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## ELECTORAL POLITICS

### CONCEPTS

#### A. Why Elections?

- Elections are a democratic way of selecting representatives.
- They ensure that the representatives rule as per the wishes of the people.
- Elections help voters to choose representatives who will make laws for them, form the government and take major decisions.
- The voters can choose the party whose policies will guide the government and law making.
- Thus election is a mechanism by which people can choose their representatives at regular intervals and change them if they wish to.

#### B. What Makes an Election Democratic?

- Everyone should be able to choose, i.e. everyone should have one vote and every vote should have equal value. Universal Adult Franchise.
- There should be parties and candidates to choose from, freedom to contest and a wide choice for people.
- Elections must be held at regular intervals.
- Candidate preferred by the people should be elected.
- Elections should be held in a fair and free atmosphere to be democratic.

#### C. Political Competition : Demerits

- Creates a sense of disunity and 'party politics'.
- Parties level allegations against each other of using dirty tricks to win elections.
- Long-term policies cannot be formulated.
- Good people do not enter politics.

**Merits :** Elections are good because they force the ruling party to perform. The government is aware that it will be voted out of power if it does not perform as the people expected.

- It forces parties and leaders to perform, so competition is good.

#### D. Our Election System

- First a voters list is compiled.
- Then the election date is announced.
- The country is divided into constituencies for purpose of elections.
- The voters have to elect one representative for the Lok Sabha from each constituency (Lok Sabha has 543 constituencies), called Member of Parliament. The constituencies are formed on basis of population.
- Similarly, each state is divided into constituencies and a specific number of members called Members of the Legislative Assembly are elected.
- The dates of General Elections are announced.
- Each party declares its Manifesto and prepares a list of nominations.

# I. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

## A. NCERT TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS

Questions within the Lesson

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**Q.1. We have seen why democracies need to have elections. But why do rulers in non-democratic countries need to hold elections?**

**Ans.** They need to hold elections to make people believe they are ruling by popular vote and have the people behind them. But in non-democratic countries elections are not free or fair (as in Mugabe's Zimbabwe) or allow every one to vote (as in China). You have to be a member of the Chinese Communist Party to be able to vote.

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**Q.2. Ah! So, elections are like exams where politicians and parties know if they have passed or failed. But who are the examiners?**

**Ans.** The Electorate.

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**Q.3. Read these two cartoons carefully. Write the message of each of them in your own words. Have a discussion in class on which of the two is closer to the reality in your own locality. Draw a cartoon to depict what elections do to the relationship between voters and political leaders.**

**Ans. Cartoon 1** — It shows the power of the voter or the common man. He can overthrow the ruling party or a candidate who makes false promises.

**Cartoon 2** — In the second one the voters have been fooled by the candidate by a bagful of promises.

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**Q.4. (i) Why is the boundary of the Gulbarga Lok Sabha constituency not the same as the district boundary of Gulbarga? Draw a similar map for your own Lok Sabha constituency.**

**(ii) How many Assembly constituencies are there in the Gulbarga Lok Sabha constituency? Is it the same in your own Lok Sabha constituency?**

**Ans.** Gulbarga district is part of the Karnataka State in Map 2. Map-1 Shows Gulbarga as one of the 10 Assembly Constituencies in which Gulbarga district is divided. Hence the difference.

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**Q.5. Like in panchayats, should we not have at least one-third seats in the parliament and assemblies reserved for women?**

**Ans.** One should not have reservations on principle. Let the students decide.

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**Q.6. Why are the candidates required to give a detailed statement of their property?**

**Ans.** So that they do not misuse their money in elections and acquire property later when in power by unfair means.

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**Q.7. Standing outside the polling station, the criminal politician says to the voter : “Why do you bother? You can go, I got your vote cast.” Does booth capturing always take place in this visible form? Are there less visible ways of booth capturing?**

**Ans.** No, booth capturing is not always so blatant or obvious. You can have bogus names in the voters list and votes can be cast illegally. So remove the names of genuine voters from the list. Stop voters from voting by not letting them come to the booth. Give wrong no. of booth where the voters list is not there.

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**Q.8. Why are party agents present in the polling booth and the counting centres?**

**Ans.** The agents are present to see that no illegal act or violation of polling law takes place at the polling booth. At the counting they are there to see that counting is done properly and their candidates do not suffer.

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**Q.9. Why does the Election Commission have so much power? Is this good for democracy?**

**Ans.** Yes, it is good. The Election Commission ensures that the elections are fair and free. Otherwise the government or the ruling party can misuse its power and win every time. The Legislature can also put pressure and prevent elections from being fair by passing some laws just before the elections.

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**Q.10. (i) The leader is coming out of a press conference : “What we need to say is that we have distributed tickets only amongst suitable and winnable family relations.” Do you think that family politics is confined to only a few states or parties?**

**(ii) Titled ‘Electoral Campaigns’, this cartoon was drawn in the Latin American context. Does this apply to India and to other democracies in the world?**

**Ans. Cartoon 1** — No, the practice is prevalent throughout India.

**Cartoon 2** — It is not possible in India or other democracies because they do not have dictators or one-party rule.

Questions in the Exercise

**Q.1. Which of the following statements about the reasons for conducting elections are false?**

- (a) Elections enable people to judge the performance of the government.
- (b) People select the representative of their choice in an election.
- (c) Elections enable people to evaluate the performance of the judiciary.
- (d) People can indicate which policies they prefer.

**Ans.** a and c

**Q.2. Which of these is not a good reason to say that Indian elections are democratic?**

- (a) India has the largest number of voters in the world.
- (b) India’s Election Commission is very powerful.
- (c) In India, everyone above the age of 18 has a right to vote.
- (d) In India, the losing parties accept the electoral verdict.

**Ans.** The first one — India has the largest number of voters in the world.

**Q.3. Match the following :**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (a) It is necessary to keep the voters list up to date because       | (i) there is a fair representation of all sections of our society        |
| (b) Some constituencies are reserved for SCs and STs so that         | (ii) everyone has equal opportunity to elect their representative        |
| (c) Everyone has one and only one vote so that                       | (iii) all candidates must have a fair chance of competing in elections   |
| (d) Party in power is not allowed to use government vehicles because | (iv) some people may have moved away from the area where they voted last |

**Ans.** (a) — (iv), (b) — (i), (c) — (ii), (d) — (iii)

**Q.4. List all the different election related activities mentioned in the chapter and arrange them in a time sequence, beginning with the first activity and ending with the last. Some of these activities are given below : releasing election manifestos; counting of votes; making of voters list; election campaign; declaration of election results; casting of votes; ordering of re-poll; announcing election schedule; filing nomination.**

**Ans.** 1st step : Making of voters list  
2nd step : Announcing election schedule  
3rd step : Division of areas into constituencies  
4th step : Filing of nominations  
5th step : Parties present their manifestoes  
6th step : Election campaign  
7th step : Polling day : casting of votes  
8th step : Ordering Repoll  
9th step : Counting - declaration of election results.

**Q.5. Surekha is an officer in-charge of ensuring free and fair elections in an assembly constituency in a state. Describe what should she focus on for each of the following stages of election :**

- (a) Election campaign      (b) Polling day      (c) Counting day

**Ans.** (a) Surekha should ensure that following unfair means are not used in the campaign by the parties:

- (i) Misusing government vehicles, machinery or resources.
- (ii) Using any place of worship for election campaign.
- (iii) Spending more than the expenditure limit allowed for an election campaign in a constituency.
- (iv) Appeal in the name of religion or caste
- (v) Ministers shall not lay foundation stones of any projects, take any big policy decisions or make any promises of providing public facilities once elections are announced. In short, to see that 'Code of Conduct' is not violated.

(b) **Polling Day :** There is no campaigning done. All campaigning should stop 36 hours before actual polling starts. No bribing or buying of voters. No rigging. Only voters in the voters list allowed to vote. Identities should be checked. Every voter votes only once, mark is put on the finger. Fair voting is done in the presence of an agent of the candidates.

- (c) **Counting Day** : They should ensure that all EVMs are sealed. All EVMs are opened on the same day in a constituency. Agents of all candidates are present when counting is done. Results declared as soon as counting is done.

**Q.6. The table below gives the proportion of different communities among the candidates who won elections to the US Congress. Compare these to the proportion of these communities in the population of the US. Based on this, would you suggest a system of reservations in the US Congress? If yes, why and for which communities? If no, why not?**

|                  | <i>Proportion of the community<br/>(in per cent) in the</i> |                         |
|------------------|---|-------------------------|
|                  | <i>House of<br/>Representatives</i>                         | <i>Population of US</i> |
| <i>Blacks</i>    | 8   | 13                      |
| <i>Hispanics</i> | 5   | 13                      |
| <i>Whites</i>    | 86  | 70                      |

**Ans.** Students to be divided into groups of 6-7. Each group to hold a discussion and arrive at a conclusion. They must write their views as a group. Teacher must facilitate discussion and help students give their honest opinion.

**Q.7. Can we draw the following conclusions from the information given in this chapter? Give two facts to support your position for each of these.**

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

**Ans.** (a) No, this is untrue. EC can order a repoll in case unfair means are used in elections. It can punish if a party or a candidate violates the code of conduct for elections.

(b) (i) Yes, in India, unlike USA, it is the illiterate, the uneducated and the underprivileged people who participate more in elections.

(ii) The number of people whose vote has gone up over the years, which proves the popularity of elections.

(c) (i) No, the 'Code of Conduct' for elections prohibits the misuse of power and government machinery by the ruling party.

(ii) If the ruling party fails to fulfil people's expectations, it is voted out as it has been proved in India many times.

(d) Yes, there are some reforms needed :

(i) Candidates with criminal connections have won elections. This should not have happened.

(ii) Some families tend to dominate elections. Tickets are distributed to relatives from these families.

**Q.8. 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.** No, they don't. Any one convicted of a crime is not allowed to stand for elections, so Chinappa was debarred. Satbir was also guilty of breaking a law by practising untouchability. So he was also debarred.

**Q.9. 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 Chaudhry, will lead to bloodshed. This was a threat to the 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.** Nigeria, Fiji and US can follow the Indian example of having a powerful Election Commission which is independent of the government. They should also have a 'Code of Conduct' for elections which would stop rigging of votes and parties threatening the voters as they did in Nigeria and Fiji. 'The Code of Conduct' should apply to the whole country and different states should not have different rules as in the case of Florida, USA.

**Q.10. 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 on Doordarshan and All India Radio.
- (c) An inquiry by the Election Commission showed that electoral rolls of a state contain name 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) The problem in the first case was to gain some popular votes for the ruling party by making promises after the announcement of elections. This should not have been allowed.

(b) In the second, opposition parties were not given the same time to air their views and campaign for elections by the media — TV and Radio. More time was granted to the ruling party. Each party should have the same access to media and given equal importance by it.

(c) Fake voters list should be condemned, a new census taken, a new electoral voters list prepared by impartial agents.

(d) They should have been arrested and punished. This is use of force in favour of a party and breaks the 'Code of Conduct' for elections.

**Q.11. Arun 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 we consensus, not by competition.
- (c) Only graduates should be allowed to stand as candidates for elections.

**Ans.** (a) He is being biased, he is denying the women their right to vote as they like. The constitution promises equality and no discrimination based on gender.

(b) With a population of millions a consensus can never be achieved. It is only through political competition, where the representatives of people are elected can be form a government.

(c) There is no guarantee that only a graduate can represent his/her people and be a good leader and administrator. Knowledge of the people's needs, a desire to serve honestly is more important and there is no need to be a graduate for it. In India, this would disqualify a number of people from standing for elections.

### OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS (AS PER CCE PATTERN)

#### B. MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS [1 MARKS]

**Q.1. Who led the 'Nyaya Yudh'?**

- (a) Chaudhary Charan Singh
- (b) Chaudhary Devi Lal
- (c) Ajit Singh
- (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.2. What was the promise Devi Lal made to the farmers and small businessmen?**

- (a) He would waive the loans of farmers and small businessmen
- (b) He would lessen the rate of interest on their loans
- (c) He would modernise agriculture
- (d) He would provide free seeds and pesticides to them

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.3. Which of the following statements about the reasons for conducting elections are false?**

- (a) Elections enable people to judge the performance of the government
- (b) People elect the representatives of their choice in an election
- (c) Elections enable people to evaluate the performance of the judiciary
- (d) Elections enable people to indicate which policies they prefer

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.4. Which of these is not a feature of Indian democracy?**

- (a) India has the largest number of voters in the world
- (b) India's Election Commission is very powerful
- (c) In India, everyone above the age of 18 has a right to vote
- (d) In India, the losing parties refuse to accept the electoral verdict

**Ans.** (d)



**Q.5. Which of these choices are made by voters in elections to a representative democracy?**

- (a) Voters can choose who will make laws for them
- (b) They can choose who will form the government
- (c) They can choose the party whose policies will guide the government
- (d) All the above

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.6. Which of these is not a condition of a democratic election?**

- (a) Everyone is allowed to vote
- (b) There are political parties to contest elections
- (c) The candidate not preferred by people gets elected
- (d) Elections are held at regular intervals

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.7. What is meant by the term 'constituency'?**

- (a) Place where the copy of constitution is kept
- (b) A particular area from where voters elect a representative to the Lok Sabha / Vidhan Sabha
- (c) A body of voters
- (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.8. Which of the options below are the demerits of the electoral competition?**

- (a) Creates a sense of factionalism
- (b) Parties use dirty tricks to win elections
- (c) Parties respect each other
- (d) Both (a) and (b)

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.9. In India, elections for which of these bodies are held after every five years?**

- (a) Rajya Sabha
- (b) Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha
- (c) Vidhan Parishad
- (d) Only Lok Sabha

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.10. Elections held after the term of 5 years of Lok Sabha are called**

- (a) Mid-term elections
- (b) General elections
- (c) By-elections
- (d) Special elections

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.11. What is an election held for only one constituency to fill the vacancy caused due to the death or resignation of a member called?**

- (a) By-election
- (b) Mid-term election
- (c) General election
- (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.12. Into how many constituencies is the country divided for Lok Sabha elections?**

- (a) 544
- (b) 543
- (c) 560
- (d) 535

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.13. Constituencies called 'wards' are made for the election to**

- (a) Parliament
- (b) State Legislative Assembly
- (c) State Legislative Council
- (d) Panchayats and municipal bodies

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.14. Which of these options is not correct?**

- (a) In an open electoral competition, certain weaker sections may not get elected



- (b) Resources, education and contacts may be lacking in their case
- (c) Influential people may prevent them from winning elections
- (d) Influential people help certain weaker sections in winning elections.

Ans. (d)

**Q.15. How many seats are reserved in Lok Sabha for the Scheduled Tribes?**

- (a) 40
- (b) 41
- (c) 51
- (d) 71

Ans. (b)

**Q.16. How many seats are reserved for women in rural and urban local bodies?**

- (a)  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the seats
- (b)  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the seats
- (c)  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the seats
- (d) None of the above

Ans. (b)

**Q.17. Which of these is not a part of the district and local level bodies?**

- (a) Panchayats
- (b) Municipalities
- (c) Corporations
- (d) Lok Sabha

Ans. (d)

**Q.18. Which of the options given below are applicable to the principle of Universal Adult Franchise?**

- (a) Only rich and educated can vote
- (b) Only men can vote
- (c) All citizens aged 18 and above can vote
- (d) Only employed people can vote

Ans. (c)

**Q.19. For voting, the voter has to show which of these as identity proof?**

- (a) Ration card
- (b) Driving license
- (c) Election Photo Identity Card (EPIC)
- (d) Any of these

Ans. (d)

**Q.20. What is the minimum age required to contest an election to Lok Sabha?**

- (a) 20 years
- (b) 18 years
- (c) 25 years
- (d) 30 years

Ans. (c)

**Q.21. What are the details the candidates have to give in the legal declaration before contesting the elections?**

- (a) Serious criminal cases pending against them
- (b) Details of assets and liabilities of the candidate and his or her family
- (c) Educational qualification of the candidate
- (d) All the above

Ans. (d)

**Q.22. What is a set of norms and guidelines, which is to be followed by political parties and contesting candidates during the election time, called?**

- (a) Discipline Roll
- (b) Code of Conduct
- (c) Conduct rules
- (d) Both (a) and (b)

Ans. (b)

**Q.23. Which of these is permitted under the Code of Conduct for election campaign?**

- (a) Use of place of worship for election propoganda
- (b) Use of government vehicle for elections
- (c) Use of media
- (d) Once elections are announced, making any promises of providing public facilities

Ans. (c)

**Q.24. Which candidate is declared elected?**

- (a) One who secures the highest number of votes from a constituency  
(b) One who secures two-third majority (c) One who secures  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total votes cast  
(d) None of the above

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.25. Name the body which conducts the elections in India.**

**[Important]**

- (a) Supreme Court (b) Parliament (c) Cabinet (d) Election Commission

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.26. How is the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) chosen?**

- (a) Appointed by the President (b) Elected by the people  
(c) Elected by the MPs (d) Elected by MPs and MLAs

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.27. When on election duty, under whose control do the government officers work?**

- (a) Central Government (b) Election Commission  
(c) District Magistrate (d) District Court

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.28. Which of these powers is/are exercised by the Election Commission to ensure free and fair elections?**

- (a) Election Commission tightens norms for poll expenses  
(b) Election Commission orders repoll in 398 booths  
(c) Election Commission appoints new Haryana DGP  
(d) Both (a) and (b)

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.29. In India, who votes in a larger proportion in the elections?**

**[Important]**

- (a) Poor and illiterate (b) Rich and privileged  
(c) Educated people (d) Women

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.30. What does the term 'incumbent' mean?**

- (a) The current holder of a political office  
(b) The candidate contesting the election  
(c) The outgoing candidate of the dissolved House  
(d) None of the above

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.31. An electoral malpractice in which a person assumes the identity of another for unlawful purposes is :**

**[CBSE 2010]**

- (a) Incumbent (b) Rigging (c) Impersonation (d) Turnact

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.32. The Election Commission is :**

**[CBSE 2010]**

- (a) An elected body (b) An appointed body  
(c) An independent body (d) Both (b) and (c)

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.33. Which among the following is not correct?** [CBSE 2010]

- (a) The Election Commission conducts all elections for the Parliament and Assemblies
- (b) The Election Commission directs and controls the preparation of electoral roll
- (c) The Election Commission cannot fix the election dates
- (d) The Election Commission does scrutiny of nomination papers

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.34. Which of the following is not allowed while carrying out election campaign?**

- (a) Giving money to voters to cast vote for candidates
- (b) Using TV channels
- (c) Door to door canvassing
- (d) Contacting voters on phone

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.35. Which of the following statement is incorrect?** [CBSE 2010]

- (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.

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.36. "Save Democracy" slogan was given by which of the following political party in 1977 Lok Sabha elections?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Congress Party
- (b) Janata Party
- (c) Telugu Desam Party
- (d) Left Front

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.37. What is the age of a person who can contest election for the Lok Sabha in India?**

[2011 (T-2)]

- (a) 25 years
- (b) 30 years
- (c) 35 years
- (d) 40 years

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.38. In our country, elections are conducted by an independent and powerful body which is known as:** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Election Commission
- (b) Parliament
- (c) Judiciary
- (d) Lok Sabha

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.39. Voter's List is also known as:** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Election Number
- (b) Voter Identity Card
- (c) Electoral Roll
- (d) None of these

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.40. What is the tenure of the Lok Sabha?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) 9 years
- (b) 4 years
- (c) 5 years
- (d) 6 years

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.41. Which one of the following provisions fails to ensure fair and equal chance to compete to candidates and political parties?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) No party or candidate can bribe or threaten voters

- (b) No party or candidate is bound by the model code of conduct
- (c) No party of candidates can use government resources for election campaign
- (d) Nobody can appeal to voters in the name of caste or religion

Ans. (b)

**Q.42. Which of the following statements is against the democratic process of elections?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Parties and candidates should be free to contest elections
- (b) Elections must be held regularly immediately after the term is over
- (c) The right to vote should be given to the selected people only
- (d) Elections should be conducted in a free and fair manner

Ans. (c)

**Q.43. Which state has the largest vidhan sabha in the country?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Maharashtra
- (b) U.P. (Uttar Pradesh)
- (c) Andhra Pradesh
- (d) West Bengal

Ans. (b)

**Q.44. Reserved Constituencies ensures:** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Right to equality
- (b) Proper representation to all religious groups
- (c) Proper representation to the weaker sections of society
- (d) None of these

Ans. (c)

**Q.45. Which of the following has the largest Lok Sabha constituency in India?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Maharashtra
- (b) U.P.
- (c) Himachal Pradesh
- (d) Bihar

Ans. (b)

**Q.46. Who has given the slogan 'Garibi Hatao'?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Indira Gandhi
- (b) Rajiv Gandhi
- (c) Sonia Gandhi
- (d) Pt. Nehru

Ans. (a)

**Q.47. The number of Lok Sabha constituencies at present is :** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) 541
- (b) 546
- (c) 543
- (d) 540

Ans. (c)

**Q.48. Who appoints the Chief Election Commissioner of India?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) The Chief Justice of India
- (b) The Prime Minister of India
- (c) The President of India
- (d) The people of India

Ans. (c)

**Q.49. Who is responsible for free and fair elections in India?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Prime Minister
- (b) President
- (c) Election Commissioner
- (d) Council of Ministers

Ans. (c)

**Q.50. The number of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes in the Lok Sabha is:** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) 59
- (b) 79
- (c) 89
- (d) 99

Ans. (b)

**Q.51. Election Commission of India is appointed by:** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) The Parliament (b) The Prime Minister  
(c) The President of India (d) The Supreme Court

**Ans.**

**Q.52. Election Commissioner in India is appointed for a period of:** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) 4 years (b) 7 years (c) 6 years (d) 5 years

**Ans.**

**Q.53. What is the Electoral Roll?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) The list of those who are eligible to vote  
(b) The list of those who are contesting election  
(c) The list of those who are not eligible to vote  
(d) None of the above

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.54. Which of the following does not include election procedure?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Voting (b) Nomination of candidates  
(c) Booth capturing (d) Canvassing

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.55. When government officers work in election duty, they work under the control of:** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) The Government (b) Election Commission  
(c) The Parliament (d) The Judiciary

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.56. Which is the new reform introduced in the electoral process by the Election Commission?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Indelible ink (b) Electronic voting machine  
(c) Polling booths (d) Voters' list

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.57. What is the minimum age of voters in India?** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) 18 years (b) 25 years (c) 21 years (d) 20 years

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.58. A ballot paper is a sheet of paper which contains the names of the:** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) voters (b) contesting candidates  
(c) polling officials (d) party workers

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.59. A set of norms and guidelines to be followed by political parties and candidates during elections is called:** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) Constituency (b) Rigging (c) Code of conduct (d) Turnout

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.60. The boundaries of a constituency is decided on the basis of:** [2011 (T-2)]

- (a) population (b) culture (c) language (d) number of villages

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.61. Which one of the following help to check the quality of the election process? [2011 (T-2)]**  
(a) election campaign (b) reservation of seats for women  
(c) Independent and powerful Election Commission (d) Normination of candidates

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.62. Which of the following statements about the reasons for conducting elections is false? [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) Elections enable people to judge the performance of the government
- (b) People select the representatatives of their choice in an election
- (c) Elections enable people to evaluate the performance of the judiciary
- (d) People can indicate which policies they prefer

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.63. The number of 'Reserved Seats' for Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the Lok Sabha is according to : [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) their population share (b) the decision of the Election Commission
- (c) the decision of all political parties (d) None of these

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.64. Which of these is not a feature of Universal Adult Franchise in India? [2011 (T-2)]**

- (a) Every citizen should have one vote (b) Each vote should have equal value
- (c) Every adult citizen has the right to vote
- (d) Every voter should be educated upto primary level

**Ans.** (d)

### C. SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS [3 MARKS]

**Q.1. What are the choices that voters make in an election?**

**Ans.** In an election, the voters make many choices :

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

**Q.2. What is the check on the political leaders which makes them serve the people?**

**Ans.** The check on the political leaders comes from the need to serve the people if they want to win the next elections. 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.

**Q.3. Why is there a provision of reservation of seats in the legislatures? [Important]**

**Ans.** 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 State Legislative Assemblies. They may not have the required resources, education and contacts to contest and win elections against the more influential contestants. So seats are reserved for them in the legislature.

**Q.4. Mention the provisions laid down under the Model Code of Conduct to regulate the election campaign.**

**Ans.** According to the Model Code of Conduct, no party can :

- (i) Use any place of worship for election propaganda.
- (ii) Use government vehicles, aircraft and officials for elections.
- (iii) 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.

**Q.5. In which way does the Election Commission enjoy the same kind of independence as the judiciary?**

**Ans.** The Election Commission enjoys the same kind of independence that the judiciary enjoys. The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) is appointed by the President of India. But once appointed, he 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.

**Q.6. What are the trends of popular participation in India?**

**Ans.** The trends of popular participation in India are :

- (i) People's participation in election is usually measured by voter turnout figures. In India the turnout over all these years has either remained stable or gone up.
- (ii) In India, the poor illiterate and underprivileged people vote in larger proportion as compared to rich sections.
- (iii) Common people in India attach a lot of importance to elections as they feel that through elections they can bring pressure on political parties to adopt policies favouring them.

**Q.7. Write about any three challenges which an ordinary citizen would have to face if he wants to contest an election.**

**Ans.** An ordinary citizen would have to face some of the following challenges if he wants to contest the elections :

- (i) Candidates with lot of money enjoy a big and unfair advantage over contestants.
- (ii) Sometimes candidates with criminal connections push others out of the electoral race and secure a 'ticket'.
- (iii) Some families tend to dominate political parties.

**Q.8. Mention any three techniques of election campaign.**

[CBSE 2010]

**Ans.** (i) Candidates contact their voters  
(ii) They address election meetings  
(iii) Use newspapers and TV for publicity

**Q.9. Discuss the importance of elections in a democracy.**

[CBSE 2010]

**Ans.** Elections give people a chance to choose the representatives the government and policies they prefer. The democratic way of selecting representatives can be had by holding elections. The voters can make their choice.

**Q.10. Discuss the importance of an election manifesto.**

[CBSE 2010]

**Ans.** An election manifesto is a statement by a political party explaining its policies, saying what they will do if they win the election.

**Q.11. What is a reserved constituency? How does it strengthen democracy?** [CBSE 2010]

**Ans.** In a reserved constituency only someone who belongs to the scheduled caste or scheduled tribe community can stand for election. In the Lok Sabha, 79 seats are reserved for SC and 41 for ST Communities. This reservation system makes our democracy a representative democracy.



### C. LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS [4 MARKS]

**Q.1. What are the demerits of political competition? [V. Important]**

**Ans.** The political competition has many demerits –

- (i) It creates a sense of disunity and factionalism in every locality. Different political parties and leaders often level allegations against one another. Parties and candidates often use dirty tricks to win elections.
- (ii) This pressure to win electoral fights does not allow sensible long-term policies to be formulated.
- (iii) Some good people who wish to serve the country do not enter this area as they do not like to be dragged into unhealthy competition.

**Q.2. With reference to ‘electoral constituencies’, state how the elections are held in India.**

**Ans.** For elections, the country is divided into different areas called ‘electoral constituencies’. The voters who live in an area elect one representative. For Lok Sabha elections, the country is divided into 543 constituencies. The representative elected from each constituency is called a Member of Parliament (MP).

Similarly, each state is divided into Assembly constituencies. In this case, the elected representative is called the Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA).

**Q.3. Why is there no educational qualification prescribed for the political leaders who hold such an important position of governing the country?**

**Ans.** (i) Educational qualifications are not relevant to all kinds of jobs. Just as a cricketer needs an ability to play well, irrespective of educational qualification, similarly the relevant qualification for an MLA or an MP is the ability to understand people’s concerns, problems, and to represent their interests.

- (ii) In our country, putting an educational qualification would go against the spirit of democracy as it would mean depriving a majority of the country’s citizens the right to contest elections. For example, if graduation is made a compulsory qualification, then 90 percent of the citizens will become ineligible to contest elections.

**Q.4. How can you say that very few Election Commissions in the world have such wide ranging powers as the Election Commission of India? [Important]**

**Ans.** (i) Election Commission takes decisions on every aspect of conduct and control of elections.

- (ii) It implements the code of conduct and punishes any candidate or party that violates it.
- (iii) 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.
- (iv) When on election duty, government officers work under the control of the EC and not the government.

**Q.5. Explain how the outcome of elections is a final test of free and fair elections.**

**Ans.** (i) The ruling parties routinely lose elections in India both at the national and state level. In fact, in every two out of the three elections held so far, the ruling party lost.

- (ii) In the US, an incumbent or ‘sitting’ elected representative rarely loses an election. In India, about half of the sitting MPs or MLAs lose elections.
- (iii) Candidates who are known to have spent a lot of money on ‘buying votes’ and those with known criminal connections often lose elections.

**Q.6. What are the main functions of the Election Commission of India? [CBSE 2010]**

**Ans.** It takes decisions on every aspect of conduct and control of election. It implements code of conduct. It orders guidelines for the government to prevent misuse of power to win elections. It EC feels unfairness in polling it orders a repoll.

**Q.7. Explain the term constituency. Give reasons why the system of reserved constituencies was introduced by our constitution makers. [CBSE 2010]**

**Ans.** The country is divided into different areas for purposes of elections. These are called 'constituencies'. The voters who live in an area elect one representative. For Lok Sabha elections the country is divided into 543 constituencies. The representative elected is called an MP. Similarly, each state is divided into a specific number of assembly constituencies. In this case the elected representative is called an MLA.

To give protection to the weaker section, the makers of our constitution thought of reserved constituencies. These are reserved for people who belong to SC or ST. The Lok Sabha has 79 reserved seats for SCs and 41 for STs.

**Q.8. What are some of the activities undertaken by political parties to carry out election campaign? Mention any three activities. [CBSE 2010]**

**Ans.** In election campaigns, political parties try to focus public attention on some big issues, e.g., the Congress party led by Indira Gandhi gave the slogan of "Gharibi Hatao" in the Lok Sabha elections of 1971. "Save Democracy" was the slogan of Janata Party in the Lok Sabha election of 1977. Secondly, political leaders contact their voters, address election meetings, promise to remove the grievances of the people. Thirdly, support of media – TV Channels and newspaper columns – is also taken by the political parties to further their cause to gather more votes.

**Q.9. Define elections. Explain the nomination process as practised in Indian elections. [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** Every candidate who wishes to contest an election has to fill a nomination form and give some money as deposit. According to recent directive from Supreme Court every candidate has to make a legal declaration giving full details of assets liabilities, educational qualification & details of any serious criminal cases pending against them.

**Q.10. Describe any four demerits of electoral competition. [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** An electoral competition has many demerits.

- (i) It creates a sense of disunity and factionalism.
- (ii) Different political parties level allegations against each others.
- (iii) Long-term policies cannot be formulated.
- (iv) Some good people who wish to serve, do not enter this arena.

**Q.11. Explain any four conditions that make an election democratic. [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** (i) Every section of citizens should get equal representation.  
(ii) Every one should get an equal opportunity to choose representatives.  
(iii) Voters' list which is revised every five year.  
(iv) Election Photo-Identity Card.

**Q.12. What is a reserved constituency? Why did India introduce this system? [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** In a reserved constituency only someone who belongs to the SC/ST or weaker section can stand for election. This was done to give a fair representation to the weaker section who did not stand a good chance to get elected to the Lok Sabha.

**Q.13. Explain any four challenges faced by election system in India. [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** (i) A few candidates may win purely on the basis of money money power sun four weans.  
(ii) Are peoples preferences based on real knowledge.  
(iii) Are the voters getting a real choice.  
(iv) Is Election leally level playing field for everyone.

**Q.14. Explain any four powers enjoyed by Election Commission in India. [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** (i) Election Commission takes decisions on every aspect of conduct and control of elections from announcement of elections to declaration of results.  
(ii) It implements the code of conduct and punishes any candidate or party that violates it.  
(iii) During Elections EC can order the government to follow some guidelines to use/misuse governmental power, its chances to win.  
(iv) When on election duty, government officials work under control of EC.

**Q.15. What is Secret Ballot System? Give three reasons why Secret Ballot System is good.**

**[2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** A ballot paper is a sheet of paper on which the names of the contesting candidates along with party names and symbol are listed.

- (i) The voter can vote in seceries
- (ii) The voter feels secure, safe and fearless
- (iii) The voter is free of threat and coercion.

**Q.16. How does our Election Law regulate campaigns? [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** Election campaigns take place to have a free and open discussion about who is a better representative, which party will make a better government or what is a good policy. These 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 leader address election meetings and political parties mobilise their supporters.

**Q.17. What are the conditions which make an election democratic? [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** (i) The presence of an independent and very powerful Election Commission (EC). It enjoys the same kind of independence that the judiciary does.  
(ii) The Chief Election Commissioner is not answerable to the President or the government.  
(iii) It is virtually impossible to remove the CEC, once he is appointed.  
(iv) When election officials come to the opinion that polling was not fair in some booths or even in an entire constituency, they order a repoll.

**Q.18. Enumerate any four challenges to free and fair elections. [2011 (T-2)]**

**Ans.** (i) Inclusion of false names and exclusion of genuine names in the voters list.  
(ii) Misuse of government facilities and officials in ruling party.  
(iii) Excessive use of money by rich candidates and big parties.  
(iv) Intimidation of voters and rigging on the polling day.

## II. FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

### A. PROJECT

**Topic Covered** : System of elections in India.

- Objective** : Creating awareness of our system of elections and its various aspects.
- Skills Developed** : Analytical understanding of our electoral system, being a responsible citizen
- Time Required** : 1 – 2 days
- Method** : (1) Focus on the following topics : (a) Electoral constituencies (b) Voters list (c) Nomination of candidates (d) Election campaign (e) Polling and counting of votes (f) Declaration of result.
- (2) Explain the role of Election Commission, media and the government in the whole process.
- (3) In ‘conclusion’, give your own views regarding the system of elections in India.

## B. ACTIVITIES

- (1) Assembly elections are held every year in a few states of the country. Collect news items from a few newspapers on an assembly election during this session or just before this session. These should be related to : (a) events just before the election (b) events on the day of election (c) events after the polling day.
- (2) Given below are some facts on Indian elections. Comment on each of these to say whether these reflect the strength or weakness of our electoral system. Also give reasons: (a) After losing an election the Prime Minister/Chief Minister always says : “I respect the people’s verdict”. (b) The Lok Sabha has always had less than 10 percent women members. (c) Many of the MPs and MLAs have criminal backgrounds. (d) The Election Commission often refuses to accept the government’s advice about when the elections should be held. (e) Many of the MLAs and MPs are non-graduates.

## C. MOCK PRESS CONFERENCE

Imagine you are a candidate contesting for an assembly seat in your state. Organise a mock press conference and explain the following points : (a) Why should people vote for you? (b) Your party’s manifesto (c) Your developmental plans for your constituency.

(**Guidelines** : A group of 3 – 4 students could act as reporters/media persons and ask a number of questions from the candidate.)

## D. SEMINAR

Organise a seminar on the topic ‘State funding of elections in India’. This is a burning question in view of the fact that elections are too expensive for our country. This is also a source of many electoral malpractices.

(**Guidelines** : The teacher would select 5 – 6 students with good oratory skills to speak on the topic. The teacher has to help in preparation of the speeches. A local politician could also be invited to speak at the seminar.)

## E. DESIGNING POSTERS/PAMPHLETS

Imagine you are a functionary of the Congress/BJP/ or any other political party, attached to the media cell responsible for publicity and propaganda. Design a poster and a few pamphlets for a candidate contesting a general election to the Lok Sabha.