

The Electoral Process

Exercise

Q. 1. A. Choose the correct option from the given options and complete the sentences.

The Election Commissioner is appointed by the

A. President

B. Prime Minister

C. Speaker of Lok Sabha

D. Vice President

Answer : (a) President

Note: The Election Commissioner is appointed by the President of India. The Election Commission is an autonomous body established in 1950 under Article 324 of the Constitution.

Q. 1. B. Choose the correct option from the given options and complete the sentences.

..... was appointed as the first Chief Election Commissioner of independent India.

A. Dr. Rajendra Prasad

B. T.N. Sheshan

C. Sukumar Sen

D. Neela Satyanarayan

Answer : Note: Sukumar Sen was appointed as the first

Chief Election Commissioner of Independent India in 1950. He was responsible for conducting the first General Election of India in 1951.

Q. 1. C. Choose the correct option from the given options and complete the sentences.

Constituencies are created by committee of the Election Commission.

A. Selection

B. Delimitation

C. Voting

D. Timetable

Answer : Note: Constituencies are created by the Delimitation committee of the Election Commission and it doesn't succumb to any pressure while restructuring the constituencies.

Q. 2. A. State whether the following statements are true or false. Give reasons for your answer.

The Elections Commission lays down the code of conduct during elections.

Answer : True.

Reason: The Code of conduct is measure adopted by the Election Commission to ensure free and fair elections in India. It explains the rules that are to be followed by the Government, political parties and voters, before elections and during elections. Violation of the Code of Conduct can lead to termination of candidature or even imprisonment.

Q. 2. B. State whether the following statements are true or false. Give reasons for your answer.

Under special circumstances the Election Commission holds re-elections in a particular constituency for a second time.

Answer : True.

Note: Under special circumstances the

Election Commission holds re-elections in a particular constituency for a second time. It is done in case of any dispute arising regarding the election for e.g. complaints criminal malpractices like booth capturing and in special circumstances of high NOTA votes.

Q. 2. C. State whether the following statements are true or false. Give reasons for your answer.

The state government decides as to when and in how many stages the elections would be held in a particular State.

Answer : False.

Note: The Election Commission decides as to when and in how many stages the elections would be held in a particular State. It is the sole authority on conducting elections in Indian.

Q. 3. A. Write short notes.

Reorganising the constituencies

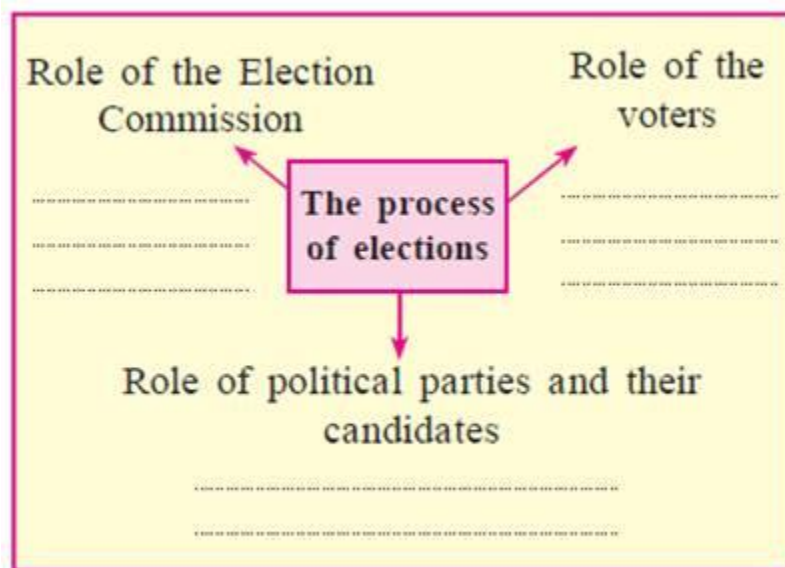
Answer : Reorganisation of the constituencies is the responsibility of the Delimitation committee of the Election Commission. The constituencies are reorganized from time to time on the basis of population density of an area, as tabulated in the decennial census reports. Uttar Pradesh is the most densely populated state of India, and hence has the largest no. of seats to Lok Sabha in the general election, each seat representing a constituency. At present there are 543 constituencies which are due for a reorganisation in 2021 on the basis of the next Census report.

Q. 3. B. Write short notes.

Journey from the ballot box to EVM machine

Answer : Since the first General Election in 1951-52, the election process has undergone various changes to improve voter experience. One such change includes introduction of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) in 1990s. It was a step towards preservation of environment since the machine eliminated the use of paper, it was now easier to vote for disabled people and promised an early declaration of results. The most notable feature of the EVM, however, was the NOTA (None of the above) option which enabled the voters to not vote for any candidate if they were not satisfied with him/her.

Q. 4. Complete the following picture.



Answer : Role of Election Commission: Conduct free and fair elections in the country.

Role of the voters: Cast their votes and participate in the election process

Role of political parties & their candidates: Follow the Code of Conduct.

Q. 5. A. Answer in brief.

Explain the functions of the Election Commission.

Answer : The functions of the Election Commission are as follows:

1. Prepare voters list

It is responsible to preparing a list of eligible voters and updating existing voter's list. It has the sole authority to issue voter identity cards.

2. Formulate the timetable and programme of elections.

It is responsible for conducting free and fair elections and decides when to conduct elections and how to conduct elections in every state.

3. Scrutinize candidate applications.

Every candidate, affiliated to a party or standing independent, has to fill an application with the election commission giving information about oneself. The commission then scrutinizes all the applications and allows the eligible candidates to contest.

4. Recognize political parties.

All political parties are required to be recognized by the Election commission. The commission has the right to derecognize a party as well. It is also responsible for allotting election symbols to the political parties.

5. Resolve disputes relating to elections.

The commission is responsible for resolution of any dispute arising regarding elections. It can accordingly declare any candidate disqualified and call for re-election in a constituency.

Q. 5. B. Answer in brief.

Write some additional information about post of the Election Commissioner.

Answer : The Election Commissioner is an important office in the Government of India.

1. He is appointed by the President and is responsible for the smooth conduct of the election process. The Election Commissioner are mostly retired IAS officers appointed on an extended term.

2. At first there was just one Election Commissioner, later in 1989 the Commission was enlarged with a Chief Election Commissioner and two Election commissioners.

3. Sukumar Sen was the first Chief Election Commissioner of India and Om Prakash Rawat is the current Chief Election Commissioner.

4. The term of the Election Commissioner is for 6 years, draws salary at par with those of the Judges the Supreme Court of India.

5. The Commissioner can only be removed from office with two-thirds majority in Loksabha and Rajsabha on the grounds of misconduct or incapacity.

Q. 5. C. Answer in brief.

Explain the meaning of Code of Conduct.

Answer : Some important points on the Code of Conduct are:

1. Code of Conduct is a measure adopted by the Election Commission of India to ensure free and fair elections. It is use to control incidences of malpractices during the elections.

2. It is a set of guidelines for the Government, political parties and candidates to be followed before and during the elections.

3. It concerns rules and regulations with respect to speeches, election manifestos, processions and general conduct.

4. Its objective is to check misuse of power during the elections and curb malpractices e.g. hate speeches, liquor distribution, use of muscle force etc. Violation of the code of conduct can lead to cancellation of candidature.

5. Due to the strict observance of the code in the last few elections, the people have become more confident and aware of their rights and duties as voters during the election process.

Project

Q. 1. Organize a mock poll in the school to understand the process of voting.

Answer : Our school witness election every academic year. This year, as the election process was a part of the study, we decided to strictly observe the election processes. The details of the observation are given below:

1. Formation of school squads (which can be related to Formation of Constituencies):

- There were 4 squads namely blue, red, green and pink. It resembled the constituencies in national and state level elections.

2. Filling of Nominations:

- The nomination of candidates is an important part of the election process.
- The regulations require that the candidate or the person who suggests his name files the nomination papers with the principal (Returning Officer in general election)
- Criteria were set for the qualification of those who become candidates.

3. Scrutiny of Nominations:

- The principal (Returning Officer) scrutinizes the nomination papers very carefully.
- If the eligibility of the student candidate is dissatisfied, he/she is officially stopped from contesting in the election.
- The candidates could withdraw their nomination papers till the prescribed period.
- The security deposit from candidates done in the general elections was not possible in the case of a school election. This step was omitted here.

4. Election Campaign:

Techniques of the election campaign and the tools employed by the squads and the independent candidates are many:

- *Election Manifesto*
- *Electioneering (Activities and Techniques to Persuade Voters)*
- Canvassing
- Meet the candidate event
- Class-to-class campaigning

In general elections, the candidates are assigned the tasks like:

- to address public meetings
- street corner meetings
- door-to-door canvassing
- new slogans are coined to attract the masses

- Advertisements are released to the press (the popular daily and weekly newspapers)
- Radio and the Television are used to broadcast the speeches and panel-discussions of leaders of various parties
- electronic media plays the most effective role in creating people's awareness of programmes of the political parties
- Attend many of interviews to newspapers and television agencies.
- Wide coverage is being given to all these events at regular intervals

5. Polling Personnel and the Polling:

- The election campaign was stopped 48 hours before the time when poll concludes on the polling day.
- The vice-principal (Presiding Officer) manages the whole of the polling process and guarantee that all persons working under him adhere to the electoral norms and practices.
- The voter records his vote by placing the seal-mark against the name of the candidate he wants to vote. (in general election it is by pressing the button of the voting machine).

6. Counting of Votes and Declaration of Results:

- After the polling has ended the ballot boxes or the voting machines are sealed and carried under custody to the counting stations (concerned classrooms).
- Then the process of counting the votes began.
- The representatives of all the squads were present at the counting point.
- The candidate who obtains the highest number of votes is declared elected.

7. Submission of Account Relating to Election Expenses:

- The school budget law fixes the maximum limit of the expenses to be incurred by various proceedings on their election.
- In general election in India, the limit of election expenses for an Assembly election in most States was raised from Rs. 1.50 lakh to Rs. 6 lakh.
- It was enhanced from Rs. 4.50 lakh to Rs. 15 lakh for a Parliamentary contest.

- The candidates are required to file an account of the election expenses.
- It is a dishonest practice for a candidate to expend more money than the prescribed amount on his election.
- These steps were not present or required in the school election.

8. Election Disputes:

- The concerned teachers and the administrative head formed the election dispute cell in school.
- The Indian Constitution originally provided for the appointment of Election Tribunals for deciding disputes happening in connection with elections.
- The Nineteenth Amendment Act (1966) eliminated this provision and insisted that the election disputes would be decided by the High Courts.

Thus the scrutiny and recording of school election gave us a better understanding of the National election in India.

Intext Questions

Q. 1. When candidates have only the condition of age as eligibility, why should they give other information to election commission?

Answer : The basic legal qualifications to stand as a candidate are:

1. Citizenship (Any Indian citizen who is registered as a voter and over 25 years of age is allowed to contest elections to the Lok Sabha or State Legislative Assemblies)
2. Above 25 years of age (For the Rajya Sabha the age limit is 30 years. Candidates for Vidhan Sabha should be residents of the same state from which they wish to contest)
3. Full possession of civil and political rights.

Other information are given to election commission because other criteria of the candidate are also considered important. They are:

- criteria of competence,
- moral aptitude
- commitment to societal norms,

- Discriminatory approach.

If opposition politicians are subject to quasi-legal persecution, court cases could be used to stop them from contesting an election. In other cases, the requirements may not have the desired effect.

Q. 2. Why are the candidates required to give the information of their property to Election Commission?

Answer : All information of the candidate is collected by the election commission. The details of the property are given because:

2. To understand the recent economic status of the candidate
3. To observe the financial expenditure of the candidate on election processes and campaigns
4. To check the growth of money of the candidate after the acquirement of position in the election.
5. It helps voters to get an image about the representative from their part.

Q. 3. What criteria are laid down by the Election Commission for giving recognition to political parties?

Answer : According to Election Commission recognition to political parties is given as:

State party

1. **Any political party in the state which is able to secure 8% of the total Valid votes polled** will be recognized as the state party, no matter the number of seats it secures.
2. The party which wins **6% of total Votes** polled (not only Valid votes) it would qualify for that.
3. The party should win one Assembly seat per 25 seats of that state.

National party

1. The party secures at least six percent (6%) of the valid votes polled in any four or more states, at a general election to the House of the People or, to the State Legislative Assembly

2. The party which wins at least four seats in the House of the People from any State or States or the party should win at least two percent (2%) seats in the House of the People.

Q. 4. Some constituencies are kept reserved for Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribes.

Answer : In India, a certain number of political positions are held for specific groups of the population, including Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, Anglo-Indians and Women. They are called **reserved constituencies** in both Parliamentary and State Assembly elections. The reservations are provided in

- Parliament of India,
- State Assemblies,
- Municipalities
- Village Panchayaths

The election of SC and ST candidates is by a Joint or mixed voters, which includes all castes, even though the SC and ST may be in a minority in the constituency. This system was introduced by the Constitution of India in 1950 (Article 330 of the Constitution of India) . allotment of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Lok Sabha are prepared on the basis of percentage of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the State concerned to that of the total population.

Some constituencies are kept reserved for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled tribes because:

1. Reservation was supposed to be in place for the first 10 years,(1950-1960) to ensure participation in politics by these groups
2. It ensured the participation of weak and needy scheduled castes/tribes
3. It also assured special protection for the minority.
4. The marginalized voice of the minority could reach the respective legislative authorities through this.

At present, out of 543 constituencies represented in the Lok Sabha, the lower house of India's parliament, 85 (15.47%) are reserved for SC and 48 (8.66%) are reserved for ST.

Q. 5. Every political party has an election symbol.

Answer : The election symbol that every political party has is called an electoral symbol. It is a standardized symbol allocated to a political party.

Uses of symbols

1. Symbols are used by parties in their campaigning,
2. They are printed on ballot papers where a voter must make a mark to vote for the associated party.
3. Their purpose is to help voting by illiterate people, who cannot read parties' names on ballot papers
4. Political Parties are identified by their symbols.

Selection of electoral symbols

1. The Commission has a list of symbols choose over the years.
2. The apex election office in New Delhi maintains at least 100 free symbols that have not been allotted to any party, at any point of time.
3. The symbols chosen are such that they can be effortlessly understood, remembered and recognized by the average voter.

Q. 6. At the time of voting and counting of votes, the official representatives of political parties remain present.

Answer : After the election, the ballot boxes are taken to the counting center and ready to be counted. The counting officer will confirm the seals on the ballot box and open it. The official representatives of political parties remain present at the venue for many reasons:

1. The ballot box is emptied on a table in the presence of counting officers, representatives of political parties and candidates, observers, etc to ensure credibility.
2. Sealed envelopes attached to the ballot boxes are opened in the presence of representatives only to avoid future confusions.
3. The ballots on the table are counted to establish quantity. The number of ballots in the ballot box should match the number of voters who voted. These are ensured by all the representatives and authority.
4. Once all ballots are sorted and tallied by candidate and party to verify that all totals are correct before making the official entries and completing the statement of the vote for the ballot box only after the surety of the representatives.

5. Everybody (observers and security personnel may be excluded) involved in the counting process should sign the forms to confirm that the accounting of ballots was satisfactory. This avoids later dilemmas.

6. In case of inconsistency, the counting process should be repeated until the missing ballots are found. Therefore the political party representatives stay vigilant.

7. The chances of significant fraud can be disabled by the scrutiny of the representatives of political parties.

Q. 7. Recognised parties have equal opportunity to present their side before media such as television and radio.

Answer : Media play an important role in the campaign and election processes.

Recognized parties have equal opportunity to present their side before media such as television and radio because:

1. All citizens get their news and information about the contesting parties.
2. Media outline how we interpret and observe political information, such as election coverage and other political events.
3. The media acts as an efficient check on government power and influence over its citizens
4. It helps in Creating and shaping of public opinion and strengthening of society.

METHODS OF MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Campaigns can contain different media (depending on local law) and their scopes.

Campaign advertising is the use of an advertising campaign through the media to influence a political debate, and ultimately, voters.

Common campaigning techniques include the following:

1. Campaign advertising (e.g. using posters, radio and TV announcements)
2. Attracting media attention (e.g. with press conferences)
3. Demonstrations, rallies, marches and other forms of mass meetings.
4. Social media campaign (through Facebook, WhatsApp etc)

Q. 8. Which two conditions among following is the violation of code of conduct?

The candidate distributes items of household use.

Answer : This is a violation of code of conduct of candidates. The election commission has set 11 guidelines for the candidates. It clearly states that the Candidates should refrain from distributing materials to voters.

Q. 9. Which two conditions among following is the violation of code of conduct?

Promise made to resolve the water problem if elected.

Answer : this is not a violation of conduct. The politicians identify that the key to winning elections is to make promises. Campaigners give promises related to issues including taxes, war, government corruption, and pollution. They say, if elected, they will bring about vast improvements in education, employment, infrastructure, and the economy. There is no legal hold back in giving promises. The matter is important after the election, when they are about to keep the promises.

Q. 10. Which two conditions among following is the violation of code of conduct?

To go from door to door to meet voters and request them to vote.

Answer : This is not a violation of conduct. The process is called Canvassing. It is defined as 'the systematic initiation of direct contact with individuals, commonly used during political campaigns'.

The types of canvassing are:

1. Political campaigning
2. Grassroots fundraising
3. Community awareness
4. Membership drives

Process of canvassing

1. Knock on doors to engage in personalized contact with an individual.
2. Election assisting groups of political parties identify supporters, persuade the undecided, add voters to the voter's list through voter registration.

Q. 11. Which two conditions among following is the violation of code of conduct?

To appeal on the basis of caste and religion to get support.

Answer : This is the violation of the code of conduct of the candidates. The election commission states that "There shall be no *appeal* to caste or communal feelings for securing votes".

Q. 12. Which of these rules would you include in the code of conduct for voters?

Answer : 1. Voters should be aware of political violence, attitude and threats from other parties,

2. Voters should know about the Electoral Commission, members of the public and the media

3. They should know about planned marches or rallies and other political canvassing.

4. Converse with other political parties about planned political events.

5. Identify the authority of the Electoral Commission

6. Seek the help of police and be in their investigation of election crime and violence, if it happens.

7. Voters should be aware about the candidates' code of conduct.

8. Accept the results of the election or challenge the result in court through legal measures.

9. Ensure the power of democracy and fundamental rights by casting the vote.

Q. 13. How political parties suffer due to family monopoly in the party?

Answer : The family monopoly in Indian politics is addressed in two ways by political observers. They are : "soon politics will be the monopoly of 400 families", and "the doors of democracy closing on the poor".

Effects of family monopoly in the political party:

1. Efficient leaders are denied their opportunity in representing common people.

2. The efficient young political workers are denied the superior position in society.

3. The decision making becomes centralized.

4. The freedom of expression and criticism lacks space in the party.

Effects of family-monopoly in common people

1. The citizens have the power to vote. But they have the chance to vote from the prearranged options. They lack the chance to elect the eligible leader, when the awful leader comes as the candidate only because of legacy.

2. The people face problems similar to that in the time of primitive administration. When family succession decides the leadership, it lacks the essence of democracy.

India is a country where the majority are denied an upright education. People are more liable to unite under a political figure than under a set of policies. Recognizable family names win easy votes. Merit is granted at birth to those of high caste or family legacy. This system is a threat to democracy.

Q. 14. What do you understand by the system of 'one vote one value'?

Answer : The regulation comes up in the context of Equal Protection.

1. By definition, 'The One-Person One-Vote one value Rule refers to the rule that one person's voting power ought to be roughly equivalent to another person's within the same state'.

2. Another definition explains it as 'a system of voting in which every person in a group or country has the right to cast their vote, and in which each individual's vote is counted and has equal value'.

3. This also implies that everyone is equal and value of that person or that person's vote is very important.