

Chapter 3 - Electoral Politics

1. Which of the following statements about the reasons for conducting elections are false?
- Elections enable people to judge the performance of the government.
 - People select the representative of their choice in an election.
 - Elections enable people to evaluate the performance of the judiciary.
 - People can indicate which policies they prefer.

Answer.

- c. Elections enable people to evaluate the performance of the judiciary.

2. Which of these is not a good reason to say that Indian elections are democratic?
- India has the largest number of voters in the world.
 - India's Election Commission is very powerful.
 - In India, everyone above the age of 18 has a right to vote.
 - In India, the losing parties accept the electoral verdict.

Answer.

- a. India has the largest number of voters in the world.

3. Match the following :

It is necessary to keep the voters list up to date because	There is a fair representation of all sections of our society
Some constituencies are reserved for SCs and STs so that	Everyone has equal opportunity to elect their representative
Everyone has one and only one vote so that	All candidates must have a fair chance of competing in elections
Party in power is not allowed to use government vehicles because	Some people may have moved away from the area where they voted last

Answer.

It is necessary to keep the voters list up to date because	Some people may have moved away from the area where they voted last
Some constituencies are reserved for SCs and STs so that	All candidates must have a fair chance of competing in elections
Everyone has one and only one vote so that	Everyone has equal opportunity to elect their representative
Party in power is not allowed to use government vehicles because	All candidates must have a fair chance of competing in elections

4. List all the different election related activities mentioned in the chapter and arrange them in a time sequence, beginning with the first activity and ending with the last. Some of these activities are given below:

releasing election manifestos
counting of votes
making of voters' list
election campaign
declaration of election results
casting of votes
ordering of re-poll
announcing election schedule
filing nomination

Answer.

1. Making of Voters' List
2. Announcing Election Schedule
3. Releasing Election Manifesto
4. Election Campaign
5. Filing Nomination
6. Casting of Votes
7. Ordering of Re-poll
8. Counting of Votes
9. Declaration of Election Results

5. Surekha is an officer in-charge of ensuring free and fair elections in an assembly constituency in a state. Describe what should she focus on for each of the following stages of election:

- a. Election campaign
- b. Polling day
- c. Counting day

Answer.

- a. Election Campaign
 - i. Check law and order
 - ii. Keep a check on muscle and money power
 - iii. Keep a check on expenditure limit of a candidate
 - iv. To ensure no promotion on the grounds of religion, caste or sex.
- b. Polling Day
 - i. Check the voters' list
 - ii. Check on voters' id
 - iii. Tab on booth capturing
 - iv. Ensure free and fair elections
- c. Counting Day
 - i. Keep a fair counting practice
 - ii. Tab on rigging of votes

6. The table below gives the proportion of different communities among the candidates who won elections to the US Congress. Compare these to the proportion of these communities in the

population of the US. Based on this, would you suggest a system of reservations in the US Congress? If yes, why and for which communities? If no, why not?

Communities	Proportion of the Community (in percent) in the	
	House of representatives	Population of US
Blacks	8	13
Hispanics	5	13
Whites	86	70

Answer.

Yes, the system of reservation should be present in the US Congress for Hispanics and Blacks. Their representation in the US Congress is comparatively lower than Whites which are the majority in the US.

7. Can we draw the following conclusions from the information given in this chapter? Give two facts to support your position for each of these.

- Election Commission of India does not have enough powers to conduct free and fair elections in the country.**
- There is a high level of popular participation in the elections in our country.**
- It is very easy for the party in power to win an election.**
- Many reforms are needed to make our elections completely free and fair.**

Answer.

Answer.

- No. The given conclusion for the Election Commission cannot be drawn because:
 - Election Commission released the code of conduct for elections and has power to punish whoever violates them.
 - During elections, the election-incharge work under Election Commission of India and not government.
- Yes, the given conclusion can be drawn because:
 - Voters-turnout has soared in the past few years
 - There has been an increase in people's participation in election-related activities
- No, it is not a right conclusion
 - The ruling party in one election loses the power in the next
 - Despite a lot of expenditure in the election campaign, candidates lose
- Yes, the conclusion is fair because:
 - Reforms will make it easier for small parties to face no major challenge in fighting an election
 - To stop candidates' facing criminal charges from running an election

8. Chinappa was convicted for torturing his wife for dowry. Satbir was held guilty of practicing untouchability. The court did not allow either of them to contest elections. Does this decision go against the principles of democratic elections?

Answer.

No. The decision to not allow both Chinappa and Satbir for their crime they committed to not contest elections is totally fair. According to the elections' rule, no criminal can participate in elections. Hence, it is a fair verdict.

9. Here are some reports of electoral malpractices from different parts of the world. Is there anything that these countries can learn from India to improve their elections? What would you suggest in each case?

- a. During an election in Nigeria, the officer in charge of counting votes deliberately increased the votes of one candidate and declared him elected. The court later found out that more than five lakh votes cast for one candidate were counted in favour of another.
- b. Just before elections in Fiji, a pamphlet was distributed warning voters that a vote for former Prime Minister, Mahendra Chaudhry will lead to bloodshed. This was a threat to voters of Indian origin.
- c. In the US, each state has its own method of voting, its own procedure of counting and its own authority for conducting elections. Authorities in the state of Florida took many controversial decisions that favoured Mr. Bush in the presidential elections in 2000. But no one could change those decisions.

Answer.

- a. On the vote-counting day, the representatives of each party has contested in the election should be present. Nigeria should follow this rule of the election that is practised in India.
- b. In Fiji, the election commission should set up an enquiry-committee and the party or the candidate who was involved in this negative propaganda should be debarred from the election.
- c. The US should have one Election Commission who can make rules for states for the election.

10. Here are some reports of malpractices in Indian elections. Identify what the problem in each case is. What should be done to correct the situation?

- a. Following the announcement of elections, the minister promised to provide financial aid to reopen the closed sugar mill.
- b. Opposition parties alleged that their statements and campaign was not given due attention in Doordarshan and All India Radio.
- c. An inquiry by the Election Commission showed that electoral rolls of a state contain name of 20 lakh fake voters.
- d. The hoodlums of a political party were moving with guns, physically preventing supporters of other political parties to meet the voters and attacking meetings of other parties.

Answer.

- a. As per the code of conduct that a candidate has to obey during the election period is to not announce any promises. Hence, in this case the Election Commission should take this up with the minister.
- b. Election Commission should ensure free and fair representation to all parties in the government-owned media.
- c. Election Commission should announce re-elections as the presence of fake votes show the vote-rigging.
- d. Election Commission should ban the party as use of muscle power and money power is totally illegal.

11. Ramesh was not in class when this chapter was being taught. He came the next day and repeated what he had heard from his father. Can you tell Ramesh what is wrong with these statements?

- a. Women always vote the way men tell them to. So what is the point of giving them the right to vote?

- b. Party politics creates tension in society. Elections should be decided by consensus not by competition.**
- c. Only graduates should be allowed to stand as candidates for elections.**

Answer.

- a. In elections, secret-ballot system is used where any individual can vote for the party he/she likes. Hence, women can also use their discretion and cast a vote as per their wish.
- b. Competition is important for any profession as it motivates one to be better. Competition in elections ensure candidates working hard for the society, hence, it should be encouraged.
- c. Educational qualification is not the only factor for a candidate to understand social needs of the people. Hence, it should be fair if someone is not a graduate to run for an election.

