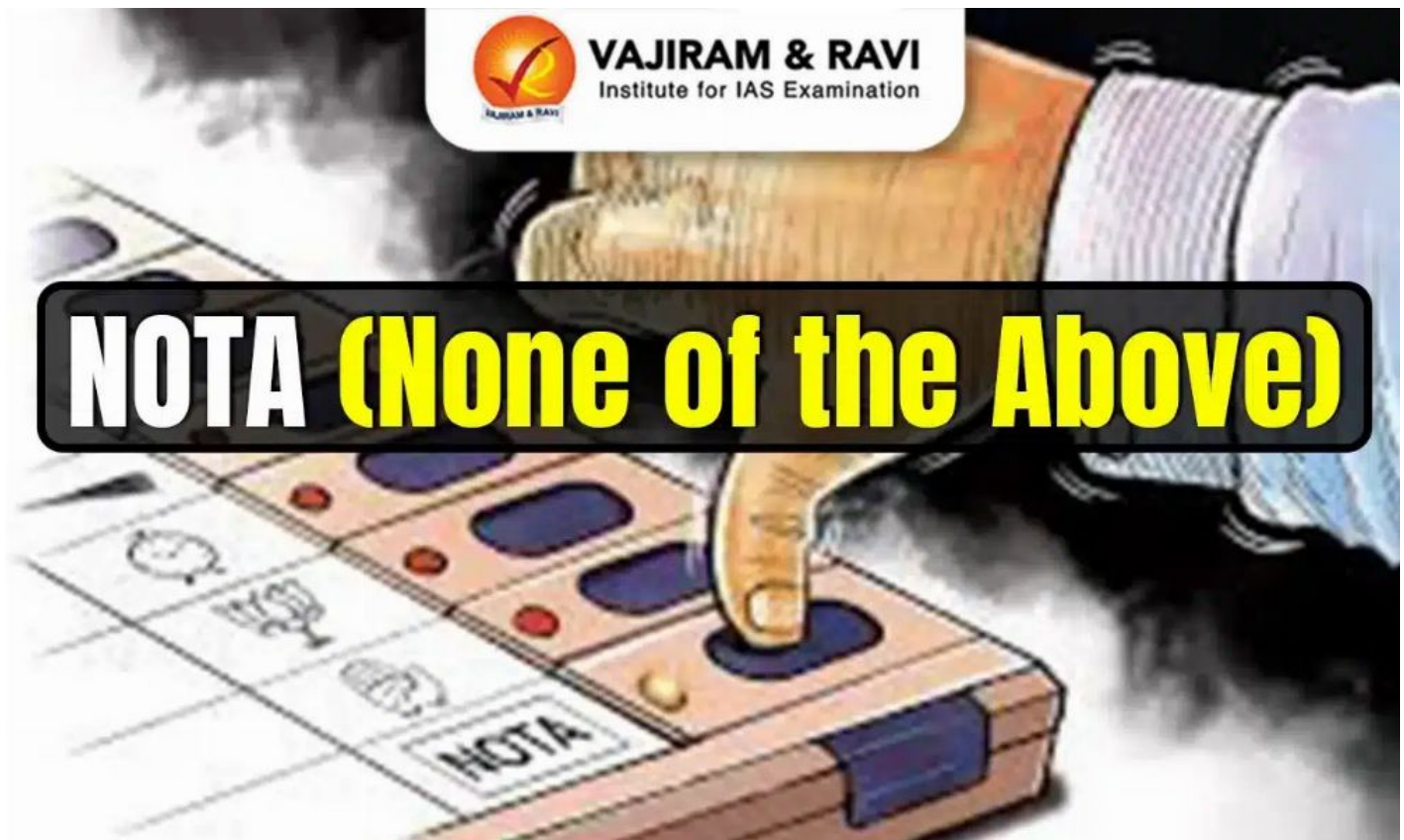


NOTA (None of the Above)

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NOTA (None of the Above) Latest News

The Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy recently filed a PIL seeking mandatory inclusion of NOTA in all elections, including constituencies with only one candidate.

About NOTA

- **NOTA (None of the Above)** is a voting option that allows voters to **reject all contesting candidates** in an election while still maintaining the **secrecy** of their choice.
- It was introduced as a result of the **2013 Supreme Court judgment** in the **PUCL vs Union of India** case, establishing it as a **symbol of voter discontent**.
- **First implemented** in the **2013 Assembly elections** in **Chhattisgarh, Mizoram, Rajasthan, Delhi, and Madhya Pradesh**, and later in the **2014 General Elections**.

Current Legal Status and Function of NOTA

- Votes cast under NOTA are **counted**, but they are **treated as invalid votes**.

- Even if NOTA receives the **highest number of votes**, the candidate with the **second-highest valid votes is declared elected**.
- Thus, **NOTA does not impact the election outcome**, but serves as a **tool for democratic expression**.

Election Commission's Position on NOTA

- The **Election Commission (EC)** opposed **making NOTA mandatory** in all elections.
- It cited that **uncontested elections are infrequent**:
 - Only **6 such cases since 1971** in Lok Sabha elections.
 - **Only 9 cases since 1952** where candidates were elected unopposed.
- The EC argued that making NOTA compulsory would **require legislative amendments** to the:
 - **Representation of the People Act, 1951**, and
 - **Conduct of Election Rules, 1961**.

NOTA (None of the Above) FAQs

Q1: What does NOTA stand for in Indian elections?

Ans: NOTA stands for "None of the Above," allowing voters to reject all candidates on the ballot.

Q2: When was NOTA introduced in Indian elections?

Ans: NOTA was introduced in India in 2013 following a Supreme Court directive for better voter choice.

Q3: Does NOTA affect the outcome of an election in India?

Ans: No, even if NOTA receives the majority, the candidate with the highest votes still wins.

Source: TH

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