

CHAPTER- 4

ELECTIONS

PART I (Short Answer Questions)

1. What do you mean by elections?

Answer: Elections are the procedures whereby persons are chosen, by voting, to represent the voters for running the government.

Or

Elections are the process by which people in a democracy (a system of governance in which the government is of the people, for the people and by the people) choose their representatives who form the government.

Or

An election is a decision-making process by which an electorate (voter) chooses an individual to hold formal office.

2. Which body is responsible for holding free and fair elections in the country?

Answer: Election Commission is responsible for holding free and fair elections in the country.

3. Which Articles in the Indian Constitution deals with the composition, powers and functions of the Election Commission?

Answer: Article 324 (1), (2) and (3) in the Indian Constitution deals with the composition, powers and functions of the Election Commission.

4. What is the composition of Election Commission?

Answer: Article 324, sections 1 to 6 deal with the composition of the Election Commission. The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) stands at the top in the hierarchy of the Election Commission. The Election Commission consists of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners. In 1989, the Election Commission was made a multi-member body. Two more commissioners were appointed. The two together equal the Chief Election Commissioner in power. The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other commissioners are appointed by the president of India. At the state level, the Chief Electoral Officer and other Election Commissioners are there who are appointed by the President of India under the supervision of the Chief Election Commissioner.

5. Name the highest official in the Election Commission?

Answer: Sunil Arora who is the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India.

6. Mention any three functions of the Election Commission.

Answer: following are the three functions of the Election Commission:

- I. **Ensuring Free and Fair Elections:** It is responsible for conducting free and fair elections in the country. It prescribes a code of conduct for the political parties and their candidates. It creates safe conditions in the polling booths so voters can exercise their rights freely.
- II. **Preparation of Electoral Rolls:** The commission has to identify the persons eligible as voters in each constituency before every election and then prepare an up-to-date list of all the eligible

persons. This list is called the **voters' list**. It also issues the photo-identity cards to the voters, which they have to carry to the polling booth during the time of elections.

- III. **Recognition to the Political Parties**: the Commission grants recognition to the political parties at the national as well as regional levels.

7. Who allots the symbols to the political parties?

Answer: The Election Commission allots the symbols to the political parties.

8. What are the two types of election?

Answer: Direct Elections and Indirect Elections are the two types of Elections.

9. What is a General Election? When was the first general election held in the country?

Answer: The elections held to elect the members of the Lok Sabha after the end of normal term of five years are called the General Election. In 1952, the first general election was held in the country.

10. What do you mean by Mid-term elections?

Answer: Mid-Term Election is a type of election held when a state Legislative Assembly or the Lok Sabha is dissolved (end something officially) before the completion of its full/normal term of five years. This election is called Mid-Term-Election.

11. What is a by-election?

Answer: By-election takes place when an elected representative resigns, dies or becomes disqualified under Parliamentary law. Such an election is held to fill the vacant seat either in Lok Sabha or in the Vidhan Sabha. This type of election is known as By-Election.

12. Who appoints the chief Election Officer of the State?

Answer: The President of India appoints the chief Election Officer of the State in consultation with the Election Commission headed by the Chief Election Commissioner of India.

PART II (Structured Questions)

1. Discuss the composition of the Election Commission of India.

Answer: Article 324, sections 1 to 6 deal with the composition of the Election Commission. The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) stands at the top in the hierarchy of the Election Commission. The Election Commission consists of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners. In 1989, the Election Commission was made a multi-member body. Two more commissioners were appointed. The two together equal the Chief Election Commissioner in power. The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other commissioners are appointed by the president of India. At the state level, the Chief Electoral Officer and other Election Commissioners are there who are appointed by the President of India under the supervision of the Chief Election Commissioner.

2. With regard to the Election Commission, answer the following question:

a) Discuss the role of the election Commission in providing free and fair elections.

Answer: Providing Free and Fair Elections: Election Commission is responsible for conducting free and fair elections in the country. It prescribes a code of conduct for the political parties and their candidates and all

others concerned. It creates safe conditions in the polling booths so voters can exercise their rights freely. In addition, the Election Commission takes the following steps to ensure free and fair elections:

- I. The Commission may send Central observers to the constituencies where there is danger of violence or booth capturing. This is done to ensure that citizens can vote freely without fear.
- II. The Commission countermands (cancel an order that has been given) polling where it has reasonable doubt that some malpractices have occurred.
- III. In terms of the recent amendments to **Representative of Peoples Act** the Commission prescribes severe punishment for booth capturing.

4. Differentiate between direct elections and indirect elections

Answer: Before we differentiate between the two, the direct and indirect elections, we need to know what types of election they are.

Direct Election: This refers to the method of choosing political representatives in which the voters directly cast their votes for the person or the party concerned whom they wish to see elected. In this type of election the eligible voters elect their representatives to the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies. The members of the State Legislative Assembly are known as MLAs, they are elected directly by the voters of the state. The members of the Lok Sabha are known as Members of the Lok Sabha. They are elected directly by the voters. Therefore, this is called the direct election. The following are elected directly; Prime Minister, Chief Minister, etc.

Indirect Election: Indirect election refers to the method of election in which the voters cast their votes indirectly. The voters elect their representatives who then play the role of direct voters. The members of the Rajya Sabha, the Vidhan Parishad, Zila Parishad, the President and the Vice-President of India are elected indirectly.

The difference between direct and indirect elections:

Direct Election	Indirect Election
1. Eligible voters vote directly for their representatives.	1. Eligible voters vote indirectly for their representatives through their elected representatives.
2. Law regulates the qualifications, age, etc. of voters and establishes eligibility requirements for State Officials.	2. There are no further qualifications for the members.
3. Every adult who has reached the age of 18 holds the right to vote.	3. Every elected representative holds the right to vote.
4. There is a very large body of voters called electorate.	4. There is a very small body of voters.
5. Members of Lok Sabha, Members of State Legislative Assemblies (Vidhan Sabha), Municipal Corporation, municipalities and gram panchayats, are elected directly.	5. The members of State Legislative Councils, the members of the Rajya Sabha, the Vidhan Parishad, Zila Parishad, the President and the Vice-President of India are elected indirectly.

5. The President of India is elected by an electoral college.

a. Discuss the composition of the Electoral College.

Answer: The President of India is elected by an electoral college is made up of the following:

- I. The Electoral College consists of the elected members of both the Houses of Parliament namely Rajya Sabha MPs and Lok Sabha MPs.
- II. The elected members of each State Legislative Assemblies of states.

III. The college also consists of the union territories of Delhi and Pondicherry throughout the country.

b. What is the name given to this kind of elections?

Answer: The President of India is elected by the Electoral College.

6. Define the three types of elections. When was the last general election held in the country?

Answer: The following are the three types of elections:

- i. **General Election:** The elections held to elect the members of the Lok Sabha after the end of normal term of five years are called the General Election. In 1952, the first general election was held in the country. Till now 17th general election has been taken place.
- ii. **By-Election:** This type of election takes place when an elected representative resigns, dies or becomes disqualified under Parliamentary law. Such an election is held for a particular seat or seats to fill the vacant seat for the remaining period of an elected body either in Lok Sabha or in the Vidhan Sabha. The elected person remains the member for the unexpired term of the House. This type of election is known as By-Election.
- iii. **Mid-Term Election:** This is a type of election held when a State Legislative Assembly or the Lok Sabha is dissolved (end something officially) before the completion of its full/normal term of five years. This situation arises when the government falls due to lack of confidence in the council of ministers of the Lok Sabha or the Legislative Assembly. This is known as No-confidence motion, a motion brought against the council of Ministers. This election is held in the middle of a period of office. This election is called Mid-Term-Election.

The last general election was held in the country in year 2019. It was the 17th General Election to the Lok Sabha. Shri Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister for the second time continuously. He belonged to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a national political party. Out of 543 seats the BJP led political party in the 17th general election managed to secure more than 350 seats.

Assignment:-

Question no. 3. According to Article 324, the superintendence, direction and the control of elections are vested in the election Commission. In this context, answer the following question:

a) The Election Commission only has a supervisory role and not a legislative one with regard to the conduct of free and fair elections. Examine it.

THE END