

## Chapter 3 - Election And Representation

### Question 1:

Which of the following resembles most a direct democracy?

- a. Discussions in a family meeting
- b. Election of the class monitor
- c. Choice of a candidate by a political party
- d. Decisions taken by the Gram Sabha
- e. Opinion polls conducted by the media

### Answer:

*Any answer supported with argument or explanation would solve the purpose. It is strongly recommended that you prepare the solution on your own. However, one sample solution has been provided for your reference:*

- b. Election of the class monitor
- d. Decisions taken by the Gram Sabha

### Question 2:

Which of the following tasks are not performed by the Election Commission?

- a. Preparing the Electoral Rolls
- b. Nominating the candidates
- c. Setting up polling booths
- d. Implementing the model code of conduct
- e. Supervising the Panchayat elections

### Answer:

- b. Nominating the candidates
- e. Supervising the Panchayat elections

### Question 3:

Which of the following is common to the method of election of the members of Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha?

- a. Every citizen above the age of 18 is an eligible voter

- b. Voter can give preference order for different candidates
- c. Every vote has equal value
- d. The winner must get more than half the votes

**Answer:**

- c. Every vote has equal value

**Question 4:**

In the First Past the Post system, that candidate is declared winner who

- a. Secures the largest number of postal ballots
- b. Belongs to the party that has highest number of votes in the country
- c. Has more votes than any other candidate in the constituency
- d. Attains first position by securing more than 50% votes

**Answer:**

- c. Has more votes than any other candidate in the constituency

**Question 5:**

What is the difference between the system of reservation of constituencies and the system of separate electorate? Why did the Constitution makers reject the latter?

**Answer:**

In a system of reservation of constituencies, the candidates are from that social section for which the seat is reserved and all voters, irrespective of their social group, vote for any of them. In a system of separate electorate, the candidate of a particular community can only be elected by the voters of her/his community.

The latter was rejected by the Constitution makers because it went against their purpose of unity, secularism and a state that is free from discrimination.

**Question 6:**

Which of the following statements are incorrect? Identify and correct them by substituting, adding or rearranging only one word or phrase.

- a. FPTP system is followed for all the elections in India.
- b. Election Commission does not supervise Panchayat and Municipal elections.

- c. President of India cannot remove an Election Commissioner.
- d. Appointment of more than one Election Commissioners in the Election Commission is mandatory.

**Answer:**

- a. Incorrect. FPTP system is only followed for election to Panchayats, Legislative Assemblies and the Lok Sabha.
- b. Correct.
- c. Incorrect. President of India can remove an Election Commissioner on the recommendation of both houses of the Parliament.
- d. Incorrect. Appointment of more than one Election Commissioner in the Election Commission is not mandatory but it is an established practice through consensus to ensure accountability.

**Question 7:**

Indian electoral system aims at ensuring representation of socially disadvantaged sections. However we are yet to have even 10 per cent women members in our legislatures. What measures would you suggest to improve the situation?

**Answer:**

- Proportional representation system of election would be better for ensuring proper representation of women in legislatures.
- This will ensure the proper representation of women according to their percentage in Indian population.
- The other method is to implement reservation for women candidates in electoral constituencies.
- The system of reservation should be rotated among all constituencies to ensure proper representation of women from all parts of the country.

**Question 8:**

Here are some wishes expressed in a conference to discuss a constitution for a new country. Write against each of these whether FPTP or Proportional Representation system is more suited to meet each of these wishes.

- a. People should clearly know who their representative is, so that they can hold him or her personally accountable.
- b. We have small linguistic minorities who are spread all over the country; we should ensure fair representation to them.
- c. There should be no discrepancy between votes and seats for different parties.
- d. People should be able to elect a good candidate even if they do not like his or her political party.

**Answer:**

- a. FPTP system
- b. Proportional Representation system
- c. Proportional Representation system
- d. FPTP system

**Question 9:**

A former Chief Election Commissioner joined a political party and contested elections. There are various views on this issue. One view is that a former Election Commissioner is an independent citizen and has a right to join any political party and to contest election. According to the other view, leaving this possibility open can affect the impartiality of the Election Commission. So, former Election Commissioners must not be allowed to contest any elections. Which position do you agree with and why?

**Answer:**

*Any answer supported with argument or explanation would solve the purpose. It is strongly recommended that you prepare the solution on your own. However, one sample solution has been provided for your reference:*

The Election Commissioners should not contest elections after they leave office. This is because the Election Commission is a constitutional body that requires the highest standards of integrity to ensure impartiality in its conduct. The task of the Election Commissioner is to impartially supervise and safeguard the conduct of elections and not become a part of the electoral process.

Any future prospect of the involvement of a statutory official like the Election Commissioner in electoral politics would seriously compromise the integrity and impartiality of the one institution that is the cornerstone of democratic convention in the country. This practice would set a precedent that would erode the credibility of the Election Commission and render it liable to charges of bias in its conduct of elections. Such a situation would be unhealthy for the polity in the long term as it would be exposed to electoral malpractices at the highest levels. This precedent would constitute a real danger of reducing elections to a shambolic exercise that would be hostage to the temptation of office for the Election Commissioners at a future date.

**Question 10:**

“Indian democracy is now ready to shift from a crude First Past the Post system to a system of Proportional Representation”. Do you agree with this statement? Give your reasons for or against this statement.

**Answer:**

*Any answer supported with argument or explanation would solve the purpose. It is strongly recommended that you prepare the solution on your own. However, one sample solution has been provided for your reference:*

Indian democracy is not yet ready to replace the First Past the Post system with Proportional Representation. This is because proportional representation system is more suitable for political parties rather than social groups. Indian society already has large number of social groups. Proportional Representation would lead to a rise in conflicting demands between these groups and the dominant social groups would continue to exercise power and create new social alliances to maintain it. It is also debatable whether language, religion, caste or ethnicity should be a decisive factor in proportional representation as this would give rise to narrow sectional interests and endanger the social fabric of the country. Proportional representation can be adopted in due course of time with the maturing of Indian democracy.