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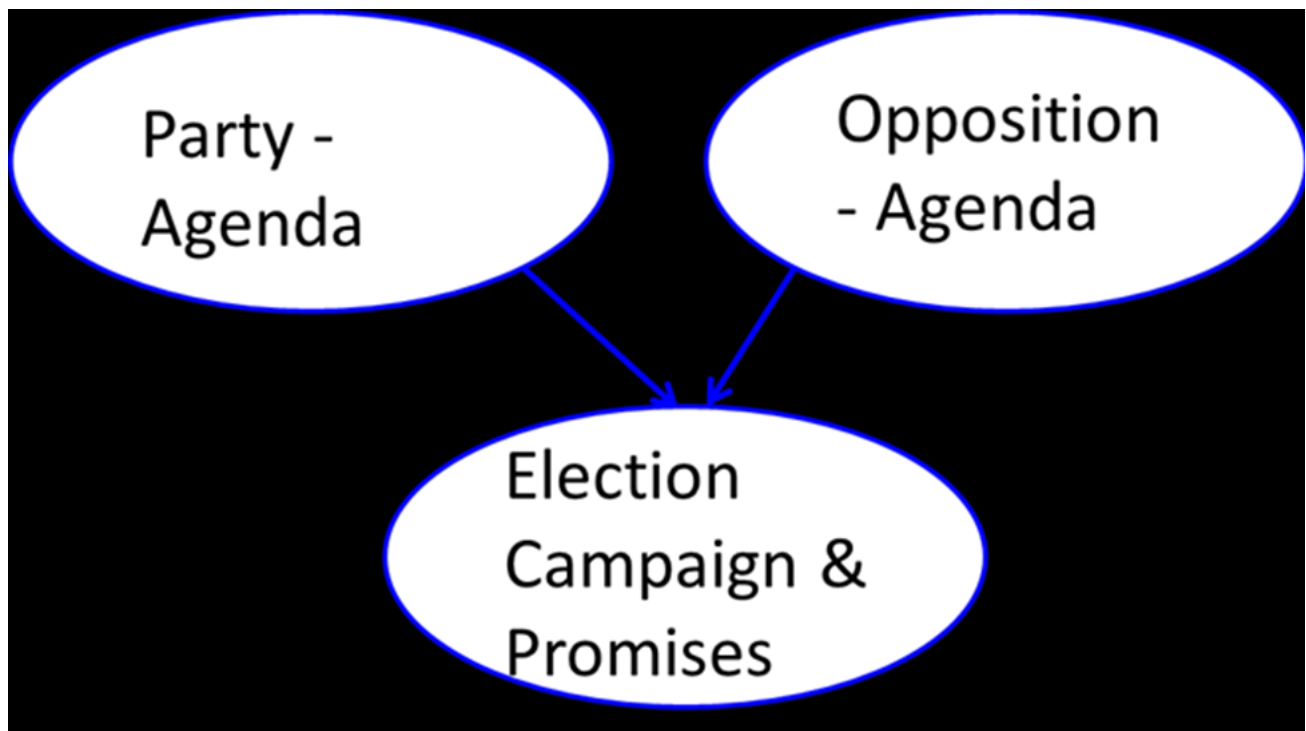
## NCERT Class 9 Political Science Chapter 4: Electoral Politics YouTube Lecture Handouts

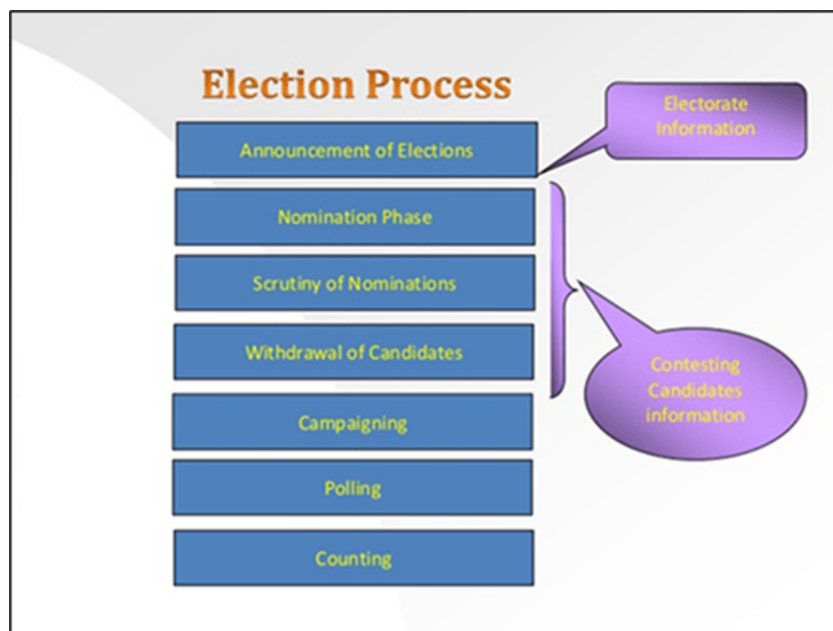
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- Democracy runs through representatives
- There is need for elections and electoral competition amongst parties





Democracy without elections:

- All the people will have to sit together
- Requires lot of time and knowledge to take decision on all matters

Selection of representative without elections can be based on:

- Age
- Experience
- Knowledge

Election: People can choose representatives and change them

- Choose who will make laws
- Choose who will form the government
- Choose party whose policies will guide government and law making

Elections can be democratic or non-democratic

Conditions for democratic elections:

- Everyone should be able to choose – one person one vote and equal value of vote
- Parties and candidates must be free to contest elections
- Choices should be offered at regular intervals
- Candidates preferred by people should be elected
- Elections should be free and fair

Political Competition

- Good for people – creates competition, provide incentives, and brings best
- Demerits – creates disunity and factionalism
- Party politics - allegations on one another, dirty tricks to win elections
- Party leaders are motivated to advance political careers - so want to remain in power and serve the best
- Improve the knowledge and character of political leaders
- System where political leaders are rewarded for serving the people and punished for not doing so by the people
- Like shopkeeper who wants profit and serves best to customer (considering that customer should not go to another place)

## Election System

- Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elected after every 5 years & when representation ends it is dissolved
- General Election: Held in all constituencies at the same time, either on the same day or within a few days
- By-election: election or one constituency to fill vacancy caused by death or resignation of member
- Electoral constituencies – Country is divided into different areas for purpose of election & voters elect 1 representative (we have 543 Lok Sabha constituencies)
- Member of Parliament (MP) : Representative of the constituency (similarly in state it is MLA – Member of Legislative Assembly)
- Same applies to municipal or panchayat elections – city divided into wards
- Reserved Constituencies – reserved for SC (84 seats) /ST (47 seats) to have the voice of the deprived
- At local levels – reservation for OBCs and  $\frac{1}{3}$ rd seats for women
- Electoral List or Voter List – list of all those who can vote & are eligible - universal adult franchise (for all above 18 years of age even though they are rich, poor, educated, or uneducated – regardless of caste, gender, and religion) – add name for those moving in, delete names for dead and those moving out
- Some with criminal background or unsound mind are not allowed to vote
- EPIC – Election Photo Identity Card – provide card to every person on voter list

## Nomination of Candidate

- Minimum age is 25 years (in extreme cases restrictions on criminals)
- Party Ticket – it is the party nomination
- Those who contest election must fill nomination form and give security deposit
- Give details of assets, liabilities, criminal cases if any and qualification (however, there is no minimum qualification as person should be able to understand the problem – if graduate degree is made compulsory, in India 90% would become ineligible)

## Election Campaign

- Free and open discussion about who is better for two-week period between the announcement of the final list of candidates and the date of polling – contact voters, address meetings and mobilize supporters
- 1971 – Indira Gandhi – Garibi Hatao (Remove poverty)
- 1977 – Save Democracy by Janata Party – on excesses committed during emergency
- 1977 – Land to Tillers in West Bengal Assembly by Left Front
- 1983 - ‘Protect the Self-Respect of the Telugus’ was the slogan used by N. T. Rama Rao in Andhra Pradesh
- According to our election law, no party or candidate can:
  - Bribe or threaten voters
  - Appeal to them in the name of caste or religion
  - Use government resources for election campaign
  - Spend more than ₹ 25 lakhs in a constituency for a Lok Sabha election or ₹ 10 lakhs in a constituency in an Assembly election.

## Model Code of Conduct

According to this, no party or candidate can:

- Use any place of worship for election propaganda;
- Use government vehicles, aircrafts, and officials for elections
- Once elections are announced, Ministers shall not lay foundation stones of any projects, take any big policy decisions, or make any promises of providing public facilities.

## Polling & Counting

- Poll - Final stage when voters cast their votes on Election Day
- People go to polling booth – put mark on finger & cast vote
- Agent of each candidate sits inside to see voting is fair

- Earlier it was on paper and now EVM (Electronic Voting Machines) , now VVPAT (Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trail)
- After elections, EVMs sealed and taken to secure place and opened on the day of counting
- Agents are present to ensure counting is smooth and fair

### Expense on Election

- 2004 Lok Sabha elections – ₹ 1300 crore (₹ 20 per person)
- In 2005, government decided to buy six nuclear submarines from France. Each submarine cost about ₹ 3,000 crores.
- Delhi hosted the Commonwealth Games in 2010. The estimate for its cost is more than ₹ 10,000 crores.

### Activities Defeating Purpose of Democracy

- Inclusion of false names and exclusion of genuine names in the voters' list
- Misuse of government facilities and officials by the ruling party
- Excessive use of money by rich candidates and big parties
- Intimidation of voters and rigging on the polling day

### Independent Election Commission

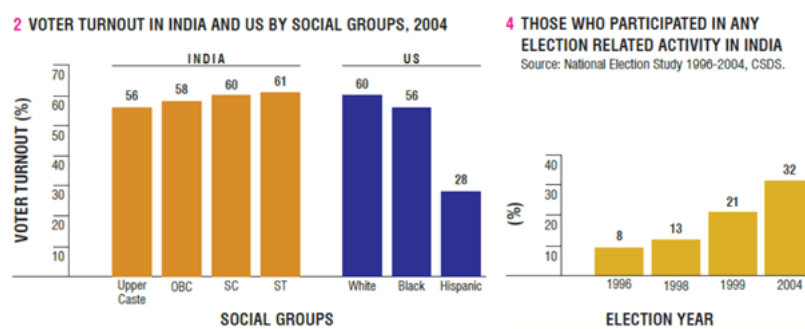
Chief Election Commissioner is appointed by President but once appointed he is not answerable and government cannot remove him

### Powers of Election Commission

- Decisions on every aspect of conduct and control of elections from announcement of elections to declaration of results
- It implements the Code of Conduct and punishes any candidate or party that violates it
- During the election period, the EC can order guidelines, to prevent use and misuse of governmental power to enhance its chances to win elections, or to transfer some government officials
- When on election duty, government officers work under the control of the EC and not government common now
- Election Commission can reprimand the government and administration for their lapses
- EC can order a repoll, if believed that election was not fair

### Popular Participation

- Turnout: Percent of eligible voters who cast their vote. Over the last fifty years, the turnout in Europe and North America has declined. In India the turnout has either remained stable or gone up.
- In India as compared to USA, the poor, illiterate and underprivileged people vote in larger proportion as compared to the rich and privileged sections
- Common people in India attach a lot of importance to elections – believing there could be change in programs and policies
- The interest of voters in election related activities has been increasing over the years. During the 2004 elections, more than one-third voters took part in a campaign-related activity. More than half of the people identified themselves as being close to one or the other political party.



### Acceptance of Outcome

Elections are free and fair; if not decision is in favor of powerful. However, by and large things are fair as:

- The ruling parties routinely lose elections in India both at the national and state level. In fact, in every two out of the three elections held in the last fifteen years, the ruling party lost.
- In the US, an incumbent or 'sitting' elected representative rarely loses an election. In India about half of the sitting MPs or MLAs lose elections.
- Candidates who are known to have spent a lot of money on 'buying votes' and those with known criminal connections often lose elections.
- Barring very few disputed elections, the electoral outcomes are usually accepted as 'people's verdict' by the defeated party.

## Challenges

- Some win by money power and unfair means
- Provide level playing field (all candidates have equal opportunity to appeal for votes) to all
- Chance to win for an ordinary citizen
- Huge parties have unfair advantages over small parties
- Candidates with criminal connection push others out of the electoral race
- Some families tend to dominate political parties
- Smaller parties and independent candidates suffer a huge disadvantage compared to bigger parties
- Booth capturing: Supporters or hired musclemen of party or a candidate gain physical control of a polling booth and cast false votes by threatening everyone or by preventing genuine voters from reaching the polling booth
- Rigging: Fraud and malpractices indulged by a party or candidate to increase its votes

 Mayank