

HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA

MODULE IV-DEMOCRATIC CULTURE IN INDIA



TOPIC: ELECTIONS AND ELECTORATE
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- India is the largest democracy in the world. Elections are the 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 Pre-2000
- **Lowering of Voting Age:** The 61st Amendment Act to the Constitution reduced the minimum age for voting from 21 to 18 years
- **Deputation to Election Commission:** Article 324 provides for the Election Commission of India. It states that the power of superintendence, direction and control of elections to parliament, state legislatures, the office of the President and the office of the Vice President of India shall be vested in the EC.



- elections in India have been the largest electoral exercise in the world since the 1st general elections of 1952.
- The cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic diversity of the country make this event more complex.
- Some of the salient features of elections in India are:
- The provisions related to elections are contained in the Articles 324 to 329 under the Part XV of the constitution.
- According to Article 324, the Election Commission (EC) of India is the only entity that has been given the authority to supervise, direct and control elections.
- The Election Commission should comprise the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners, who will be appointed by the President.
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- India has been divided into single member territorial constituencies.
- Every constituency will have one electoral roll for both Parliamentary and Assembly elections and no person shall be included or excluded from the electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste and sex.
- Every individual who is a citizen of India and has attained the voting age shall be entitled to be registered as a voter.
- The exception can happen if the person is disqualified on the ground of “non residence, unsoundness of mind, crime or corrupt or illegal practice.”
- The Constitution empowers the Parliament to formulate laws regarding the preparation of electoral rolls, delimitation of constituencies and relevant processes.
- The Constitution also prohibits courts’ interference in electoral matters.
- No court can question the validity of any law related to the delimitation of constituencies or the allotment of seats.



- In India, First Past the Post system of elections is followed in elections to Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies.
- The whole country is divided into constituencies. Voters select a single candidate by marking against the candidate of their choice through electronic voting machines.
- The candidate who secures the highest number of votes is declared elected.