

Election Reforms

The election process in our country is the progenitor of political corruption. Politicians today have mono aim to capture power by hook or by crook with no consideration for moral or ethical values. The erstwhile chief election Commissioner T.N. Sheshan considers the election process to be the root cause of corruption and the corrupt influences in our political system. In his peculiar style, he endeavored to the rest of his capacity to purge the electoral system of the baneful influences of money power, muscle power, politicians' dominance and bureaucratic favoritism.

In the path or reform in election process, the judgment of Supreme Court delivered on 13th March, 2003, has a far reaching positive and resultant impact. With this judgment, it has become mandatory for candidates to declare their criminal antecedents, wealth, educational qualifications etc.

A very crucial milestone achieved by the Indian government in the constitution which disqualifies all elected legislators who violate party whip irrespective of the size of detecting faction. The bill has also limited the number of ministers that could not be more than limited the number of ministers that could not be more than 15% of the strength of legislatures. The provision will check those ambitious self-centered politicians who defects from the original party to gain the ministerial in the government.

The Election Commission exercises full discretionary and disciplinary power during the election period. T was with efforts of election communion that a Conses among the political parties was build upon on the implication of model code of conduct. The election commission has accomplished a vital task of introduction of photo identity cards for every voter in the country. Unless the presiding officer and other staff do not support them fully.

With all the above reforms, it is still to be seen how successful could be our political system to fight the evil of corruption in our democratic setup. To fight the devil of corruption a strong will power, determined efforts and a dedicated approach is required from the political leaders. If ethics and morality is expected from the political leader, the voting to a fair and honest leader is expected from the general public without making any considering to caste, cruet or other affiliation of the candidate.

Essay No. 02

Elections form the foundation of democracy. They are the central institution of democratic representative governments. It is not only legal but also a moral responsibility of a democratic nation to hold free and fair elections. It is true that all modern democracies hold elections. But, at the same time, it is also true that all elections are not democratic. Right-wing dictatorships, communalist, and single-party governments also stage elections to establish their rule. Such parties may represent only one candidate or a list of candidates.

Such circumstances allow no alternative choices to the voter. Though such elections may offer several candidates for each office, it is usually ensured through pressure or supports that only the government approved candidate is chosen. Other elections may offer genuine choices — but only within the serving party. These are not democratic elections. “According to a scholar, Democratic elections are competitive, periodic, comprehensive, definitive elections in which the chief decision-makers in a government are selected by citizens who enjoy broad freedom to criticize government, to publish their criticism and to present alternatives.” Democratic elections are competitive. The opposition, whether it consists of one party or many, as well as all the candidates in an election must enjoy the freedom of speech, assembly, and the movement necessary to speak their mind. A true democracy allows criticisms of the government. Democracy also allows all the parties to bring alternative policies and candidates to the voters. Simply permitting all access to the ballot is not enough in a true democracy. A democracy in which all the parties are not allowed a fair use of media to generate awareness in the public regarding their view, agenda etc. certainly cannot be called a democracy.

Moreover, a country where the campaigning rallies of the candidates or the parties other than the ruling one are harassed or where newspapers indulge in yellow journalism, victimizing a particular candidate or a party, also cannot be called democratic. The party in power may enjoy the advantages of incumbency, but the rules and conduct of the election contest must be fair. Democratic elections are periodic. A democracy like India holds elections after a specific period of time. In India, polling

time is after every five years. Democracies do not elect dictators or presidents-for-life. Even a successfully running government is required to seek the approval of the common man after its term is over.

Moreover, the elected officials are answerable to the people as that are the same people whose votes hold the power to elect them again or choose a new government. Thus, it is quite obvious that the elected government cannot go on fooling the people with empty promises. The promises made to the common man are to be fulfilled, else the power would slip out of the hands of the government.

Democratic elections are comprehensive. The definition of citizen and voter must be large enough to include a large proportion of the adult population. A government chosen by a small, exclusive group is not a democracy. Thus, all the members of the minorities, irrespective of racial, tribal or religious factors, or women, should be allowed full citizenship with the right to vote. Democratic elections are definitive. They determine the leadership of the government. The elected representatives rule subject to the laws and constitution of the country. Democracies flourish in the act of voting itself. To cast a pressure free ballot, voters in a democracy must be permitted to cast their ballots in secret.

Thus, the votes are confidential. At the same time, the protection of the ballot box and tallying of vote, must be conducted as openly as possible, so that citizens are confident that the results are accurate.