In a fresh bid to push the electoral reforms pending with the Centre, the Election Commission (EC) met the Legislative Department of Ministry of Law and Justice officials.

Background

As many as over 40 recommendations for electoral reforms are pending with the Centre.

About the meeting

The pending issues discussed, including were

1. linking voter ID with Aadhaar,
2. allowing multiple registration windows to a new voter and
3. ensuring gender neutral rights for ‘service voter’,
4. paid news and false affidavit as electoral offence/corrupt practice;
5. print media and social media intermediaries to be covered under Section 126 of the RP Act 1951.

Issue of linking Aadhaar with Voter ID

- Linking voter ID with Aadhaar will help weed out duplications and misrepresentations from the electoral rolls.

- Aadhaar linkage and voter authentication are also considered critical to the commission’s plans to work towards electronic, internet-based voting and for giving ‘remote’ voting rights to domestic migrant workers.

- Earlier, in a letter to the Law Ministry, the Commission had recently proposed that provisions of the Representation of the People Act be amended to allow
EC seek Aadhaar numbers of those applying to be voters and those who are already part of the electoral rolls. Accepting the proposal to give it legal backing to collect Aadhaar data, the Law Ministry is learnt to have asked the poll panel to ensure that the data is protected at multiple levels. The EC recently listed out steps to protect the data from possible leaks.