

First General Elections of India: This Day in History – Oct 25

The first General Elections of India started on 25th October 1951 and continued till 21st February 1952. It was a landslide victory for the Indian National Congress and Jawaharlal Nehru became India's first democratically elected Prime Minister. This article shares some important events of the first General Elections and brief highlights of some of the important results.

Aspirants would find this article very helpful while preparing for the IAS Exam.



Women wait to cast their votes in Narela (Delhi) in the first elections[/caption]

First General Election of India

1. The first Lok Sabha was elected in the first general elections of independent India.
2. Since August 1947, the country was run by an interim legislature called the Indian Constituent Assembly.
3. Elections were held on the basis of universal adult suffrage and anyone over the age of 21 years could cast his/her franchise.
4. The 53 political parties contested for 489 seats. There were about 1874 candidates from various parties. There were 401 constituencies and some had multiple seats. In the 1960s, the multi-seat constituencies were done away with.
5. Out of a total population of 36 crore, about 17.32 crore were eligible to vote. There was a turnout of 45% in the first general elections.
6. The INC won the elections in a big way. It received four times as many votes as the second-largest party. INC won 364 seats and the Communist Party of India (CPI) was second with 16 seats. Almost 45% of the votes went in INC's favour.
7. Before the elections, a mock election was held in September 1951 since most people of the country were unfamiliar with the election process.
8. The first Election Commissioner of India was Sukumar Sen.

9. 2 members of the Anglo-Indian community were nominated to the Lok Sabha.
10. Prominent winners were Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Sucheta Kripalani, Gulzari Lal Nanda, Kakasaheb Kalelkar, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, etc.
11. B R Ambedkar lost to INC candidate Narayan Sadoba Kajrolkar in the Bombay (North-Central) seat. Ambedkar stood as a Scheduled Castes Federation (party) candidate. Acharya Kripalani also lost from Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh.
12. Although elections started in October 1951, most of the country voted in January-February of 1952.

Highlights of the Results of the First General Elections

The below table gives details on major parties and the number of votes and seats won by them respectively.

Major Parties	No. of votes	Seats won
Indian National Congress (INC)	47,665,875	364
Communist Party of India (CPI)	3,484,401	16
Bharatiya Jana Sangh	3,246,288	3
Socialist Party	11,266,779	12
Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party	6,156,558	9
Independents	16,817,910	37

1. The Bharatiya Jana Sangh was led by Shyama Prasad Mukherjee. The Socialist Party was led by Ram Manohar Lohia and Jayaprakash Narayan. The Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party was led by Acharya Kripalani.
2. The first Lok Sabha had a record 677 sittings and it lasted its full term from April 1952 to April 1957.
3. The Speaker of the first Lok Sabha was G V Mavalankar.
4. The first person to enter Parliament in independent India was Ravi Narayana Reddy from Telangana who stood for the People's Democratic Front. Reddy received more votes than Nehru in the first general elections. Nehru's seat was Phulpur in Uttar Pradesh which he held till his death in 1964.
5. The first vote of this election was cast at Chini in Himachal Pradesh.

Also on this day

1296: Saint Gyaneshwar attained Samadhi.

1800: Birth of Thomas Babington Macaulay, British historian and politician who was infamous in India for his 'Minute on Education'.

1881: Birth of celebrated artist Pablo Picasso.

1964: The first indigenous tank of India 'Vijyant' was manufactured.

1971: National Science and Technology Committee was established.

1980: Death of Urdu poet Sahir Ludhianvi.

1990: Death of Williamson Ampang Sangma, the founder and first Chief Minister of Meghalaya.