

## Hand Out :1

Class 9

Civics

### Chapter 3 - Electoral Politics

In this lesson, you will understand how the representatives are elected. The chapter begins with the topic of why elections are necessary and useful in a democracy. Then it further explains how electoral competitions among various parties help the people.

#### Why Do We Need Elections?

Elections take place regularly in any democracy.

There are more than 100 countries in the world in which elections take place to choose people's representatives.

The mechanism by which people can choose their representatives at regular intervals and change them whenever they want to is called an **election**.

In an election the voters make many choices:

- They can choose who will make laws for them.
- They can choose who will form the government and take major decisions.
- They can choose the party whose policies will guide the government and law making.

#### What Makes an Election Democratic?

Minimum conditions of a democratic election include the following points.

1. Everyone should be able to choose their own representative.

2. Parties and candidates should be free to contest elections and should offer some real choice to the voters.
3. Elections must be held regularly after every few years.
4. The candidate preferred by the people should get elected.
5. Elections should be conducted in a free and fair manner where people can choose as they really wish.

### Is it Good to have Political Competition?

Elections are all about political competition.

This competition takes various forms.

At the constituency level, it takes the form of competition among several candidates.

Here are a few reasons that support political competition as being good for people.

1. Regular electoral competition provides incentives to political parties and leaders.
2. Political parties know that if they raise issues that people want to be raised, their popularity and chances of victory will increase in the next elections.
3. On the contrary, if they fail to satisfy the voters with their work, they will not be able to win again
4. If a political party is motivated only by the desire to be in power, despite that, it will be forced to serve the people.

### What is Our System of Election?

Two types of elections are held in India (regularly after every 5 years):-

- Lok Sabha Election and
- Vidhan Sabha (Assembly) Election

After 5 years, the term of all the elected representatives comes to an end.

Elections held in all constituencies at the same time, either on the same day or within a few days is called a **General Election**.

Sometimes elections are held only for one constituency to fill the vacancy caused by death or resignation of a member. This is called a **By-Election**.

### Electoral Constituency

India is divided into different areas for the purpose of elections. These areas are called **electoral constituencies**. The voters who live in an area elect one representative.

- For Lok Sabha elections, India is divided into 543 constituencies. The representative elected from each constituency is called a **Member of Parliament** or an MP.
- Each state is divided into a specific number of Assembly constituencies. In this case, the elected representative is called the **Member of Legislative Assembly or an MLA**. Each Parliamentary constituency has within it several assembly constituencies.

The same principle applies for Panchayat and Municipal elections.

Each village or town is divided into several '**wards**' that are like constituencies.

Each ward elects one member of the village or the urban local body.

Sometimes these constituencies are counted as '**seats**', for each constituency represents one seat in the assembly.

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