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Role of Voters in Knowing the Electoral System in India-An Observation

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Abstract

Conducting transparent and fair election is the main motto of the Election Commission of India. Indian election system has to perform and also has been performing its duty through upholding the constitutional values in the lines of Democracy. It has already been already declared that Democracy is a fair system which is for the people, by the people and of the people. Wherein, the election work is supervised under the observation of the Election Commission subject to overall superintendence, direction and control of the Commission, by the Chief Electoral Officer of the State, who is appointed by the Commission from amongst senior civil servants proposed by the concerned State Government. The Constitution of India has vested, in the Election Commission, the superintendence, direction and control of the entire process, for conduct of elections to Parliament and Legislature of every State, and to the offices of President and Vice-President of India. Village and city local elections have been left to the State Governments under local Commissioners.

Keywords: Election, Constitution of India, President and Vice-President of India, the Election Commission of India, Constitutional Democracy, etc.

Introduction

Conducting transparent and fair election is the main motto of the Election Commission of India. Indian election system has to perform and also has been performing its duty through upholding the constitutional values in the lines of Democracy. It has already been already declared that Democracy is a fair system which is for the people, by the people and of the people. Wherein, the election work is supervised under the observation of the Election Commission subject to overall superintendence, direction and control of the Commission, by the Chief Electoral Officer of the State, who is appointed by the Commission from amongst senior civil servants proposed by the concerned State Government. He is, in most of the States, a full time officer and has a team of supporting staff. Field administration at the District and Sub-Divisional levels in India is run by the District Magistrates (Deputy Commissions/Collectors), Sub-Divisional Magistrates, Revenue Divisional Officers, Tahisldars etc. They are senior officers of the State Governments, belonging to the national and State civil services. The Election Commission utilizes the same State Governments officers, for election work, by designating them as District Election Officers, Electoral Registration Officers, Returning Officers, Assistant Electoral Registration Officers, Assistant Returning Officers, etc. They all perform their functions relating to elections in addition to their other responsibilities. During election time, however, they are available to the Commission, more or less, on a full time basis. India is a constitutional Democracy, which is

having a parliamentary system of government. These elections deal with the elections relating to all state assemblies, union territories, and president as well as vice-president elections. Elections in India are events involving political mobilization and organizational complexity on an amazing scale.

The Election Commission of India has five different symbols to various political parties as well as independent candidates. Most of the common people in India are illiterate, so to identify the candidates, as well as political parties and independent candidates are given various symbols from the election commission. It is very necessary for all eligible voters in India to know the value of their votes in electing suitable and eligible candidates to serve the interest of all citizens of India. Hence, National Voters' Day in India is observed on January 25th each year. This special day was first celebrated on January 25, 2011, to mark the foundation day of the Election Commission of India, which plays a crucial role in organizing free and fair elections in the country. So, 'National Voters' Day' serves as a reminder of the importance of voting and aim to educate and engage citizens in the electoral process. Indeed, Voting is the foundation of Democracy in India. In India, every citizen has the right and responsibility to participate in the electoral process. In this process citizens can exercise their right to choose their representatives and participate in the decision-making process.

Through voting, individuals will have the power to hold their elected officials and representatives accountable for their actions and policies. Voters' duty ensures a fair and transparent electoral process, promoting social and political equity and this kind of process helps in establishing a fair government that reflects the will and aspirations of the people. By voting, citizens will have the opportunities to voice their opinions on various issues and contribute to the development of the nation as well. Here, it is a notable thing that voting empowers marginalized sections of society, allowing them to have a say in matters that affect their lives, in addition to this voting promotes the growth of a responsible and responsive government, as elected representatives are more likely to address the concerns of their constituents. Besides, voting is not only a right but also a civic duty of all citizens of the nation, and by exercising it, voters or individuals can actively participate in the Democratic process and contribute to the overall progress of the country.

Observations

Only Indian citizens are eligible to vote in elections and also will have voice to say of the ups and downs of the election system. So, non-citizens and non-residents of India can't do so. Voters have the right to cast their votes without revealing their preferences to anyone, including polling officials or other voters.

The Constitution of India has vested, in the Election Commission, the superintendence, direction and control of the entire process, for conduct of elections to Parliament and Legislature of every State, and to the offices of President and Vice-President of India. Village and city local elections have been left to the State Governments under local Commissioners. The Election Commission can, justifiably, take pride in having successfully conducted the above electoral exercise to the satisfaction of all stake holders and participants, namely, political parties, candidates and the electorate. Elections are conducted according to the constitutional provisions, supplemented by laws made by Parliament. The major laws are Representation of the People Act, 1950, which mainly deals with the preparation and revision of electoral rolls, and the Representation of the People Act, 1951, which deals, in detail, with all aspects of conduct of elections and post-election disputes. The Supreme Court of India has held that where the enacted laws are silent or make insufficient provision to deal with a given situation in the conduct of elections, the Election Commission has the residuary powers under the Constitution to act in an appropriate manner.

Elections to the Lok Sabha (and also to Vidhan Sabhas) are carried out using a first-past-the-post electoral system. The country is split up into separate geographical areas/known as constituencies, and the electors can cast one vote each for a candidate, the winner being the candidate who gets the most votes. The members of the Rajya Sabha are elected indirectly, rather than by the citizens at large. Rajya Sabha members are elected by each State Vidhan Sabha using the single transferable vote system. Unlike most federal systems, the number of members returned by each State is roughly in proportion to their population. At present, there are 233 members of the Rajya Sabha elected by the Vidhan Sabhas, and there are also twelve members nominated by the President ' as representatives of literature, science, art and social services. Rajya Sabha members can serve for six years, and elections are staggered, with one third of the assembly being elected every 2 years. India is a federal country, and the

Constitution gives the States and Union Territories significant control over their own government. The Vidhan Sabhas (Legislative Assemblies) are directly elected bodies set up to carrying out the administration of the government in the 25 States of India. In five States, there is a bicameral organisation of legislatures, with both an Upper and Lower House [Vidhan Parishad (Legislative Council) and Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly)]. Two of the seven Union Territories, viz., the National Capital Territory of Delhi and Pondicherry, have also Legislative Assemblies. Elections to the Vidhan Sabhas are carried out in the same manner as for the Lok Sabha election, with the States and Union Territories divided into single-member Assembly constituencies, and the first-past-the-post electoral system used. The Constitution puts a limit on the size of the Lok Sabha of 550 elected members, apart from two members who can be nominated by the President to represent the Anglo-Indian community. There are also provisions to ensure the representation of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, with reserved constituencies where only candidates from these communities can stand for election. The number of these reserved seats is meant to be approximately in proportion to the number of people from scheduled castes or scheduled tribes in each State. There are currently 79 seats reserved for the scheduled castes and 41 reserved for the scheduled tribes in the Lok Sabha.

There was an attempt to pass legislation to introduce reservation of one-third of the seats for female candidates, but the dissolution of Lok Sabha for the 1998 election occurred before the Bill had completed its passage through Parliament. The democratic system in India is based on the principle of universal adult suffrage; that is to say, any citizen over the age of 18 can vote in an election to Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabha (before 1989 the age limit was 21). The right to vote is irrespective of caste, creed, religion or gender. Those who are deemed unsound of mind, and people convicted of certain criminal offences are not allowed to vote. There have been even more rapid increases in the turnout of women and members of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, who had tended in the past to be far less likely to participate in elections.

Conclusion

Any Indian citizen who is registered as a voter and is over 25 years of age is allowed to contest elections to the Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabhas. For the Rajya Sabha and Vidhan Parishads, the age limit is 30 years. Candidates for the Rajya Sabha, Vidhan Sabha and Vidhan Parishads should be a resident of the same State from which they wish to contest. Political parties are an established part of modern mass democracy, and the conduct of elections in India is largely dependent on the behaviour of political parties. Although many candidates for Indian elections are independent, the winning candidates for Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections usually stand as members of political parties, and election results show that people tend to vote for a party rather than a particular candidate. Parties offer candidates organisational support, and by offering a broader election campaign, looking at the record of government and putting forward alternative proposals for government, help voters make a choice about how the government is run. The Election Commission appoints a large number of Observers to ensure that the campaign is conducted fairly, and that people are free to vote as they choose. Election expenditure Observers keep a special check on the amount that each candidate and party spends on the election.

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