

## ABSTRACT

## RECOGNIZING THE 'NONE OF THE ABOVE' VOTE

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A free and fair election is an essential element of a democracy wherein the citizens have the right to vote and elect the representatives of their choice. The citizens have been given the right to vote along with the right to not vote. The democratic setup of government ensures active public participation, which includes embracing (both positive and negative vote) from the citizens. *Part I* of this paper discusses the background for guaranteeing such a right to vote and its legal basis. *Part II* of the paper seeks to discuss the nature of the said right and its distinction from the freedom of voting. *Part III* of the paper discusses the relevance of secrecy in the voting procedure whilst discussing the consequence of the recent Supreme Court judgment in the case of People's Union for civil Liberties v. Union of India (2013) 10 SCC 1. *Part IV* of the paper extensively discusses the implication of exercising a 'None of the Above' (NOTA) vote. *Part V* considers the different voting practices in countries throughout the world. *Part VI* of the paper seeks to gauge the critical appraisal of NOTA as a form of internationally accepted voting practices.

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