

4

ELCTROL POLITICS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In democratic country like India decisions are taken by consulting each other. But practically it's not possible for people to sit together every day and take all the decisions on all matters. So in most democracies people rule through their representatives.

Elections provide a mechanism by which people can choose their representatives at regular intervals and change them if they wish to do so.

They can choose the party whose policies will guide the government and law making.

All democratic countries hold elections.

- Everyone should have one vote and every vote should have equal value.
- Elections must be held regularly after every few years.
- The candidate preferred by the people should get elected.
- Election should be conducted in a free and fair manner where people can choose as they really wish.

Knowledge Based Questions :

1. What form of government do we have in India?
(A) Democracy (B) Monarchy (C) Dictatorship (D) Oligarchy
2. After how many years the elections are held in India?
(A) 6 years (B) 5 years (C) 4 years (D) 3 years
3. Who is the head of the state in India?
(A) Prime Minister (B) Chief Minister (C) Governor (D) President
4. Who was the head of the constituent assembly?
(A) Dr. Rajendra Prasad (B) B.R. Ambedkar (C) Mahatma Gandhi (D) None of these
5. Which country got freedom from the white European rule on 24 April 1994?
(A) New Zealand (B) South Africa (C) Kenya (D) Ghana
6. How many constituencies are there in our country?
(A) 500 (B) 525 (C) 543 (D) 562
7. How many constituencies are reserved for scheduled castes?
(A) 79 (B) 70 (C) 52 (D) 62

8. How many constituencies are reserved for scheduled tribes?
(A) 40 (B) 41 (C) 42 (D) 43
9. Who conducts elections in our country?
(A) Election commission (B) Planning commission
(C) UPSC (D) All of these
10. When did the Indian constitution come into force?
(A) 26 Jan 1930 (B) 26 Jan 1950 (C) 15 Aug. 1947 (D) 15 Aug. 1950

**IMPORTANT TERMS**

- **Allegation :** A public statement that is made without giving proof, accusing somebody of doing something that is wrong or illegal.
- **By-election :** If a candidate elected from a constituency dies while in office, or his office falls vacant because of other reasons such as resignation, fresh elections are held for that particular constituency. Such elections, held not of normal schedule, are called by-elections.
- **Mid-term elections:** If the Lok Sabha or any of the State Assembly is dissolved before the expiry of its full term and elections are held to constitute a new house, it is usually called mid-term elections.
- **Code of conduct:** A set of norms and guidelines to be followed by political parties and contesting candidates during election time.
- **Constituency :** Voters in a geographical area who elect a representative to the legislative bodies.
- **Election Commission:** Constitutional independent body which conducts, controls and supervises the entire process of elections and also ensures free and fair elections.
- **Electoral Roll:** The official list of people in a country or an area who have the right to vote, thought of as a group. It is also called a 'Voters List'.
- **Factionalism :** It refers to opposition or disagreement that exists between small groups of people within a political party.
- **General Elections:** If the elections are held in all the constituencies at the same time, either on the same date, or within a few days, this is called a general election.
- **Inducement :** A thing (or bribe) that persuades or leads someone to do so.
- **Incumbent :** The current holder of a political office. Usually, the choice for the voters in elections is between the incumbent party or candidate and those who oppose them.
- **Nomination of Candidate:** It is formal suggestion of someone as a candidate by a political party in an election.
- **People's representatives :** Candidates chosen to act or make decisions on behalf of citizens.
- **Polling booth:** It refers to a place where people go to vote at an election. It is often a school or other public building.
- **Party ticket:** It is another name for party's nomination.
- **Turnout :** The percentage of eligible voters who cast their votes in an election.

- **Verdict :** A decision that is made by an Election Commission, stating if a candidate wins the election or is defeated.

4.2 WHY ELECTIONS

Why do we need elections

A mechanism by which people can choose their representatives at regular intervals and change them if they wish to do so is called **election**.

In an election the voters make many choices:

- They can choose who will make laws for them.
- They can choose who will form the government and take major decisions.
- They can choose the party whose policies will guide the government and law making.

What makes an election democratic?

1. First, everyone should be able to choose. This means that everyone should have one vote and every vote should have equal value.
2. Second, there should be something to choose from. Parties and candidates should be free to contest elections and should offer some real choice to the voters.
3. Third, the choice should be offered at regular intervals. Elections must be held regularly after every few years.
4. Fourth, the candidate preferred by the people should get elected.
5. Fifth, elections should be conducted in a free and fair manner where people can choose as they really wish.

Is it good to have political competition?

If there is no competition, elections will become pointless.

An electoral competition has many **demerits**.

1. It creates a sense of **disunity and factionalism** in every locality.
2. Different political parties and leaders often level **allegations** against one another.
3. Parties and candidates often **use dirty tricks** to win elections.
4. This pressure to win electoral fights **does not allow sensible long-term policies** to be formulated.
5. Some **good people** who may wish to serve the country **do not enter this arena**. They do not like the idea of being dragged into unhealthy competition.

Regular electoral competition provides incentives to political parties and leaders. They know that if they raise issues that people want to be raised, their popularity and chances of victory will increase in the next elections. But if they fail to satisfy the voters with their work they will not be able to win again.

Illustration 1

Write any 2 demerits of electoral competition?

Solution

- (a) It creates a sense of disunity & factionalism
- (b) Different political parties and leaders level allegation against one another.

Illustration 2

Why are elections considered essential in our times for any representative democracy?

Solution

Elections are considered essential because in an election, the voters make the following choices:

- They can choose those who will make laws for them.
- They can choose those who will form the government and take major decisions.
- They can choose the party whose policies will guide the government and law making.

Illustration 3

Is it good to have political competition?

Solution

Elections are all about political competition.

- This competition takes various forms. The most obvious form is the competition among political parties.
- At the constituency level, it takes the form of competition among several candidates.
- Sometimes, this competition turns into a personality race among the top leaders of various political parties.
- Elections also lead to competition among various policies and ideologies. If there is no competition, elections will become pointless.

Try Yourself

1. What is an election?
2. Why do we need elections?

4.3 WHAT IS OUR SYSTEM OF ELECTIONS?

Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha (Assembly) elections are held regularly after every five years.

Elections are held in all constituencies at the same time, either on the same day or within a few days. This is called a **general election**. Sometimes election is held only for one constituency to fill the vacancy caused by death or resignation of a member. This is called a **by-election**.

Electoral Constituencies

1. In our country we follow an area based system of representation.
2. The country is divided into different areas for purposes of elections. These areas are called **electoral constituencies**. The voters who live in an area elect one representative.

For Lok Sabha elections, the country is divided into **543** constituencies.

Each state is divided into a specific number of Assembly constituencies. In this case, the elected representative is called the Member of Legislative Assembly or an **MLA**.

For Panchayat and Municipal elections. Each village or town is divided into several **wards**.

Reserved Constituencies

1. That in an open electoral competition, certain weaker sections may not stand a good chance to get elected to the Lok **Sabha** and the state Legislative Assemblies.
2. They may not have the required resources, education and contacts to contest and win elections against others.
3. Those who are influential resourceful may prevent them from winning elections.
4. If that happens, our Parliament and Assemblies would be 'deprived of the voice of a significant section of our population. That would make our democracy least representative and less democratic:
5. So, the makers of our Constitution thought of a special system of reserved constituencies for the weaker sections. Some constituencies are reserved for people who **belong** to" the Scheduled Castes [SC] and Scheduled Tribes [ST].

In the Lok Sabha, **84** seats are reserved for the Scheduled Castes and **47** for the Scheduled Tribes.

In many states, seats in rural (panchayat) and urban (municipalities and corporations) local bodies are now reserved for Other Backward Classes (OBC) as well.

One-third of the seats are reserved in rural and urban local bodies for women candidates.

Voter's List

In a democratic election, the list of those who are eligible to vote is prepared much before the election and given to everyone. This list is officially called the **Electoral Roll** and is commonly known as the **Voters' List**.

In our country, all the citizens aged 18 years and above can vote in an election.

A complete revision of the list takes place every five years.

In the last few years a new system of **Election Photo Identity Card [EPIC]** has been introduced. The government has tried to give the card to every person on the voters list. The voters are required to carry this card when they go out to vote so that no one can vote for someone else.

Nomination of Candidates

Any-one who is above 25 yrs who is a voter can also become a candidate in elections. The only difference is that in order to be a candidate the minimum age is 21 years, while it is only 18 years for being a voter.

There are some other restrictions on criminals.

Party's nomination is often called **party ticket**.

Any Indian citizen with **25 yrs** minimum age can contest the election. Every person who wishes to contest an election has to fill 'nomination form' and give some money as 'security deposit'.

Every candidate has to make a legal declaration, giving full details of:

1. Serious criminal cases pending against the candidate;
2. Details of the assets and liabilities of the candidate and his or her family; and
3. Education qualifications of the candidate.

Educational Qualifications for candidates

Why is there no educational qualification for holding such an important position.

1. Educational qualifications are not relevant to all kinds of jobs. Similarly the relevant qualification for being an MLA or an MP is the ability to understand people's concerns, problems and to represent their interests. Whether they can do so or not is examined by lakhs of examiners — their voters — after every five years.
2. Even if education was relevant, it should be left to the people to decide how much importance they give to educational qualifications.
3. It would mean depriving a majority of the country's citizens the right to contest elections.

Election Campaign

Election campaigns take place for a **two-week period** between the announcement of the final list of candidates and the date of polling.

- During this period the candidates contact their voters.
- Political leaders address election meetings.
- Political parties mobilise their supporters.

Newspapers and television news are full of election related stories and debates.

Political parties try to focus public attention on some big issues. They want to attract the public to that issue and get them to vote for their party on that basis.

According to our election law, no party or candidate can

1. Bribe or threaten voters;
2. Appeal to them in the name of caste or religion;
3. Use government resources for election campaign; and
4. Spend more than **Rs. 25 lakh** in a constituency for a **Lok Sabha election** or **Rs. 10 lakh** in a constituency in an Assembly election.

In addition to the laws, all the political parties in our country have agreed to a Model **Code of Conduct**.

1. Use any **place** of worship for election propaganda ;
2. Use government vehicles, aircrafts and officials for elections; and
3. Once elections are announced, Ministers shall not lay foundation stones of any projects, take any big policy decisions or make any promises of providing public facilities.

Polling and counting of votes

The final stage of an election is the day when the voters cast or 'poll' their vote. That day is usually called the **election day**.

An agent of each candidate is allowed to sit inside the polling booth and ensure that the voting takes place in a fair way.

Are the elections too expensive for our country?

A large amount of money is spent in conducting elections in India. For instance, the government spent about Rs.1,300 crores in conducting Lok Sabha elections in 2004.

Roughly speaking, the expenditure made by government parties and candidates, was around Rs. 3,000 crore or Rs. 50 per voter.

A **ballot** paper is a sheet of paper on which the names of the contesting candidates along with party name and symbols are listed. Nowadays electronic voting machines (EVM) are used to record votes. The machine shows the names of the candidates and the party symbols.

Once the polling is over, all the EVMs are sealed and taken to a secure place. A few days later, on a fixed date, all the EVMs from a constituency are opened and the votes secured by each candidate are counted.

The candidate who secures the highest number of votes from a constituency is declared elected.

Illustration 4

- (i) *What are general elections?*
- (ii) *Who is MLA?*
- (iii) *How many seats are reserved for women in rural and urban local bodees.*

Solution

- (i) When elections are held in all **constituencies** at the same time either on the same day or with in a few days. This is called general election.
- (ii) An elected representative from an assembly constituency is MLA.
- (iii) One Third.

Illustration 5

What are the provisions of the Model Code of Conduct?

Solution

According to this, no party or candidate can:

- Use any place of worship for election propaganda;
- Use government vehicles, aircraft and officials for elections; and
- Once elections are announced, Ministers will not lay foundation stones of any projects, take any big policy decisions or make any promises of providing public facilities.

Illustration 6

What a new system has been introduced on direction from the Supreme Court for candidates to make a legal declaration?

Solution

Every candidate has to make a legal declaration, giving full details of:

- Serious criminal cases pending against the candidate;
- Details of the assets and liabilities of the candidate and his or her family; and
- Educational qualifications of the candidate.

Illustration 7

What is the difference between a ballot paper and electronic voting machine?

Solution

Ballot paper is a sheet of paper on which the names of the contesting candidates along with party names and symbols are listed.

Electronic voting machine: The machines are used now-a-days to record votes. The machine shows the name of the candidates and the party symbols. Independent candidates have their own symbols, allotted by election officials. All that voters have to do is to press the button against the name of the candidate they want to give their vote.

Once the polling is over, all the EVMs are sealed and taken to a secure place.

Try yourself:

3. What is by elections?
4. What are wards?
5. Are the Indian elections democratic? Give examples to support your answer.
6. What is reserved constituency? Why did India introduce this system?

4.4 INDEPENDENT ELECTION COMMISSION

In our country elections are conducted, by an independent and very powerful Election Commission (EC).

The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) is appointed by the President of India.

But once appointed, the Chief Election Commissioner is not answerable, to the President or the government.

Even if the ruling party or the government does not like what the Commission does, it is virtually impossible for it to remove the CEC.

Powers of Election Commission

1. EC takes decisions on every aspect of conduct and control of elections from the announcement of elections to the declaration of results.
2. It implements the Code of Conduct and punishes any candidate or party that violates it.
3. During the election period, the EC can order the government to follow some guidelines, to prevent use and misuse of governmental power to enhance its chances to win elections, or to transfer some government officials.

4. When on election duty, government officers work under the control of the EC and not the government.
5. It is very common now for the Election Commission to reprimand the government and administration for their lapses.
6. When election officials come to the opinion that polling was not fair in some booths or even an entire constituency, they order a repoll.

4.5 POPULAR PARTICIPATION

1. People's participation in election is usually measured by voter turnout figures. In India the turnout has either remained stable or actually gone up.
2. In India the poor, illiterate and underprivileged people vote in larger proportion as compared to the rich and privileged sections.
3. Common people in India attach a lot of importance to elections. They feel that through elections they can bring pressure on political parties to adopt policies and programmes favourable to them.
4. The interest of voters in election-related activities has been increasing over the years. More than half of the people identified themselves as being close to one or the other political party.

4.6 CHALLENGES TO FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

Elections in India are basically free and fair. The party that wins an election and forms government.

1. Candidates and parties with a lot of money may not be sure of their victory but they do enjoy a big and unfair advantage over smaller parties and independents.
2. In some parts of the country, candidates with criminal connection have been able to push others out of the electoral race and to secure a ticket' from major parties.
3. Some families tend to dominate political parties; tickets are distributed to relatives from these families.
4. Elections offer little choice to ordinary citizens, for both the major parties are quite similar to each other both in policies and practice.
5. Smaller parties and independent candidates suffer a huge disadvantage compared to bigger parties.

Illustration 8

- (i) *Who appoints the election commissions.*
- (ii) *Who conducts free and fair elections in our country?*
- (iii) *Write any 2 powers of election commission?*

Solution

- (i) The President
- (ii) Election commission.
- (iii) (a) It takes decision on every aspect of conduct and control of election from announcement of the election to the declaration of results.
(b) It implements the code of conduct and punishes those who violate it.

Try yourself

- 7. Who is the head of the election commission?
- 8. Write any one challenge to free and fair election.

SOLVED EXAMPLES**Example 1**

What were the results of the elections in Haryana in 1987?

Solution

Lok Dal and its partners won 76 out of 90 seats, with Lok Dal alone won 60 seats. The congress could win only 5 seats.

Example 2

What is the difficulty in choosing representatives on basis of education and knowledge?

Solution

- (i) The difficulty would be in deciding who is more educated or more knowledgeable.
- (ii) There will be no way to find out whether the people like their representatives or no.

Example 3

State two choices of the voters in an election.

Solution

- (i) They can choose who will make laws for them.
- (ii) They can choose the party whose policies will guide the government and law making.

Example 4

How has the constitution ensured that the weaker sections of society also get representation in the Parliament and State Assemblies?

Solution

This was ensured by having a special system of reserved constituencies for the weaker sections, for those who belong to the Scheduled Castes (SC) or Scheduled Tribes (ST).

Example 5

Explain the term 'Universal Adult Franchise'.

Solution

It means in practice that everyone should have one vote and each vote should have equal value. In India, all citizens aged 18 can vote in an election.

Example 6

What is the main purpose of an election?

Solution

It is to give to the people a chance to choose the representatives, the government and the policies they prefer.

Example 7

What is a 'Code of Conduct'.

Solution

These are the rules or model which have to be followed for election campaigns by all political parties, e.g., no candidate can use a place of worship for election propaganda.

Example 8

What is a 'ballot paper'?

Solution

A ballot paper is a sheet of paper on which the names of the contesting candidate along with party name and symbols are listed.

Example 9

Give one example to show that by and large Indian elections are fair and free.

Solution

The ruling party routinely loses elections in India both at the national and state level. If elections were not fair, this would never happen.

Example 10

Mention two challenges to elections in India which used our attention.

Solution

- (i) In some parts of the country, candidates with criminal connection have been able to get a 'ticket' from the party and win elections.
- (ii) Some families tend to dominate political parties. Tickets are distributed to relatives.

ASSIGNMENT - I

Q.1 List all the different election related activities mentioned in the chapter and arrange them in a time sequence.

Ans. (i) Making of Voters' list (ii) Nomination of candidates (iii) Election campaign
(iv) Polling of votes (v) Counting of votes
(vi) Declaration of election results (vii) Ordering of repoll (if needed)

Q.2 Surekha is an officer in-charge of ensuring free and fair elections in an assembly constituency in a state. Describe what she should focus on for each of the following stages of election:

Ans. (i) **Election campaign** (ii) **Polling day** (iii) **Counting day**

(i) Election campaign: Surekha should focus to regulate campaigns to ensure every political party and the candidate to get fair and equal chance to compete. She should take steps to stop each party and candidate from practising:

- (a) Bribe or threaten the voters.
- (b) Appeal to the voters in the name of caste or religion.
- (c) Use of government resources for election campaign.
- (d) Meeting beyond the stipulated time.
- (e) Clashes during the rallies.

(ii) Polling day: She should focus on the following points:

- (a) To conduct free and fair election at each and every booth of the state by taking some strict decisions to stop rigging, booth-capturing by any candidate or party.
- (b) To prevent bogus voters to cast votes.
- (c) To prevent unsocial elements from entering any booth.
- (d) To send ballot boxes or electronic voting machines to the control room safely and in time.

(iii) Counting day: She should take the following points into consideration:

- (a) Make security arrangement to stop any party to use unfair means to affect free and fair counting of the votes.
- (b) To make proper seating arrangements for the agents of different candidates.
- (c) To prevent unsocial elements from entering into the counting centre.
- (d) She must be ready to face the supporters of the party and the candidates who will be defeated.

Q.3 Can we draw the following conclusions from the information given in this chapter? Give two facts to support your position for each of these.

Ans. (a) **Election Commission of India does not have enough powers to conduct free and fair elections in the country.**
(b) **There is a high level of popular participation in the elections in our country.**
(c) **It is very easy for the party in power to win an election.**
(d) **Many reforms are needed to make our elections completely free and fair.**

(a) No, it is not true that election commission of India does not have enough powers to conduct free and fair elections.

- (i) EC can take decisions on every aspect to conduct and control elections from the announcement of elections to the declaration of results.
- (ii) During the election period, the EC can order the government to follow its guidelines to prevent misuse of the government resources to enhance its chances to win elections, or to transfer some government officials.

- (b) Yes, this conclusion is absolutely true. This is because:
 - (i) The turnout of voters in the elections in India during the last 60 years has increased or remains stable while it has decreased in many countries of the world during the same period.
 - (ii) The poor and illiterates also participate in elections in larger number.
- (c) It is not true that a party in power can win the election because:
 - (i) According to the code of conduct, nobody can use the official machinery or person in its favour.
 - (ii) Often we see that the party in power does not win the election .
- (d) It is true that reforms are needed to make our election completely free and fair because:
 - (i) We can observe that the candidates are spending more than the allotted expenditure of the election commission.
 - (ii) No doubt there is proper security arrangement but still booth capturing and use of force and money is still there. So, we must check these problems and make election completely free and fair.

Q.4 Chinappa was convicted for torturing his wife for dowry. Satbir was held guilty of practicing untouchability. The court did not allow either of them to contest elections. Does this decision go against the principles of democratic elections?

- Ans.**
- (i) The decision of the court is correct in the cases of both Chinappa and Satbir that they cannot contest election.
 - (ii) This decision is not against the principles of democratic elections because they would criminalise the whole election process. The election commission is also in favour of such decision that the criminals or convicts should not be allowed to contest the election.

Q.5 Here are some reports of electoral malpractices from different parts of the world. Is there anything that these countries can learn from India to improve their elections? What would you suggest in each case?

- (a) **During an election in Nigeria, the officer in-charge of counting votes deliberately increased the votes of one candidate and declared him elected. The court later found out that more than five lakh votes cast for one candidate were counted in favour of another.**
- (b) **Just before elections in Fiji, a pamphlet was distributed warning voters that a vote for former Prime Minister, Mahendra Chaudhary will lead to bloodshed. This was a threat to voters of Indian origin.**
- (c) **In the US, each state has its own method of voting, its own procedure of counting and its own authority for conducting elections. Authorities in the state of Florida took many controversial decisions that favoured Mr. Bush in the presidential elections in 2000. But no one could change those decisions.**

- Ans.**
- (a) Nigerian government should use the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM). In this matter, the Nigerian government should send their people in India to learn and operate the electronic voting machine.
 - (b) In this matter, we can see that voters of Indian origin are not safe in other countries. That is why, the threat is being given to them. In such conditions, Indian government can suggest the Fiji government to make proper security arrangement especially for the Indian Voters. In this regard, Fiji should learn the lesson from India-not to intimidate the voters and distribute the pamphlets 48 hours before the actual elections.

- (c) Process of elections in the US and its states is different because there is no unified agency like Election Commission of India, that is why their election process is different. The US can learn from India that all the states should follow the same rules, regulations and procedures.

Q.6 Here are some reports of malpractices in Indian elections. Identify what the problem in each case is. What should be done to correct the situation?

- (a) Following the announcement of elections, the minister promised to provide financial aid to reopen the closed sugar mill.
- (b) Opposition parties alleged that their statements and campaign was not given due attention in Doordarshan and All India Radio.
- (c) An inquiry by the Election Commission showed that electoral rolls of a state contain names of 20 lakh fake voters.
- (d) The hoodlums of a political party were moving with guns, physically preventing supporters of other political parties to meet the voters and attacking meetings of other parties.

- Ans.** (a) After the announcement of the election, no minister can announce any benefit to any section of people or as a whole because it is against the code of conduct.
- (b) The government should ask the Doordarshan and All India Radio to give due attention in case of opposition parties election campaign.
- (c) The election commission should order to make another voter list of the genuine voters, so that the people of the state can see their names in the voter list and mark or report any fault done by the press or the official on duty.
- (d) The activities of any such party taking the help of hoodlums to threaten the voters of other parties and disturbing the meetings of other parties should be prevented by the Election Commission by sending central forces. It should take strict action against the hoodlums and the party concerned.

Q.7 Ramesh was not in class when this chapter was being taught. He came the next day and repeated what he had heard from his father. Can you tell Ramesh what is wrong with these statements?

- (a) Women always vote the way men tell them to. So what is the point of giving them the right to vote?
- (b) Party politics creates tension in society. Elections should be decided by consensus not by competition.
- (c) Only graduates should be allowed to stand as candidates for elections.

- Ans.** (a) This is not right that women can be pressed by their male family members to vote to any particular party. This will not show the democratic attitude because according to our Constitution, there are equal rights to vote both-men and women. The women should be given this right to vote at their will.
- (b) This statement does not lead to the proper election process. Party politics or a healthy competition brings the best candidate among all the men and women candidates. It is rightly said that if there are no political parties, there is no democracy.
- (c) This is against the constitutional right of the people of India. Any candidate may contest election, not only graduates, because all have voting rights. So, the statement given to Ramesh was not correct.

ASSIGNMENT - II**Q.1 Why do we need elections?**

Ans. In a democratic country like India decisions are taken by consulting each other. But practically it's not possible for people to sit together every day and take all the decisions. Nor everyone has the time and knowledge to take decisions on all matters. So in most democracies people rule through their representatives. Election provides a mechanism by which people can choose their representatives at regular intervals and change them if they wish to do so. Hence, elections are essential for any representative democracy.

Q.2 What makes an election democratic?

Ans. All democratic countries hold elections. The following points make an election democratic:

- (a) Every one should have one vote and every vote should have equal value.
- (b) Parties and candidates should be free to contest elections and should offer some real choice to the voters.
- (c) The choice should be offered at regular intervals. Elections must be held regularly after every few years.
- (d) Elections should be conducted in a free and fair manner where people can choose as they wish.

Q.3 State some of the demerits of an electoral competition in India.

Ans. The demerits of an electoral competition are given below:

- (a) It creates a sense of disunity and 'factionalism' in every locality.
- (b) Different political parties and leaders often put allegations against one another.
- (c) Parties and candidates often use dirty tricks to win elections.
- (d) Pressure to win electoral fights does not allow sensible long-term policies to be formulated.
- (e) Some good people who may wish to serve the country do not enter this field.

Q.4 Why is it necessary to regulate election campaigns and what are the election laws in this respect?

Ans. It is sometimes necessary to regulate election campaigns to ensure that every political party and candidate gets a fair and equal chance to compete. To execute it some election laws have been made according to which no party or candidate can:

- (a) Bribe or threaten voters.
- (b) Appeal to them in the name of caste or religion.
- (c) Use government resources for election campaign.
- (d) Spend more than Rs.25 lakh in a constituency for a Lok Sabha election or Rs.10 lakh in a constituency in an Assembly election.

If they do so, their election can be rejected by the court even after they have been declared elected.

Q.5 What do you mean by voters' list? What is its significance?

Ans. In a democratic election the list of people eligible to vote is prepared much before the election. This list is officially called the Electoral Roll and is commonly known as the Voters' List. This is an important step for it is linked to the first condition of democratic election. Every one should get equal opportunity to choose representatives. Everyone deserve to have an equal say in decisions that affect them. The electoral roll is normally revised every year to add the names of those who are to turn 18 on the 1st January of that year or have moved into a constituency and to remove the names of those who have died or moved out of a constituency.

Q.6 How does the polling take place?

Ans. On the election day the voters cast or poll their vote. People who are eligible to vote go to the nearest 'polling booth' and vote. A mark is put on the finger of the voter who votes as an identification mark so as to avoid any person voting more than once. An agent of each candidate is allowed to sit inside the polling booth to ensure that the elections are conducted in the free and fair manner

Q.7 What is Electronic Voting Machine (EVM)?

Ans. Nowadays, Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) are used to record votes. The machine shows the names of the candidates and the party symbols. Independent candidates too have their own symbols, allotted by Election Commission. Once the polling is over, all the EVMs are sealed and taken to a secure place. Then on the decided date the votes secured by each candidate are counted and the candidate who secures the highest number of votes from a constituency is declared elected.

Q.8 What are the limitations and challenges of Indian elections?

Ans. The limitations and challenges of having free and fair elections in India:

- (a) Candidates and parties with a lot of money may not be sure of their victory but they do enjoy a big and unfair advantage over smaller parties and independents.
- (b) In some parts of the country, candidates with criminal connection have been able to push others out of the electoral race and to secure a 'ticket' from major parties.
- (c) Some families tend to dominate political parties; tickets are distributed to relatives from these families.
- (d) Very often elections offer little choice to ordinary citizens, for both the major parties are quite similar to each other both in policies.
- (e) Smaller parties and independent candidates suffer a huge disadvantage compared to bigger parties.

Q.9 Write some of the important slogans given by different political parties in various elections.

Ans.

Q.10 What is a model code of conduct?

Ans. A model code of conduct is a set of norms and guidelines to be followed by political parties and contesting candidates during the time of elections. According to this no party or candidate can:

- (a) Use any place of worship for election propaganda.
- (b) Use government vehicles, aircrafts and officials for elections.
- (c) Once elections are announced, ministers shall not lay foundation stones of any projects, announce any big policy decisions or make any promises of providing public facilities.

ASSIGNMENT - III**SECTION-A****• Fill in the Blanks**

- Q.1 Chaudhary Devi Lal led a movement called _____ and formed a new party.
Q.2 Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections are held regularly after every _____ years.
Q.3 Sometimes election is held only for one constituency to fill the vacancy caused by death or resignation of a member. This is called a _____.
Q.4 The country is divided into different areas for the purpose of elections. These areas are called _____.
Q.5 In Lok Sabha _____ seats are reserved for scheduled caste and _____ for the scheduled tribes.

SECTION-B**• Multiple choice question with one correct answer**

- Q.1 Which party had been ruling Haryana since 1982?
(A) Congress Party (B) BJP (C) LOK DAL (D) CPI (M)
- Q.2 Who formed an opposition party in Haryana? Name the party. When did it take part in elections against the Congress?
(A) Bhajanlal (B) Chaudhary Devilal (C) Charan singh (D) Chautala
- Q.3 When does the term of all the elected representatives come to an end?
(A) After 10 years (B) After 7 years (C) After 5 years (D) After 15 years
- Q.4 Into how many constituencies is Lok Sabha divided? What are its members called?
(A) 500 (B) 545 (C) 550 (D) 543
- Q.5 What are the members of State Assemblies called?
(A) MLA's (B) MPS (C) MHA's Mayors (D) Ministers
- Q.6 How many seats in the Lok Sabha are reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes?
(A) 70 – 40 (B) 79 – 41 (C) 75 – 45 (D) 81 – 41
- Q.7 Who appoints the election commissioner of India –
(A) President (B) Prime Minister (C) People of India (D) Chief Justice
- Q.8 What is the voters list, a list where names of all eligible voters are kept, called officially?
(A) Electoral Poll (B) Electoral Roll (C) Voters Poll (D) none of these
- Q.9 What is the minimum age of a candidate standing for elections to the parliament?
(A) 21 yrs. (B) 20 years (C) 25 years (D) 24 years
- Q.10 After how many years Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha (assembly) elections are held.
(A) 2 (B) 5 (C) 6 (D) 8

- Q.11 How many seats are reserved for women in rural and urban local bodies.
(A) 1/4 (B) 1/2 (C) 1/3 (D) 1/5
- Q.12 After how many years is the voters list reserved.
(A) 2 (B) 4 (C) 3 (D) 5
- Q.13 Which of the following does not include election procedure?
(A) Voting (B) Nomination of Candidate
(C) Booth capturing (D) Canvassing
- Q.14 Which of the following is a directly elected house?
(A) Parliament (B) Lok Sabha (C) Rajya Sabha (D) Vidhan Parishad
- Q.15 Which of the following statements is incorrect?
(A) All citizens above the age of 21 can vote in an election
(B) Every citizen has the right to vote regardless of caste, religion or gender.
(C) Some criminals and persons with unsound mind can be denied the right to vote in rare situations.
(D) It is the responsibility of the government to get the names of all eligible voters put in the voters list.
- Q.16 Which of the following is not allowed while carrying out an election campaign?
(A) Giving money to voters to cast vote for particular candidate
(B) Using television channels
(C) Door-to-door canvassing
(D) Contacting voters on phone
- Q.17 Which among the following is not correct?
(A) The Election Commission conducts all elections for the parliament and Assemblies.
(B) The Election Commission directs and controls the preparation of electoral rolls.
(C) The Election Commission cannot fix the election dates.
(D) The Election Commission does the scrutiny of nomination papers.
- Q.18 Here are some facts on Indian elections. Which of them reflect the weakness of our Electoral System?
(I) The Lok Sabha has always had less than 10 percent women members.
(II) The Election Commission often refuses to accept the government's advice about when the elections should be held.
(III) The present Lok Sabha has more than 145 members whose assets are more than Rs.1 crore.
(IV) After losing an election the Chief Minister said "I respect the people's verdict".
(A) (I) (B) (III) (C) (I) and (III) (D) (II) and (IV)
- Q.19 During election the voters make many choices. Select the correct options..
(i) Who will make laws for them? (ii) Who will grant Fundamental Rights?
(iii) Who will form the government and take major decisions?
(iv) Who will check the functioning of courts?
(A) (i) and (iii) (B) only (ii) (C) only (iii) (D) Both (ii) and (iv)

- Q.20 What is the General Election?
(A) Elections held for one constituency to fill the vacancy caused by death or resignation of a member
(B) Elections held before the expiry of Lok Sabha term
(C) Elections held in all constituencies at the same time after every five years.
(D) All of these
- Q.21 What is the motive behind Reserved Constituencies?
(A) Proper representation to the upper class people
(B) To provide Right to Equality
(C) To promote democratic ideals
(D) To ensure proper representation to the weaker sections like SC and ST
- Q.22 Legal declaration or Affidavit includes which of the following?
(A) Details of Educational Qualification
(B) Details of experience as a Political Leader
(C) Serious criminal cases pending against the candidate
(D) Details of the assets and liabilities
- Q.23 What does the word 'Code of Conduct' signify? Select the right option.
(i) An appeal to the leaders in the name of caste or religion
(ii) Use any place of worship for election campaign
(iii) A model of election law which all the political parties in our country have agreed for election campaign
(iv) A law to regulate the elections that candidates get a fair chance to compete
(A) (i) (B) (ii) (C) both (i) and (ii) (D) (iii) and (iv)

SECTION-C

• **Multiple choice question with one or more than one correct answers**

- Q.1 Which slogans were given by Janata Party and Left front in Lok Sabha and West Bengal assembly elections in 1977 respectively.
(A) Garibi Hatao (B) Land to the tiller
(C) Save Democracy (D) Protect the self respect of the telegues
- Q.2 What are the powers of election constitution
(A) Implements code of conduct
(B) Takes decision on every aspect of election
(C) can reprimand the government and administration for their lapses
(D) can appoint election commission
- Q.3 What different allegation are referred in Newspapers and television reports.
(A) Inclusion of false Names (B) Misuse of government facilities
(C) Excessive use of money (D) Rigging on the polling day
- Q.4 In which two continents voters turnout has declined over the last fifty years
(A) South America (B) North America (C) Europe (D) Asia
- Q.5 What are the different source of information about the election results
(A) Television (B) Radio (C) Newspapers (D) Pamphlets

SECTION-D

- Assertion & Reason**

Instructions: In the following questions as Assertion (A) is given followed by a Reason (R). Mark your responses from the following options.

- (A) Both Assertion and Reason are true and Reason is the correct explanation of 'Assertion'
 (B) Both Assertion and Reason are true and Reason is not the correct explanation of 'Assertion'
 (C) Assertion is true but Reason is false (D) Assertion is false but Reason is true

- Q.1 **Assertion:** Election is a mechanism by which people can choose their representative at regular intervals and change them if they wish to do so.
Reason: In election people cannot choose who will form the government and take major decisions.

SECTION-E

- Match the following (one to one)**

Column-I and **column-II** contains **four** entries each. Entries of column-I are to be matched with some entries of column-II. Only One entries of column-I may have the matching with the same entries of column-II and one entry of column-II Only one matching with entries of column-I

- | Q.1 | Column I | Column II |
|-----|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| (A) | Total Lok Sabha constituencies | (P) 1/3 seats for women |
| (B) | Reserved constituencies for SC | (Q) 543 |
| (C) | Reserved constituencies for ST | (R) 41 |
| (D) | Rural and Urban local bodies | (S) 79 |

SECTION-F

- Comprehension**

The State had been ruled by a Congress party led government since 1982. Chaudhary Devi Lal, then an opposition leader, led a movement called 'Nyaya Yudh' (Struggle for Justice) and formed a new party, Lok Dal. His party joined other opposition parties to form a front-against the Congress in the elections.

In the election campaign, Devi Lal said that if his party won the elections, his government would waive the loans of farmers and small businessmen. He promised that this would be the first action of his government. People voted overwhelmingly in favour of Lok Dal and its allies. Lok Dal and its partners won 76 out of 90 seats in the State Assembly. Lok Dal alone won 60 seats and thus had a clear majority in the Assembly. The Congress could win only 5 seats.

Once the election results were announced, the sitting Chief Minister resigned. The Governor invited Devi Lal to be the new Chief Minister. Three days after the election results were declared, he became the Chief Minister.

His party ruled the State for four years. The next elections were held in 1991. But this time his party did not win popular support. The Congress won the election and formed the government.

- Q.1 Who led the movement called Nyaya Yudha in Haryana?
 (A) Devi Lal (B) Shyam Lal (C) Bansilal (D) Moti Lal
- Q.2 Which party had been ruling Haryana since 1982?
 (A) BJP (B) Lok Dal (C) BSP (D) Congress
- Q.3 What promise did Devi Lal make before the elections
 (A) He will construct an overbridge
 (B) He will waive the loans of farmers and small businessman
 (C) He will increase the salaries
 (D) He will reserve seats for women in state legislative

ANSWERS

Knowledge Base Questions

- | | | | | | | |
|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. A | 2. B | 3. D | 4. A | 5. B | 6. C | 7. A |
| 8. B | 9. A | 10. B | | | | |

Try Yourself

- A mechanism by which people can choose their representatives at regular intervals and change them if they wish to do so.
- Elections are a must in a democratic country because of the following reasons:
 - A rule of the people is possible without any elections if all the people can sit together everyday and take all the discussions. But this is not possible in a populous country like India.
 - Nor is it possible for everyone to have the time and knowledge to take decisions on all matters. Therefore in most democracies, people rule through their representatives who are elected through elections.
- Sometimes the elections is held for one constituency to fill the vacancy caused by death or resignation of a member. This is called by elections.
- For panchayat and municipal elections each village is divided into several wards.
- In India, Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha (Assembly) elections are held regularly after every five years. After five years, the term of all the elected representatives comes to an end. The Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabha stands dissolved.
 - Elections are held in all constituencies at the same time, either on the same day or within a few days. This is called a general election.
 - Sometimes election is held only for one constituency to fill the vacancy caused by death or resignation of a member. This is called a by-election.

All the above factors make Indian elections democratic.
- When any constituency is reserved for people belonging to the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), such a constituency is termed as 'Reserved Constituency'. Why Reserved Constituencies?
 - The Constitution makers were worried that in an open electoral competition, certain weaker sections may not stand a good chance to get elected to the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies.
 - They may not have the required resources, education and contacts to contest and win elections against others.
 - Those who are influential and resourceful may prevent them from winning elections. If that happens, our Parliament and Assemblies would be deprived of the voice of a significant section of our population.
 - In that case, our democracy would be less representative and less democratic.
- Election commissioner
- Refer to 4.6

ASSIGNMENT - III**SECTION-A**

- Q.1 Nyaya Yudha
Q.3 by election
Q.5 79, 41

- Q.2 Five
Q.4 Electoral constituencies

SECTION-B

- | | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Q.1 A | Q.2 B | Q.3 C | Q.4 D | Q.5 A | Q.6 B | Q.7 A |
| Q.8 B | Q.9 B | Q.10 B | Q.11 C | Q.12 D | Q.13 C | Q.14 B |
| Q.15 A | Q.16 A | Q.17 C | Q.18 A | Q.19 A | Q.20 C | Q.21 D |
| Q.22 D | Q.23 D | | | | | |

SECTION-C

- Q.1 BC Q.2 ABC Q.3 ABCD Q.4 BC Q.5 ABC

SECTION-D

- Q.1 C

SECTION-E

- Q.1 (A-Q), (B-S), (C-R), (D-P)

SECTION-F

- Q.1 A Q.2 D Q.3 B

ASSIGNMENT - IV

- Q.1 Which is the largest legislative assembly in India?
(A) Madhya Pradesh (B) Bihar (C) Kerla (D) Uttar Pradesh
- Q.2 Which is the new reform introduced in the electoral process by the Election Commission?
(A) Indelible ink (B) Electronic voting machine
(C) Polling booths (D) Voters list
- Q.3 Who appoints Chief Election Commissioner of India?
(A) Prime Minister (B) Parliament (C) Supreme Court (D) President
- Q.4 Which of the following does not include election procedure?
(A) Voting (B) Nomination of Candidate
(C) Booth capturing (D) Canvassing
- Q.5 Which one of the following is a directly elected house?
(A) Parliament (B) Lok Sabha (C) Rajya Sabha (D) Vidhan Parishad
- Q.6 By-elections are held in one constituency to
(A) Fill the seats in Vidhan Sabha
(B) To select a capable candidate
(C) To fill the vacancy caused by death or resignation of a member
(D) To elect two leaders in the constituency.
- Q.7 Which of the following statements is incorrect?
(A) All citizens above the age of 21 can vote in an election
(B) Every citizen has the right to vote regardless of caste, religion or gender
(C) Some criminals and persons with unsound mind can be denied the right to vote in rare situations.
(D) It is the responsibility of the government to get the names of all eligible voters put in the voters list.
- Q.8 Which of the following is not allowed while carrying out an election campaign?
(A) Giving money to voters to cast vote for particular candidate
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(D) Contacting voters on phone
- Q.9 Which among the following is not correct?
(A) The Election Commission conducts elections for the Parliament and Assemblies
(B) The Election Commission directs and controls the preparation of electoral rolls
(C) The Election Commission cannot fix the election dates
(D) The Election Commission does the scrutiny of nomination papers

- Q.10 Which of the following statements regarding elections and election commission hold true?
- (i) Election Commission of India has enough powers to conduct free and fair elections in the country.
 - (ii) There is a high level of popular participation in the elections in our country
 - (iii) It is very easy for the party in power to win an election
 - (iv) Many reform are needed to make our elections completely free and fair.
- (A) (i), (ii), & (iii) (B) (i), (ii) & (iv) (C) (i), (ii), (iii) & (iv) (D) only (iii)
- Q.11 Why do we need election?
- Q.12 Give an account of the malpractices during election campaigning.
- Q.13 What are the functions of the elections commission?