ICSI ELECTIONS TO MANAGING COMMITTEE
OF GRADE A+ AND A CHAPTERS, 2014

What is Single Transferable Vote System

The best known form of Proportional Representation is that of the "Single Transferable Vote", which means that each elector has only one vote, irrespective of the number of seats to be filled up. For instance, if there are six seats to be filled up, the elector does not cast six votes but indicates six successive preferences, by marking his first preference and the succeeding preferences with the appropriate numerals against the name of candidates printed on his ballot paper.

Quota of Votes

In the ordinary straight voting system a candidate who secures the highest number of votes is declared elected, while under the Proportional Representation system any member who secures the necessary quota of votes is declared elected. There are several ways of finding out the quota, but the most common method is to divide the total number of valid votes cast by the total number of seats in the constituency plus one and add one to the quotient.

Supposing there are 100 valid voting papers and four seats are to be filled up. In order, therefore, to determine the quota 100 is divided by 4 plus 1, i.e. 5 and the quotient arrived at, namely 20, is increased by one so that the quota is 21. After the quota is fixed, any candidate whose total number of first preference votes is equal to or exceeds the quota is forthwith declared elected.

Distribution of Surplus Votes

Each successful candidate's surplus votes of first preferences which are now of no use to him, are transferred to other candidates proportionately to the second preferences indicated on the whole of his papers (except that the second preferences shown for any other candidate already elected are ignored and the third preferences on those papers taken instead).

Elimination of the Bottom Candidate

If all the seats are filled upon this second count, the election is completed. But if all the required number of candidates do not reach the quota by the distribution of surplus first preferences votes of the candidates who have received more than the quota, the process is reversed by dropping out the candidate who has the least number of first preferences. The whole of his votes are transferred to the other not yet elected candidates in accordance with the next available preferences shown on his papers (next available means next excluding candidates already elected). If this does not suffice to fill the remaining seat or seats, the process is repeated by the exclusion of the candidate now at the bottom of polls and the transfer of his votes as a whole in accordance with the next available preferences shown on his papers. Eventually in this way all seats are filled.

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