

Daily Mains Practice Answer 10-10-2026

Q. "Constitutional institutions must not only be independent but must also be perceived as independent." Explain with reference to the Election Commission of India. (10 marks, 150 words)

Direction: Intro---- institutions be independent and be perceived as independent + Independence of ECI -----Conclusion.

Introduction:

Briefly describe the Election Commission of India.

Main Body

Why must institutions be independent and be perceived as independent?

- Legitimacy - Public acceptance of institutional decisions depends on confidence in their impartiality.
- Rule of law - Decisions must be guided by constitutional principles.
- Accountability - Independent institutions can scrutinise those in power without fear or favour.
- Public trust - Perceived fairness encourages citizens to participate in democratic processes.
- Conflict prevention - Credible institutions reduce suspicion, disputes and allegations of arbitrary action.

Independence of the Election Commission of India

- Constitutional status - Article 324 grants the ECI authority over the conduct of elections.
- Security of tenure
- Service conditions
- ECI's Institutional authority
- Model Code of Conduct

Why perceived independence matters?

- Electoral legitimacy - Citizens are more likely to accept election outcomes when the referee is trusted.
- Level playing field - Political parties must have confidence that electoral rules are applied consistently.

- Democratic stability
- Public trust

Conclusion:

Give a balanced conclusion and suggest some measures to strengthen actual and perceived independence.

The ECI's constitutional independence is essential, but independence must also be visible through impartial conduct, transparent procedures and consistent enforcement. An institution must not only act fairly; it must provide credible reasons for the public to trust that fairness.

