

Chapter-3

Election and Representaion

Revision Notes

1. The modern period is considered as the age of democracy where participation of people is ensured at every level of government. In the words of Abraham Lincoln. "Democracy is the government of the people, for the people and by the people".
2. Elections have today become the most visible symbol of the democratic process.
3. The method followed to choose these representatives is referred to as an election. thus, the citizens have a limited role in taking major decisions and in running the administration.
4. Democracy can be classified into 2 types, i.e. Direct Democracy and Indirect Democracy.
5. In ancient times, the direct democracy was prominent due to small sizes of kingdoms but now the states are vast along with higher population.
6. In an indirect democracy, the people do not participate directly but they participate indirectly through their elected representatives who act in accordance with the wishes of the people.
7. In a democratic election, people vote and their preference decides who will win the contest/election.
8. Indian Electoral System experiences some unique features as Universal Adult Franchise, Joint Electorate, Combination of direct and indirect elections, secret Ballot system, Election petition, etc.
9. In the lok sabha elections of 1984, the congress party came to power winning 415 of the 543 lok sabha seats more than 80% of the seats.
10. By Universal Adult Franchise, we mean every person above the age of maturity (18 years and above) is entitled to enjoy the right to vote in elections irrespective of caste, creed, colour, race, language, religion, etc.
11. The age of attaining maturity is fixed by the state. In India, England and Russia, it is 18 years, in Switzerland 20 years and in America 21 years and in Norway it is 23 years.
12. In India, we have adopted PR system on a limited scale for indirect elections. The Constitution prescribes a third and complex variation of the PR system for the election of President, Vice President, and for the election to the Rajya Sabha and Vidhan Parishads.

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13. Adult franchise has many merits. It provides political training and education as well as creates the feelings of self-respect among the people. It ensures participation of people in governance.
 14. The FPTP system generally gives the largest party or coalition some extra bonus seats, more than their share of votes would allow. Thus this system makes it possible for parliamentary government to function smoothly and effectively by facilitating the formation of a stable government.
 15. The FPTP system has proved to be simple and familiar to ordinary voters. It has helped large parties to win clear majorities at the center and the State level. The system has also discouraged political parties that get all their votes only from one caste or community.
 16. The constitution of India appoints our Election Commission also to perform election related activities, i.e. to prepare voters' list, provide recognition to political parties, declares constituencies and control over the machinery of election.
 17. The Delimitation Commission is appointed by the President of India and works in collaboration with the Election Commission of India. It is appointed for the purpose of drawing up the boundaries of constituencies all over the country.
 18. The Constitution provides for reservation of seat in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
 19. The election process begins with the election notification issued by the president under section 14 of the People's Representation Act, 1951, which is followed by the announcement of election dates by the Election Commission.
 20. Though Election Commission performs its duties very well, despite the following discrepancies have been observed during elections:
 - a. Use of money and use of power by candidates has become dominant.
 - b. In actual, voters do not create much interest in the elections.
 - c. Misuse of public funds and facilities.
 - d. Even the candidate less than majority of votes becomes victorious.
 21. The following suggestions might be there to remove the drawbacks mentioned above:
 - a. To control money and muscle power
 - b. The participation of women should be encouraged.
 - c. The persons from criminal background should be prohibited.
 - d. During election campaign, the candidates should not use words related to any caste, religion, language, etc.