulating poll campaigns by them.
- A 'recognized' party declared as such by the Election Commission can nominate a maximum of 40 star campaigners.
- An unrecognized political party can nominate a maximum of 20 star campaigners.
- Expenditure incurred on electioneering by the star campaigner is not added to a candidate's poll

expenditure giving him/her more leeway.

- According to the ROPA, 1951, these **expenses will be borne by the political parties.**
- If she/he shares the stage with a candidate, the entire campaign cost except expenditure incurred on travelling will be added to the candidate's election expenses.
- The MCC guidelines say **when a prime minister or a former prime minister is star campaigner, the expenditure incurred on security including on the bullet-proof vehicles will be borne by the government.**