

(b) “electoral right” means the right of a person to stand, or not to stand as, or to withdraw from being, a candidate or to vote or refrain from voting at an election.

**171B. Bribery.**—(1) Whoever—

(i) gives a gratification to any person with the object of inducing him or any other person to exercise any electoral right or of rewarding any person for having exercised any such right; or

(ii) accepts either for himself or for any other person any gratification as a reward for exercising any such right or for inducing or attempting to induce any other person to exercise any such right,

commits the offence of bribery:

Provided that a declaration of public policy or a promise of public action shall not be an offence under this section.

(2) A person who offers, or agrees to give, or offers or attempts to procure, a gratification shall be deemed to give a gratification.

(3) A person who obtains or agrees to accept or attempts to obtain a gratification shall be deemed to accept a gratification, and a person who accepts a gratification as a motive for doing what he does not intend to do, or as a reward for doing what he has not done, shall be deemed to have accepted the gratification as a reward.

**171C. Undue influence at elections.**—(1) Whoever voluntarily interferes or attempts to interfere with the free exercise of any electoral right commits the offence of undue influence at an election.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of the provisions of sub-section (1), whoever—

(a) threatens any candidate or voter, or any person in whom a candidate or voter is interested, with injury of any kind, or

(b) induces or attempts to induce a candidate or voter to believe that he or any person in whom he is interested will become or will be rendered an object of Divine displeasure or of spiritual censure,

shall be deemed to interfere with the free exercise of the electoral right of such candidate or voter, within the meaning of sub-section (1).

(3) A declaration of public policy or a promise of public action or the mere exercise or a legal right without intent to interfere with an electoral right, shall not be deemed to be interference within the meaning of this section.

**171D. Personation at elections.**—Whoever at an election applies for a voting paper on votes in the name of any other person, whether living or dead, or in a fictitious name, or who having voted once at such election applies at the same election for a voting paper in his own name, and whoever abets, procures or attempts to procure the voting by any person in any such way, commits the offence of personation at an election.

<sup>1</sup>[Provided that nothing in this section shall apply to a person who has been authorised to vote as proxy for an elector under any law for the time being in force in so far as he votes as a proxy for such elector.]

**171E. Punishment for bribery.**—Whoever commits the offence of bribery shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both:

Provided that bribery by treating shall be punished with fine only.

*Explanation.*—“Treating” means that form of bribery where the gratification consists in food, drink, entertainment, or provision.

**171F. Punishment for undue influence or personation at an election.**—Whoever commits the offence of undue influence or personation at an election shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year or with fine, or with both.

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1. The proviso ins. by Act 24 of 2003, s. 5 (w.e.f. 22-9-2003).