

ELECTION COMMISSION

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Objective
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 History of the Election of India
- 1.3 Formation of the Election of India
- 1.4 Role of the Eci
- 1.5 Functions of Election Commission
- 1.6 Importance of Election Commission for India
- 1.7 Conclusion

1.0 OBJECTIVE

The aim of this chapter to develop understanding of the Election Commission of the India. In the end of the chapter you will able to find out these are questions.

- Role of the Election commission
- What is a power of an election commission?
- How its ensuring free and fair election?
- How its maintain Law, Order and Security?

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Election commission is the one of the permanent body of the India constitution. This is the autonomous and quasi-judicial constitutional body under the Article 324 in part 15 of the constitution. This commission is the grand body and vested in powers of supervision, control and direction over all factors of electoral governance in the country.

In 1950 it was established with the primary goal of managing and controlling and responsible for conducting free and fair elections of parliament, state legislature, the office of president of India and the office of vice-president of India.

1.2 HISTORY OF THE ELECTION OF INDIA

If you understand any topic, you should know the background or its history of the topic. History clear the picture of the topic. So look at the historical background of the ECI. General elections were held in India between 25 October 1951 and 21 February 1952. They were the first elections to the Lok Sabha after independence in August 1947. It was conducted under the

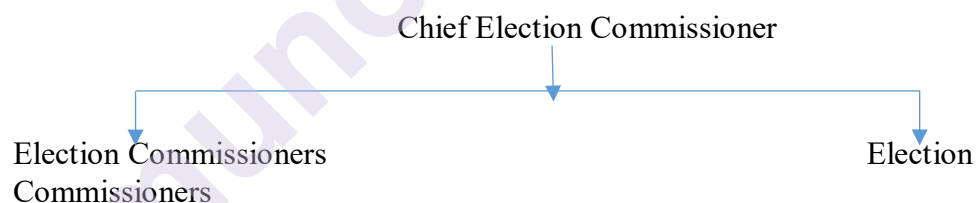
provisions of the Indian Constitution, which was adopted on 26 November 1949 by the Election Commission of India. It was established under Article 324 of the Indian constitution. Here the timeline of ECI, In 1989, the election commission was a single-member body consisting of only the Chief Election Commissioner when two more election commissioners were appointed functioning as a multi-member body. Then again between 1990 and 1993 the election commission was a single-member body. The ECI had released the Model Code of Conduct for the first time in 1971, at the time of the fifth general elections in India. Since then the MCC has been revised several times to lay the guidelines as to how political parties and leaders should behave and conduct themselves ahead of the elections.

1.3 FORMATION OF THE ELECTION OF INDIA

The commission is assisted by deputy election commissioners and at the state level assisted by the chief electoral officer appointed by the commission with tenure system.

It further states that when any other Election Commissioner is so appointed the Chief Election Commissioner shall act as the Chairman of the Election Commission. The CEC cannot be removed from the office except under the orders of the President and any other Election Commissioner or a Regional Commissioner shall not be removed from office except on the recommendation of the Chief Election Commissioner. Presently the structure body of the ECI.

Fig 1



Check your Progress Exercise 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

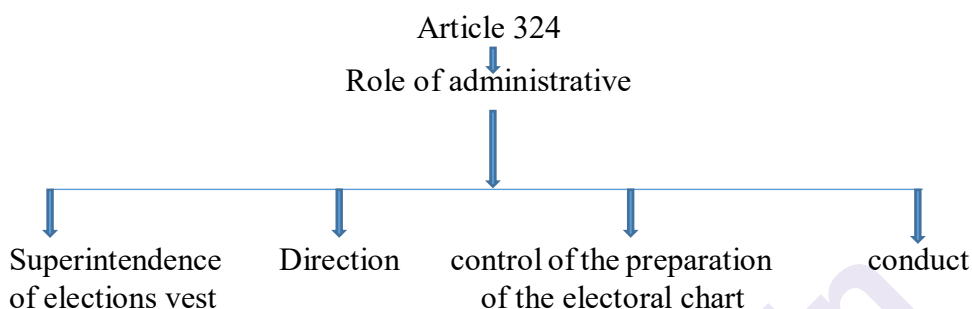
1. What is the history of EC?

2. Who elects the members of the election commission?

1.4 ROLE OF THE ELECTION OF INDIA

- Role of Administrative
- Role of Quasi-Judicial
- Role of Advisory

Article 324 is the only article whose tell the role, function and direction of the EC. Under this article 324 its composition and protect the right of independent and equitable or honest working of the ECI



Role of Administrative

This role is very importance because in this role EC have to Specifying territorial areas of electoral constituencies based on the delimitation commission act. It prepares and revise electoral chart whom are eligible and whom are not and to register all eligible voters. It grants recognition to political parties and allot election symbols to political parties. Notify the dates and schedules of elections and investigate nomination papers. Supervise machinery of elections EVM throughout the county to ensure free and fair elections. It determines the Code of Conduct and cancels polls in the event of booth capturing and other conspiracy.

Role of Quasi-Judicial

Role Under the quasi-judicial of the ECI has the power to settle disputes related to recognition granted to political parties. It is entitled to act as a court for matters relating to disputes arising out of the election symbol to political parties. It also has the power to disqualify a contender who failed to lodge an account of his election expenses within a given time.

Role of Advisory

It advises the President and the Governor on matters relating to disqualification of members of parliament and the state legislature. The opinion of the commission in all such matters is binding. To Advise the president whether the elections can be held in a state under the President's rule to extend the period of emergency after one year.

The Commission is aided in its function by deputy election commissioners. The deputy ECs are taken from the civil services and they are appointed by the Commission. They have a fixed tenure. They are aided by the secretaries, deputy secretaries, joint secretaries and under-secretaries posted in the commission's secretariat.

Check your Progress Exercise 2

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

a. What are the role of the Election Commission in India?

1.5 FUNCTIONS OF ELECTION COMMISSION

1. To direct and control the entire process of conducting elections to Parliament and Legislature of every State and to the offices of President and Vice-President of India.
2. To decide the election schedules for the conduct of periodic and timely elections, whether general or bye-elections
3. To decide on the location of polling stations, assignment of voters to the polling stations, location of counting centres, arrangements to be made in and around polling stations and counting centres and all allied matters
4. To prepare electoral roll and issues Electronic Photo Identity Card (EPIC)
5. To grant recognition to political parties & allot election symbols to them along with settling disputes related to it
6. To sets limits of campaign expenditure per candidate to all the political parties, and also monitors the same
7. To advise in the matter of post-election disqualification of sitting members of Parliament and State Legislatures.
8. To issue the Model Code of Conduct in the election for political parties and candidates so that no one indulges in unfair practice or there is no arbitrary abuse of powers by those in power.

1.6 IMPORTANCE OF ELECTION COMMISSION FOR INDIA

Since 1954 the Election Commission has been playing vital role in the national as well as state elections. it doing an active role to ensure the greater participation of voters. If the political party failed to maintaining democracy in the inner party, then the commission has made discipline among the political parties with a threat of derecognizing. It helps the values ensured within the Structure viz, balance, value, fair-mindedness, autonomy; and run the show of law in superintendence, course, and control over the constituent administration. ECI makes a difference in conducting decisions with the most elevated standard of validity, reasonableness,

straightforwardness, keenness, accountability, autonomy and polished skill. Within the discretionary prepare, it guarantees the support of all qualified citizens in a comprehensive voter-centric and voter-friendly environment. The Race Commission of India engages with political parties and all partners within the intrigued of the appointive handle. It makes mindfulness approximately the constituent handle and discretionary administration among partners (political parties, voters, decision functionaries, candidates and individuals at huge) to improve and fortify certainty and believe within the constituent framework of this nation.

Check your Progress Exercise 3

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

1. Explain the main importance and function of the ECI?

| Important Articles related to Election Commission of India | |
|--|--|
| Article 324 | Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission. |
| Article 325 | No person to be ineligible for inclusion in, or to claim to be included in a special, electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex. |
| Article 326 | Elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assemblies of States to be on the basis of adult suffrage. |
| Article 327 | Power of Parliament to make provision with respect to elections to Legislatures. |
| Article 328 | Power of Legislature of a State to make provision with respect to elections to such Legislature. |
| Article 329 | Bar to interference by courts in electoral matters. |

Check your Progress Exercise 4

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

1. What are the articles related to ECI?

1.7 CONCLUSION

- Increased savagery and discretionary misbehaviors beneath impact of cash have brought about in political criminalization, which ECI is incapable to capture.
- Election Commission isn't satisfactorily prepared to direct the political parties. It has no control in implementing inner-party majority rule government and direction of party accounts.
- ECI is getting to be lesser autonomous of the Official which has affected its picture.
- Allegations of EVMs failing, getting hacked and not enlisting votes, erodes the believe of the common masses in ECI

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ELECTORAL PROCESS

Unit Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Representation of the people Act
- 2.2 Electoral Reforms: 61st Constitutional amendment
- 2.3 Proposals for reforms
- 2.4 Summary
- 2.5 Check your progress
- 2.6 Reference reading

2.0 INTRODUCTION: ELECTORAL PROCESS

Government through election is privileged of every adult to choose its representative in house of People. In Democracy, there are two most popular forms of government - parliamentary and presidential. India adopted parliamentary form of government because we believe in direct representation in government. elections are held on the basis of universal adult franchise, which means all Indians of 18 years of age and above have the right to vote, irrespective of their caste, colour, religion, sex or place of birth.

Election is a complex exercise. It involves schedules rules and machinery. In these chapter deal with representation of the people act and reform in electoral process. The Representation of Peoples act includes The House of the People - Allocation of seats in the House of the People, Filling of seats in the House of the People and Parliamentary Constituencies. The State Legislative Assemblies - Total number of seats in Legislative Assemblies and Assembly Constituencies, Total number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of Sikkim and Assembly Constituencies. The Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies Order - Consolidation of delimitation orders, Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies in the States of Arunchal Pardesh, Assam, Manipur or Nagaland, Power of Election Commission to maintain Delimitation Order up-to-date. In addition to Electoral Reforms and Proposal for Reforms.

2.1 REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT

Background: The Constitution of India's Article 324 to 329 of Part XV provides provision of electoral System. The constitution confers upon the parliament the power to enact laws for all matters connected with elections to the parliament and the states legislature.

The Representation of the People Act (RPA), 1950 gives the clear idea about Assembly constituency which means constituency provided for the purpose of legislative assembly of State, similarly the Council Constituency which means Legislative council of state and Parliamentary constituency which means the house of People. The Act also defines the role and Power of Election Commission which appointed by President of India. There are other provisions in the act which deals about the following objectives.

Allocations of Seats in the House of People and Legislative Assembly: The first schedule of act inherits the allocation of seats to the States in the House of the People and the number of seats, if any, to be reserved for the Scheduled Castes and for the Scheduled Tribes of each State. The seats which are to be filled in the house of People as allotted to the respective states, shall be filled by persons chosen by direct election from parliamentary constituencies in the States, those constituency shall be Single-member constituency. Parliamentary seats to the states are allotted with respect to the population of the states. This act give power to Election commission to increase or decrease the parliamentary seats allotted to States, however the extent of all parliamentary constituencies except the parliamentary constituencies in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, Manipur and Nagaland shall be as determined by the orders of the Delimitation Commission made under the provisions of the Delimitation Act, 2002 (33 of 2002) and the extent of the parliamentary constituencies in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Jharkhand, Manipur and Nagaland shall be as provided for in the Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies Order, 2008 having regard to the provisions of sections 10A and 10B of the Delimitation Act, 2002.

The total number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of each State specified in the Second Schedule, to be filled by persons chosen by direct election from Assembly Constituencies, and the number of seats, if any, to be reserved for the Scheduled Castes and for the Scheduled Tribes of the State, shall be as shown in that Schedule:

For Example: The total number of seats allotted to the Legislative Assembly of the State of Nagaland shall be 52. From which twelve seats are reserved for Tuensang district and shall be filled by the person chosen by the members of the regional council, amongst themselves in such a manner as the Governor after consulting to the council may nominate. Remaining forty seats shall be filled by the persons chosen by direct election from assembly constituencies in the rest of the state.

2.2 ELECTORAL REFORMS: 61ST CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

Election forms the mainstay of our Indian Democracy and most integral and important part of politics in a democratic system of governance. True democracy can function only when elections to the offices of power are held in a free and fair manner.

Electoral reforms in India refer to the evolution and positive change in election processes in order to promote greater democracy, clean politics, ideal members of legislative chambers, and equal representation, among other things. Elections and electoral reforms are covered in Articles 324-329. Electoral reforms are essential to achieve goal of Egalitarian society.

Our democratic setup bestows on us to elect the representatives of the State. Besides, the elected people have the power to decide on the pinnacle of the State. The Election Commission of India is the apex body that conducts elections in India. Both the general and State Elections are held as per the principles prescribed by the Commission. This Commission consists of high-ranking brass and is constituted in step with the provisions of the Indian Constitution.

Reform means to improve by alteration, correction of error, or removal of defects put into a better form or condition.

Some of the Electoral reforms that have occupied the Election Process includes EVMs that's, Electronic, a mechanical device which ends up in additional transparency and creditability of elections, Universal Adult Franchise started by 61st Amendment, 1988 which has lowered the age of voters from 21 years to 18 years and Anti- Defection Law.

-Why do we need reform? How does reforming helps to evolve Democratic process of election?

Let's discuss by taking example

Historically, adult franchise has been slow in making itself a universal law. In fact, one of the major demands in the long-drawn struggle for democracy in the world has been the Acceptance of the principle of universal adult franchise, as the basis of ascertaining the Wishes of people. Till the second decade of the twentieth century, not all the countries Were practising universal adult franchise. Many democratic systems had restricted to male Franchise only, based on property, education and other qualifications.

In India 61st Amendment Act, 1988 was introduced in the Lok Sabha as the Constitution (62nd Amendment) Bill, 1988 on December 13, 1988, by B. Shankaranand, the then-Minister of Water Resources. The bill attempted to modify Article 326 of the Indian Constitution, which governs Lok Sabha and Assemblies elections.

Article 326 of the Constitution provides that the elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assembly of every State shall be based on adult suffrage a person should not be less than 21 years of age.

Universal adult franchise (also known as universal suffrage, common suffrage, and general suffrage of the common man) grants the right to vote to all adult citizens, irrespective of their gender, race, social status, wealth, political stance, or any such criteria, with a few exceptions.

The voting age varies from country to country. In Denmark and Japan, a person, man or Woman, is entitled to vote after attaining the age of 25 years.

In Norway, the age limit is 23, in Great Britain, the United States, Russia and Turkey it is 18. In Switzerland, it is 20 Years.

At present youths are literate and enlightened and the lowering of the voting age would provide to the unrepresented youth of the country an opportunity to give vent to their feelings and help them become a part of the political process. The present-day youth are very much politically conscious. It is, therefore, proposed to reduce the voting age from 21 years to 18 years.

Some of the key facts about Indian Adult Suffrage and 61st constitutional Amendment-

- About 52 lakh voters in India are 18 years old now, and they have a significant role in the outcome of elections in the country.
- Elections to the Houses and State Legislative Assemblies based on universal adult suffrage are governed under Article 326 of the Indian Constitution.
- On December 15, 1988, the lower house considered and passed it. The bill was passed by the Rajya Sabha on December 20th.
- The bill required the approval of more than half of the state legislatures, which was properly gained.
- States which did not ratify: Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Nagaland, Tamil Nadu, and Tripura.
- The bill received presidential assent on March 28, 1989. As a result, the act came into effect on March 28, 1989, and any citizen who is otherwise qualified could participate in India's democratic processes from the age of 18 onwards.

Elections are, in fact, the bedrock of democracy and express the sovereign will of the people through the exercise of their Free and equal vote. Here we have learnt that universal adult franchise is foundation of Representative democracy which states that each man and woman after attaining prescribed age can vote to choose their own representative.

Lowering of the voting age provided to the unrepresented youth of the country an opportunity to express their feelings and help them to become a part of the political process. The present-day youth are very much politically conscious. It was, therefore, proposed to reduce the voting age from 21 years to 18 years.

2.3 PROPOSALS FOR REFORMS

India's democratic setup is a paradigm for many countries in the world due to its remarkable success over the past six decades. The heart of India's democratic system witnesses regular elections with the participation of the largest electorate in the world. In order to safeguard the core values of fair and free elections in this dynamic scenario, it is important to have a just and unbiased electoral process with a greater citizen participation. Therefore, to ensure the Authenticity which comes from legislative process, the election

commission of India improved the process by introducing the reforms in the Constitution of India.

Key Reforms Introduced are

Use of Common electoral roll: Like wife of husband in service gets special voter enrolment, The Commission proposes to extend the facility of registration in the native constituency under the said sub-section for the husband of declared office holder (wife) and service voter also, provided the husband is ordinarily residing with the female office holder/ service voter at her place of posting. In order to simplify the procedure of preparation of electoral rolls and to avoid unnecessary expenditure, the Election Commission regarding introduction of common electoral rolls for Parliamentary, Assembly and local body elections.

Election Management: Making false Statement before authorities is punishable offence, The Commission also proposed that furnishing of false affidavit or suspension of material information in the affidavit should also be specified as ground for challenging the election under section 100 (1) of The Representation of the People Act, 1951. Adjournment of poll or countermanding of election on the ground of bribery

Official and Logistics : To provide a ban on the transfer of officers referred to in these sections during a period of 6 months before the expiry of the term of the House. Section 159 of The Representation of the People Act, 1951 should be amended to empower the District Election Officer also, apart from the Chief Election Officer to requisition of staff for election duties.

Nomination process: In case the provision needs to be retained, then there is a need for an express provision in law requiring person who contests and wins election from two seats, resulting in bye-elections from one of the two constituencies to deposit in the government account an appropriate amount of money being an expenditure for holding the bye-election.

De-criminalization of Politics : Persons with Criminal background, accused of serious offences contesting election sends very negative signals about our electoral process. Many of such persons facing charges of grave nature end up winning election and entering our temple of democracy namely the Houses of Parliament and State Legislature which is highly undesirable, and the issue needs to be addressed. Persons charged with cognisable offences shall be de-barred from contesting in the elections, at the stage when the charges are framed by the competent court provided the offence is punishable by imprisonment of at least 5 years, and the case is □led at least 6 months prior to the election in question.

The proposal was to initiate swift action against those persons who attempt to misuse religious sentiments or making appeals to voters through the mode of their piety by holding disguised religious rallies in places of worship as political supplication, to strengthen the existing provisions in the Codes of Conduct and other election related laws. The Commission proposed that for giving effect to the recommendations in the Liberhan Commission Report, the law should be amended as was proposed in the Bills of 1990 and 1994 referred to above.

Political Parties : Many political parties get registered, but never contest election. Such parties exist only on paper. The possibility of forming political parties with an eye on availing the benefit of income tax exemption also cannot be ruled out. It would only be logical that the Commission which has the power to register political parties is also empowered to de-register in appropriate cases. The Election Commission of India should be given powers to de-register a political party should be authorised to issue necessary orders regulating registration and de-registration of political parties.

Provisions for exemption of Income Tax should be made applicable only to political parties that contest elections and win seat(s) in the Parliament or Legislative Assemblies.

2.4 SUMMARY

The Representation of the People Act (RPA), 1950 gives the power to election commission to conduct the free and fair elections in democracy. The RPA also empowers the adult citizens to vote the representative. The 61st constitutional Amendment act brings electoral reform like Universal adult suffrage at house and State legislature. It reduces the age criteria for voting from 21 to 18 years, provision of two-third majority to pass certain bills etc. The law commission have proposed some reforms to consolidate the election process in smooth manner. There are provisions that empowers election commission to condition the unlawful activities during or post-election process.

2.5 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. What are the salient feature of The Representation of the People Act?
2. Comment on, The 61st Constitutional Amendment on electoral roll?
3. Discuss the Recommendations of Law commissions of India, in a view of Proposed reform by election commission.
4. Discuss the role of Election commission of India in Electoral process.

2.6 REFERENCE READING

- 61st Constitutional amendment act
- Proposed Electoral Reform published by Election commission of India
- Electoral System: Democracy, Laws & Issue by Prof. Rattan Singh and Dr. Shruti Bedi



HISTORY OF GENERAL ELECTIONS

Unit Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 First General Election: 1952
- 3.3 Phase of One-Party Dominance: General Elections - 1952, 1957, 1962
- 3.4 Decline and Resurgence of Congress: General Election – 1967, 1971, 1977, 1980, 1984
- 3.5 Coalition Politics Phase 1: 1989-1999
- 3.6 Coalition Politics Phase 2: 1999-2009
- 3.7 Rise of BJP as Dominant party: General Elections – 2014, 2019
- 3.8 References

3.0 OBJECTIVES

The aim of this unit is to familiarize you with the Electoral History of India mainly focusing on parliamentary elections. It will explore the party system, electoral system and verdicts of Indian voters. After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the working of Electoral System in India and Electoral Politics in India since 1952
- Understand the party system and its changing nature in Indian Politics.

3.1 INTRODUCTION: BACKGROUND OF LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

A close look at the party politics today gives us an idea of the complex nature of electoral politics. This party politics has evolved in the last seventy years. Perhaps, we can trace its roots to the colonial era. The General Election of 1920 was the first election conducted in modern India. Though, at that time very few people were granted the right to vote. Those were mainly on the basis of tax pay, land revenue and education etc. As many Congress members had boycotted the election of 1920, it is the provincial elections of 1937 which can be considered as an important phase in party politics. This was the first major election held on a large scale. All major political leaders participated in it. The Constitution of India was adopted in

November 1949. The Constitution enfranchised all citizens of India irrespective of caste, gender, income, social status, place of birth, etc.

India became independent in 1947. Until the first general election, the Constituent Assembly of India was functioning as the Indian Parliament. The first Lok Sabha General elections were held in 1952. From being one party dominance in the first two decades to the multi-party system, Electoral history of India has taken so many trajectories. Till now, 17 Lok Sabha elections have been held. From the first general election (1952) to the 17th Lok Sabha election's (2019) results have been given here.

3.2 FIRST GENERAL ELECTION: 1952

After the constitution of India came into effect, first general elections were expected to be conducted in 1950 itself. But, as informed by the election commission, the machinery to conduct elections was not ready. First general elections were conducted between October 1951 to January 1952. It was a big test for Indian democracy. We passed it despite poverty and illiteracy. Population of India was 36 crores, out of which, 17.32 crore population was eligible to vote. Voter turnout was 45.7 percent.

In the first elections held in 1952, around 192 political parties participated. From these huge numbers, it seems that a multi-party power struggle has taken place in India since the very first election. In this election, the Congress party won 364 seats out of 489 securing 45% of the total votes. With 45 percent of votes, Congress was able to win 74 percent of seats. Thus, victory of the Congress was artificially boosted by the electoral method of First Past the Post (FPTP).

State assemblies' elections were also held simultaneously with Lok Sabha elections. Congress became the victorious party at the centre as well as at all states. Nehru became the first prime minister of the country. Congress party was carrying the legacy of nationalist struggle, this was the main reason behind its extraordinary success in the first general elections. No other political party was able to match with the Congress. Among the opposition parties, Communist Party won 16 seats. Socialist Party (12), Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (9), Bharatiya Jana Sangh (3) and Schedule Caste Federation (2) were the other opposition parties securing a few seats and voting percentage.

The first general elections i.e., test of electoral democracy was passed by India. These elections were meant to enhance peoples' faith in the constitution and democracy.

3.3 PHASE OF ONE-PARTY DOMINANCE: 1952 - 1967

People of India favoured the Congress party in the first general election. The Congress party was expected to win being an inheritor of the freedom struggle.

- Legacy of nationalist struggle
- Popular, democratic leaders
- Strong organizational network from national to local level
- Inclusive party, accommodating diverse social, ideological groups

According to Rajni Kothari, one-party dominance in India seems to have taken root since the first general election. One party, Congress, emerged as a dominant party in the general election of 1952. Congress party maintained this dominant position also in the general elections of 1957, 1962.

While explaining how the Congress party differed from the other dominant political parties in other nations, Rajni Kothari used the term 'Congress System' for predominance of the Congress. According to him, The Congress party in the earlier era after independence was a big social and ideological coalition accommodating various fractions. Those factions or groups have had contradictory interests like peasants, industrialists, workers, urban middle class, villagers, upper castes and lower castes. These factions used to influence, criticise, and pressurise the Congress. Thus, acted as an opposition. Hence, in the first decade after independence, the Congress acted both as a ruling party as well as the opposition. This is termed as the Congress System.

1957 General Election:

The second general election held in the year of 1957. The number of participant political parties decreased. The Congress party increased its seats and votes percentage. It became the largest party taking 371 of the 494 seats. Communist Party became the largest opposition among other parties with 27 seats. Still too much behind the ruling party. Congress won at all states except Kerala where communist party (CPI) became largest party. For the first time in the world party with communist ideology formed the democratic government.

1962 General Election:

In the third general election of 1962, The Congress maintained its dominance by winning 361 out of 494 seats. The party's vote-share was 44.7 per cent. Communist Party became the second largest party by winning 29 seats. In some states, the Congress was being challenged by new political parties. Communist party had set foot in West Bengal, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. While the Swatantra Party emerged as the main opposition party in Orissa, Bihar, Rajasthan and Gujarat. Jan Sangh had done well in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: (1) Use the space given below for your answer.

- 1) What is Congress System? Explain dominance of the Congress party in the first three general elections.**

3.4 DECLINE AND RESURGENCE OF CONGRESS:

1967 General Election:

The fourth general election was held in 1967. Background of these elections was very critical for the nation. Decade of the 1960s was labelled as the dangerous decade. India lost two prime ministers in quick succession during this time. Nehru passed away in May 1964, his successor Lal Bahadur Shastri died in January 1966. Invasion of China (1962) and Pakistan (1965) Two severe droughts and inflation were the national issues in this period.

After Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri became India's second Prime Minister in 1964. After the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri Congress faced the internal competition for leadership between Indira Gandhi and Morarji Desai. Party resolved this with internal secret voting and supported Indira Gandhi for Prime Ministership.

The Congress continued with victory in the elections of 1967, although reduced the seat share. The party won 283 out of 520 seats (less by 83 seats compared to 1962). Indira Gandhi became the prime minister. The Swatantra Party was the second largest party with 44 seats. The Congress ended up losing the election in seven states. In two other states Congress became unable to form a government. In Madras state Dravid Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) formed a government with a clear majority. First time any non-Congress party secured a majority in the state assembly. This era was the development of non-Congressism in electoral politics.

During this term the Congress party faced a split within the party. The Congress Party divided into the two groups of Indira Congress and Syndicate Congress, later named as Congress (R - Requisitionists) and Congress (O - Organizational) respectively.

1971 General Election:

This general election is the first Interim elections in India. 5th Lok Sabha elections were supposed to be conducted in 1972. Increased defections made the government in many states unstable. Presidential rule was imposed in the states of Bihar, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and West

Bengal. Six state legislative assemblies' elections happened before completion of the five years term. From this election the Lok Sabha and the state assembly elections began to be held separately. Four general elections from 1951 to 1967 for the Lok Sabha and the state assemblies were held together. Due to the mid-term elections of 1971, the era of simultaneous elections ended.

The Congress won 352 out of 518 seats and formed its fifth successive government at the Centre. The party's vote share was 43.7 per cent. The CPI(M) was the second party with 29 seats. The Congress(O) won just 16 seats. Indira Gandhi became the prime minister for the third term. Congress (O) formed a pre-poll alliance with Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP), Praja Socialist Party (PSP), the Swatantra Party, Bharatiya Jana Sangh BJS and several other regional parties with the slogan of 'Indira Hatao'. Indira Gandhi's launched a campaign with the slogan of Garibi Hatao. Through this campaign She tried to generate her support base among poor and lower strata of society.

1977 General Election:

This was a historic election which saw the first non-Congress government at the centre. The Janata Party experiment did bring an alternative to the rule of single party majority of 30 years. National Emergency had played a major role in the defeat of Congress and Indira Gandhi. Janata party, i.e., alliance won 345 out of 542 seats. Congress Vote share was reduced to below 35 percent and it was able to secure only 154 seats. Morarji Desai became the first non- Congress prime minister. Two major leaders from Congress. Indira Gandhi and her son Sanjay Gandhi lost their seats.

Janata Party was amalgamation of different political parties and groups that were in the opposition to the Congress. Bharatiya Kranti Dal, Samajwadi Party, Bharatiya Jan Sangh and Indian National Congress (O). Leaders from the opposition came together to defeat Indira Gandhi on the backdrop of emergency protest. Nevertheless, there were implicit ideological differences among the political groups consisting of the Janata Party. The Janata government was soon hit by internal rift and could not complete a five years term. This had led to another general election in the year 1980.

1980 General Election:

This election again witnessed the resurgence of the Congress party. The Janata experiment collapsed within 2-3 years. Congress under the leadership of India Gandhi did rise with new strength. Congress won 353 seats out of 542. Indira Gandhi returned as the prime minister for the fourth time. The Ascendancy of Congress in the 1980s is linked with growing influence of religion in politics. Khalistan movement, Assam agitation over Bangladeshi migrants, issue over Meenakshipuram conversion and all such incidents were signals of communal politics. This trend became more open in the late 1980s and 1990s.

1984 General Election:

In the election of 1984 people massively supported the Congress party. The Congress party won the historically highest 404 seats securing 49.10 percent of votes. Party received such huge support on the backdrop of assassination of Indira Gandhi. Those votes are called sympathy votes. Telugu Desam Party led by N T Rama Rao was the second largest party in parliament with 30 seats. This was the first time some regional political party became an opposition party in parliament. Rajiv Gandhi became Prime Minister at the youngest age of 40. His government had faced many issues in five years. The Bofor scam was the main issue behind its decline in the election of 1989.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

1) Explain the decline of Congress as predominant party

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

1) Elaborate the Janata party experiment

3.5 COALITION POLITICS PHASE 1 (1989-1999)

1989 General Election:

Congress fell down from 404 votes to 197 seats in the election. Janata Dal led by V P Singh became the second largest party securing 143 seats. Bharatiya Janata Party received big success with the increase in the number of seats from 2 seats in 1984 to 85 seats in 1989. Congress was not able to form the government due to lack of majority. V P Singh, leader of Janta party was invited by the president to form the government. BJP and CPI (M) gave their support to the V P Singh government from the outside.

The V P Singh government took a historic decision to implement the prolonged Mandal Commission report. It was regarding reservations to the backward castes (OBCs) in jobs. This decision had major political

implications. BJP saw it as a potential divide between Hindus into upper and lower castes. In order to secure Hindu vote banks and countering Mandal discourse, BJP launched the famous Rath-Yatra from Somnath to Ayodhya. They planned to start construction of Ram Mandir. Rath-Yatra ended after the arrest of Advani. BJP withdrew its support from the V P Singh government. Later, Chandrashekhar with the outside support from Congress formed the government. But it could survive only for months.

1991 General Election:

This election had the background of Mandal-Mandir politics. Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated while campaigning for election.

No party was able to secure a majority in the elections of 10th Lok Sabha. Congress won 232 seats. BJP was able to increase its seats from 85 to 120. Congress formed a minority government with the support of other parties. P V Narasimha Rao became prime minister. His term is identified with the era of beginning of open market economy i.e., Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation (LPG).

1996 General Election:

This election was held on the backdrop of growing communalism in politics. Mobs supported by Hindu communal groups demolished the Babri Masjid in 1992.

Elections resulted in a hung parliament with no single party having a clear majority. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, leader of BJP formed the government. But it could live only for 13 days. These years (1996-1998) were the most unstable years for the formation of government at the centre. After the short-lived BJP government, Janata Dal leaders H D Deve Gowda and Inder Kumar Gujral served as the Prime Ministers for short terms in the year of 1996 and 1997 respectively.

1998 General Election:

Elections for the 12th Lok Sabha were held in March 1998. This time the pre-election fronts of the parties were in the electoral race. The National Democratic Front (NDA) was led by the BJP. The BJP-led alliance won 252 seats. The Congress-led alliance United Progressive Alliance (UPA) got 166 seats. Third National Front and Left Front secured only 96 seats. In this election, once again, BJP had the highest number of seats. Government formed under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. But it collapsed in 13 months.

Check Your Progress Exercise 4

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

1) Explain the Mandal-Mandir politics in the decade of 1990s.

3.6 COALITION POLITICS PHASE 2 (1999-2009)

1999 General Election:

In the 1999 Lok Sabha election BJP led NDA emerged as the largest alliance with securing 299 seats. With the formation of the NDA government, the instability of the coalition government ended. Thus, a new phase of coalition started in Indian politics. NDA was an anti- Congress coalition with several regional parties.

Elections were held after the six months from Kargil War. With the victory in Kargil War, the BJP government presented itself as the saviour of the nation. It benefited in elections. NDA government under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee successfully completed five years term and became first such non-Congress government. Bharatiya Janata Party emerged as an alternative national party to the level of Congress.

2004 General Election

Elections for the 14th Lok Sabha were held in May 2004. BJP campaigned with the slogan of 'Shining India.' However, the NDA was defeated. In the NDA, the number of seats was reduced for Telugu Desam Party which resulted in overall decline in seats of alliance.

Although the Congress party got the highest number of seats in this election, it seems that the regional parties in the states got the highest number of votes. The Congress party faced the big issue regarding leadership. Sharad Pawar, P. A. Sangma and Tariq Anwar left the Congress on the issue of foreign citizenship of Sonia Gandhi. They opposed Sonia Gandhi as the Leader for prime ministership. They formed another party called the Nationalist Congress Party.

This time Sonia Gandhi's leadership was to be tested. In this election both the Congress and the BJP realised the inevitability of alliance politics. Elections got conducted face to face between UPA (United Progressive Alliance) and NDA (National Democratic Alliance).

For the first time in the election, the role of the Left parties became important. After the election the Congress-led UPA government was formed with the support of the Left parties. Manmohan Singh became Prime Minister.

2009 General Election

Elections for the 15th Lok Sabha were held in May 2009. The issue of the Indo-US nuclear deal was crucial in the election. There were differences on this issue between the Congress and the Left. In the elections held against

this background. This election saw a sharp drop in left-wing seats. The Congress received the support from all sections of the society. For the first time in this election, the NCP has joined hands with the Congress.

Congress won 206 seats. UPA formed the government with outside support from SP, BSP, RJD, JD(S). Manmohan Singh became the Prime Minister for second time.

Check Your Progress Exercise 5

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

1) Write brief note on the coalition politics in India

3.7 RISE OF BJP AS DOMINANT PARTY: GENERAL ELECTIONS OF 2014 & 2019

2014 General Election:

General elections for the 16th Lok Sabha were held in 2014. There were three main fronts in this election, UPA, NDA and Third front led by small 11 parties. The election campaign mainly revolved around the leadership, especially Narendra Modi against Rahul Gandhi.

BJP won the clear majority with 282 seats and NDA got 336 seats. For the first time in the history of post-independence Indian elections a non-Congress government with an absolute majority was formed. Even though BJP is the only party to get an absolute majority, it is inevitable that a coalition government was formed. Therefore, in Indian politics, the rule of the alliance has become a political inevitability.

In this election, the national parties got the highest number of seats and votes than the regional parties. However, compared to the 2009 Lok Sabha elections, the percentage of seats and votes received by the regional parties has increased. The Congress party declined at the level of mere 40 seats.

2019 General Election:

The Indian general elections to constitute the Seventeenth Lok Sabha were held in 7 phases across the country from 11 April to 19 May 2019. BJP contested election taking the issue of national security aftermath Pulwama attack. Bharatiya Janata Party won 303 seats, maintaining its absolute majority and the BJP-led coalition winning 353 seats. The BJP secured 37.36% of the votes, while the combined vote share of the NDA was 45% of the 60.37 crore votes.

The Congress party won 52 seats and the Congress-led alliance won 92 seats. Other parties and their alliances won 97 seats.

Elections of 2019 saw a rise in the use of digital media and social media by political parties. Internet users in India increased from 65 million in 2014 to 600 million in 2019. So, the number of netizens increased and these reshaped the strategies of political parties for political communication. BJP has a higher share in spending for digital political advertisements on Google and Facebook. DMK is in second place.

BJP, once identified as an urban-centric party or party supported by upper castes, is now changing its nature by adopting several fundamental changes. BJP now became the predominant party in the Hindi heartland region. Is it becoming the predominant party all over the country? It will be very quick to analyse on these terms. Due course of time will answer this question.

| Lok Sabha Elections (1952- 2019): | | | |
|--|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| No | Year | Congress | Jan Sangh/BJP |
| 1 | 1952 | 364 | 3 |
| 2 | 1957 | 371 | 4 |
| 3 | 1962 | 361 | 14 |
| 4 | 1967 | 283 | 35 |
| 5 | 1971 | 352 | 22 |
| 6 | 1977 | 154 | - |
| 7 | 1980 | 353 | - |
| 8 | 1984 | 404 | 2 (BJP) |
| 9 | 1989 | 197 | 85 |
| 10 | 1991 | 232 | 120 |
| 11 | 1996 | 140 | 161 |
| 12 | 1998 | 141 | 182 |
| 13 | 1999 | 114 | 182 |
| 14 | 2004 | 145 | 138 |
| 15 | 2009 | 206 | 116 |
| 16 | 2014 | 44 | 282 |
| 17 | 2019 | 52 | 303 |

(Source: election commission of India website)

Check Your Progress Exercise 6

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

1) Elaborate the rise of BJP as the dominant party.

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GROUP & ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

Unit Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Women
- 4.2 Dalits and Tribals
 - 4.2.1 5th and 6th schedules
- 4.3 Minorities
 - 4.3.1 Articles

OBJECTIVE

The aim of this chapter to develop understanding of the Group & electoral Participation in the election. In the end of the chapter you will able to find out these are questions.

- What is group and electoral participation?
- Which articles are right to part of the politics.
- How women get power in the participation in the politics?
- How were minorities and other group get power to set up government?

4.0 INTRODUCTION

First, we must understand the electoral participation in the country politics. A citizen whose age 18 above are eligible for voting that's mean he or she will be a part of the politics of the country. Members of the Lok Sabha (House of the People), of India's Parliament, are chosen from a list of candidates standing in their respective seats by all adult citizens or electoral participants of India. Every adult Indian citizen is only allowed to vote in their own constituency. That's the role of the electoral participants. Now we understand the electoral group which also part of the participants. These are women, Dalits, Tribals and Minorities. It cuts across genders in sharing political power and provides women with liberty and space from inside democratic framework of electoral politics as an evidence of equality and freedom. In the Preamble of the Indian Constitution of 1950, all citizens were promised 'JUSTICE, social, economic, and political,' as well as 'EQUALITY of position and possibility.' (Basu, 1991: 21)

In 1927, women were granted suffrage in the Central Provinces, and in 1929, in Bihar and Orissa. Franchise had been extended to practically all Indian provinces by the end of the 1920s. However, due to the property requirement, only about 1% of women in the country were eligible to vote. Let's explore more about history of the women participant. See this, chronological and thematic survey of women's rights in general (Kumar, 1997), as well as involvement in electoral contests, traces its origins to the mid-nineteenth century. Bengal's Swadeshi movement (1905–8), which marked the beginning of Indian independence. Women's engagement in nationalist movements raised the issue of women's equality and bringing women's suffrage and voting rights to the fore (Nair, 1996: 122–44). Trying to figure out where the word came from is a difficult task. Forbes (1979) observes that the tenacity of the women's suffrage movement in India. The desire for organized women to be considered as equals to men arose not from the perceptions of men, but from the perceptions of women. women's demands in India, but due to the influence of a few British women. Consequently, the beginnings of the women's suffrage movement in India in the early twentieth century were copied after the British model and via the efforts of British women reformers in India. The Women's Indian Association was founded in Madras in 1917 with the primary goal of "seeking an expanded role for women in public life" (Nair, 1996: 124). The literature on how these activities related to the nationalist movement and affected different sections of India is extensive (Everett, 1985; Mazumdar, 1979). Suffragist goals had to be justified in Indian terms and related to the nationalist themes of political rights and colonial status that dominated public discourse in India throughout the 1920s and 1930s (Southard, 1993).

Consequently, as a result of the Between 1920 and 1929, as part of the women's suffrage movement, limited voting rights were granted to select women in various Indian provinces, beginning in Madras (Nair, 1996: 132). However, these privileges were only granted to a small group of Indian women who met certain property requirements. Later, the Government of India Act of 1935 extended suffrage rights to a larger group of women, but only if they met certain criteria, such as literacy, property ownership, or marriage to a property-owning man. One woman was enfranchised for every five men enfranchised under the Act (Visram, 1992). Despite the women's movement's opposition to gender-based seat reserves, the 1935 Act provided 41 reserved seats for women in provincial legislatures, as well as limited reservations in the federal legislature, resulting in the creation of the Women's Legislative Caucus cleavages in the women's movement along religious and gender lines In the 1937 elections, however, women took advantage of the seats allotted for them, and 80 women were elected to the legislature. After the United States and the Soviet Union, India had the third greatest number of female parliamentarians in the world at the time (Visram, 1992). Though the reserve of seats for women in the last days of the colonial rule was short-lived and divided along religious lines, it provided women with a foothold in Indian legislative life and established a precedent that women could draw on decades later (Jenkins, 2003; Nair,

1996: 122). Then, In a larger sense, women's participation in politics includes participation in trade unions, co-operatives, women's collectives, and informal and formal politics, as well as interactions in elections. The word 'political participation' has been defined as an individual's or a group's active involvement with public institutions, such as voting, candidacy, campaigning, holding political office, and/or lobbying (Arora, 1999; Gleason, 2001). In 2014 women participation had been increased in the lok sabha election. Now days, Women voted 65.63 percent in India's legislative general elections, compared to 67.09 percent for men. In terms of female representation in Parliament, India ranks 20th from the bottom. In India, women have served as president and prime minister, as well as chief ministers of various states. "India has seen a 235.72 percent increase in female electors since the 1971 elections," recent Chief Election Commissioner of the India Chandra said that in an international webinar event organized by the Election Commission of India on Enhancing Electoral Participation of Women, Persons with Disabilities, and Senior Citizen Voters: Sharing Best Practices and New Initiatives (ECI). The recent levels of women's participation in official politics in India suggest two positives that bode favorably. First, a spike in female voter turnout that began in the 1990s peaked in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, with the greatest female turnout ever. Second, during the 2014 general elections, women's engagement in high-stakes electoral campaigns increased significantly. However, the ongoing under-representation of women in legislative bodies and in political party ranks and ranks counters the significant improvements made in India's people-driven feminization of electoral politics.

Check your Progress Exercise 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

1. What is the history of women participation in politics?

Dalits and Tribals

Dalits

Dalits, also known as scheduled castes, are India's most discriminated-against minority. Their discrimination stems from their birth into a particular "untouchable" caste or community, as well as customary "polluting" labour. In India, there are around 250 million Dalits. The economic situation of Dalits has barely improved in the last 50 years. When compared to non-Dalits, this is insufficient. Dalits make up one in every four Indians. The effort to assess the stage and size of Dalit political involvement has become vitally relevant to the nature and implementation

of the political system as a whole. Natural traits such as honesty, affection, and a sense of duty are very useful to political parties and political leaders. The large-scale mobilisation of SCs disrupted traditional bonds and encouraged them to develop a viewpoint on larger socio-political issues. Reservation in local governance enabled Dalits to participate actively in local governance, but no attempts have been made by people or groups to determine the level of involvement and contributions made by Dalit members in local governance.

By the Constitution by India. Article 12 (1): All persons are equal before the law and are entitled to the equal protection of the law. Article 12 (2): No citizen shall be discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, language, caste, sex, political opinion, place of birth or any such grounds Article 14 (1)(a): Every citizen is entitled to the freedom of speech and expression including publication

Check your Progress Exercise 2

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

1. What is the role of dalit in the politics ?

2. Which articles given right of the electoral group?

Tribal

This topic has been start from its History, In the nineteenth century, tribal rebellions led to a British strategy of excluding tribal territories from the application of ordinary laws.

Non-Regulation Provinces were established by Regulation XIII of 1833 and were to be controlled by specific laws for civil and criminal justice, land income collection, and so on. It developed a new administrative system in Singhbhum.

In 1873, the British imposed the Inner Line Regulation in the Northeast, which established a boundary beyond which the colony's ordinary laws did not apply and entry of subjects from outside the territory was tightly forbidden. The Governor General was solely responsible for law and

administration under the Government of India Act, 1919, and could only act through local officials. The Governor could make policy directly or through his representatives in the tribal territories, according to the Government of India Act, 1935. Following the adoption of the Constitution (Article 342) in 1950, groupings and communities defined and classed as tribes during British rule were reclassified as Scheduled Tribes. In areas where Schedule Tribes are numerically strong, the Constitution provides for two distinct administrative structures in the shape of the Fifth and Sixth Schedules. According to the Constitution, the 5th Scheduled Territories are "such areas as the President may by order declare to be Scheduled Areas." Ten states currently have Fifth Schedule Areas: Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Telangana. The Requirements of Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 added legal and administrative support to the Fifth Schedule's provisions, allowing for more democratization. The Sixth Schedule areas are some of the places in the former Assam and other tribal-dominated areas that became distinct States that were 'excluded' till the Government of India Act, 1935. Part XXI of the Constitution has additionally made special provisions for these regions (6th schedule). The Removal of Area Constraints (Amendment) Act of 1976 abolished area restrictions on the recognition of Scheduled Tribes, allowing lists to be applied to entire States rather than blocks and district within states. Schedule Tribes are a component of the country's overall administrative system in areas where they constitute a numerical minority. Reservations in educational institutions and government employment have given Scheduled Tribes across the country certain rights. The 5th and 6th Schedules give Parliament and state legislatures the power to construct tribal independent areas. For instance, the Leh Autonomous Hill Development Council, the Kargil Autonomous Hill Development Council, and the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council are all examples of autonomous hill development councils.

Check your Progress Exercise 3

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

1. What are 5th and 6th schedules?

Minorities

First understand who are the minorities in India. Under Section 2 (c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jain, and Zorastrians (Parsis) have been designated as minority communities. Just look at the back, The growth of minority rights and

safeguards in India demonstrates that, while minorities had been in India for a long time, it was under British control that they began to receive fresh attention and configuration. Reading India's minority problem exclusively in terms of the British policy of divide and rule, on the other hand, is a ludicrous distortion of the truth and a misrepresentation of India's historical and anthropological social reality. The intensity and significance of India's minority problem can be gauged by the fact that resolving minorities' claims to their satisfaction was not only the most perplexing problem during the independence struggle, but it was also a major source of political and constitutional gridlock. The agonizing and brutal partition of India in 1947, as well as the communal inferno that accompanied it, add to the gravity of the situation. In independent India, the problem of minorities continues to be a major source of communal strife and social turmoil.

The history of India's Constitution being drafted by a Constituent Assembly reflects the country's deep communal divide and opposing claims. The Constitution is a great example of these claims being accommodated and adjusted. The Constitution's Preamble declares India a "Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic," promising freedom, equality, and justice to all of its residents. It also gives minorities and other vulnerable groups in society specific rights and constitutional protections. In addition to safeguarding all citizens' fundamental rights to religious freedom, Articles 29 and 30 of the Constitution grant a particular package of cultural and educational rights to minorities. These Articles were incorporated as particular rights of specific minorities, according to their pre-natal history. However, revisions made to these provisions at various phases of the Constituent Assembly added a layer of subtle ambiguity to the ambit and extent of these Articles, resulting in an apparent conflict between Articles 29 and 30. The way these Articles are implemented and interpreted has led legal and constitutional experts to declare that "Article 30 (1) must be freed from the tyrannical grasp of Article 29 (2)." In fact, the division placed a pall over most of the minority protection clauses. It rendered ineffective minorities' cultural and educational rights by eliminating numerous significant ideas, such as the right of a child to receive elementary education in his or her mother tongue, as well as any those relating to economic safeguards and political representation of minorities. In India's Constitution, there are no clear provisions for economic security or assuring political participation for minorities. This is in direct contradiction to the Indian National Congress's commitments to minorities during the independence fight. As evidenced by the Gopal Singh Panel Report of 1983 and the Prime Minister's High Level Committee to Study the Social, Economic, and Educational Backwardness of the Muslims of India, 2006, the absence of economic and political safeguards for minorities has contributed to their marginalization and exclusion from public employment and policy-making bodies.

Check your Progress Exercise 1

Note: 1) Use the space given below for your answer.

1. How are minorities play important role in the politics?

Conclusion

To make democracy meaningful, effective participation in respect to the right to full and effective quality and meaningful engagement in national activities is required. Women make up a significant portion of the population. However, their engagement is low at all levels, from voting to top-level positions. Women are underrepresented in elections due to social and economic circumstances. A policy reservation for women is a key step in this direction. Because of caste oppression, Dalits and Tribals do not participate in considerable numbers. The extent to which they participate in politics differs by state. For social equity and justice, the participation of Dalits and Tribals should be increased. The right to preserve one's language, culture, and customs, as well as to defend one's identity from loss, must be recognized, preserved, documented, and permitted to develop as a dynamic living culture. Minority political involvement has long been a defining issue. They should be able to freely and effectively engage in all elements of governance.

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