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BACKGROUND GUIDE



AIPPM All India Political
Parties Meet

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Letter from the Executive Board

Dear delegates,

It is with immense pleasure and anticipation that we welcome you to the All India Political Parties Meet (AIPPM) committee at our Model United Nations conference. As your Executive Board, we are thrilled to guide you through one of contemporary India's most significant and transformative political debates: the implementation of simultaneous elections, popularly known as "One Nation, One Election."

This committee simulation presents a unique opportunity to engage with the complexities of Indian federal democracy, constitutional law, and political consensus-building. Unlike traditional UN committees, the AIPPM format allows you to step into the shoes of India's diverse political leadership, representing parties that span the ideological spectrum from national giants to regional powerhouses, each with distinct perspectives on this crucial reform proposal.

Regards,

Chairperson: Manav Dharía

Vice Chairperson: Anindita Kulur

Moderator: Siddharth

Why This Topic Matters

The simultaneous elections debate encapsulates fundamental tensions in Indian democracy: efficiency versus representation, national integration versus federal diversity, governance needs versus democratic accountability. As we gather in October 2025, this issue has gained unprecedented urgency with the recent passage of the Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha and its referral to a Joint Parliamentary Committee. Your deliberations will mirror the real-world political negotiations happening across India's corridors of power.

The Ram Nath Kovind Committee's comprehensive 18,626-page report, submitted in March 2024, provides the foundation for our discussions. However, the political reality extends far beyond technical recommendations—it involves navigating the aspirations of 32 supporting parties against the concerns of 15 opposing parties, each representing millions of Indian citizens with varying regional, linguistic, and ideological interests

Committee Expectations

We expect delegates to embody the authentic positions and concerns of their assigned political parties. Whether you represent the ruling BJP's efficiency-focused approach, Congress's federal concerns, regional parties' autonomy demands, or left parties' constitutional integrity arguments, your role is to advance your party's interests while seeking meaningful compromise.

This committee operates on consensus-building rather than formal resolutions. Success will be measured by your ability to find common ground on contentious issues such as constitutional, All India Political Parties Meet (AIPPM) Background Guide: Simultaneous Elections in India, Letter from the Executive Board, amendment procedures, implementation timelines, safeguards for regional representation, and practical logistical challenges. Remember that in the AIPPM format, no single party can impose its will—coalition-building and negotiation are essential.

Research and Preparation Guidelines

While this background guide provides comprehensive information, we strongly encourage additional research into your specific party's historical positions, recent statements by party leadership, and regional considerations that may influence your party's stance. Pay particular attention to:

- Your party's performance in recent elections and how simultaneous elections might affect future prospects
- Regional concerns specific to your party's stronghold states
- Coalition dynamics and relationships with other parties
- Constitutional interpretation from your party's ideological perspective

Committee Dynamics

The AIPPM reflects India's vibrant multi-party democracy, where regional diversity meets national aspirations. Expect passionate debates on federalism, robust discussions on constitutional interpretation, and creative problem-solving on implementation challenges. Your ability to articulate complex legal and political arguments while remaining open to compromise will define the committee's success.

We have structured the agenda to progress from constitutional and legal foundations through practical implementation challenges to potential compromise solutions. Each session will build upon previous discussions, requiring sustained engagement and strategic thinking throughout the conference.

A Note on Authenticity

Indian political discourse is characterised by its intellectual rigour, constitutional depth, and passionate advocacy for democratic principles. We expect delegates to maintain this standard while demonstrating respect for India's democratic traditions and the genuine concerns of all political perspectives represented in this committee.

The simultaneous elections debate is not merely about electoral logistics—it touches the very essence of India's federal democratic experiment. Your discussions will explore how the world's largest democracy can evolve while preserving its foundational principles of diversity, representation, and federal autonomy.

Looking Ahead

As we embark on this intellectual journey together, remember that the solutions you develop may well inform real-world policy discussions. The challenges you'll face—balancing efficiency with representation, addressing technological and logistical constraints, maintaining democratic accountability—are the same ones confronting India's actual political leadership.

We encourage vigorous debate, creative problem-solving, and genuine engagement with the complexities of Indian democracy. Most importantly, we expect you to demonstrate the collaborative spirit that has enabled India's diverse democracy to thrive for over seven decades.

The Executive Board is here to facilitate meaningful dialogue, ensure productive debate, and guide you through the nuances of the Indian political process. We look forward to witnessing your engagement with this pivotal moment in India's democratic evolution.

Welcome to what promises to be an intellectually stimulating and politically enriching experience. Let us work together to honour the democratic traditions we represent while exploring pathways for India's electoral future.

Committee Introduction

The All India Political Parties Meet (AIPPM) represents a unique forum that brings together representatives from across India's political spectrum to deliberate on critical national issues[1][4]. As a simulation of high-level political discourse, AIPPM serves as a consultative body where diverse ideologies converge to seek consensus on matters of national importance[7][16]. This committee operates as a non-legislative forum, focusing on building political consensus before parliamentary sessions or major policy implementations[10].

The AIPPM structure mirrors real-world inter-party consultations, providing delegates with the opportunity to represent various political parties, from national giants like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Indian National Congress to regional powerhouses like the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), Trinamool Congress (TMC), and emerging forces like the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). This diverse representation ensures a comprehensive debate on issues affecting India's federal democratic structure.

Committee Agenda: Simultaneous Elections in India

The committee will address one of contemporary India's most significant electoral reforms: "One Nation, One Election" - the proposal to synchronise elections for the Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies, and local bodies across the country[2][14]. This agenda assumes paramount importance as India grapples with the challenges of frequent elections and their impact on governance, economic development, and democratic representation.

Historical Context and Background

The Era of Synchronised Elections (1951-1967)

India's democratic journey began with synchronised elections, where the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assembly elections were conducted simultaneously from 1951-52 to 1967[14][28]. This system functioned smoothly until political instabilities led to premature dissolutions of state assemblies in 1968 and 1969, disrupting the synchronised cycle[14].

The original synchronised system emerged from practical necessity during India's early democratic phase. The Election Commission of India, established in 1950, found it logistically efficient to conduct multiple elections together, given the nascent state of democratic institutions and limited administrative capacity.

Disruption and Current Challenges

Since 1967, India has witnessed a staggered election system where different states conduct elections at various times throughout the five-year parliamentary cycle[3]. This has resulted in what critics describe as a "perpetual election mode," where some part of the country is always under election influence[2][3]. The Model Code of Conduct, which restricts government decision-making during election periods, frequently disrupts governance and policy implementation[3].

The Current Proposal: "One Nation, One Election"

The Ram Nath Kovind Committee Report (2024)

The Government of India constituted a High-Level Committee under former President Ram Nath Kovind in September 2023 to examine the feasibility of simultaneous elections[21][26]. The committee submitted its comprehensive 18,626-page report in March 2024, recommending a phased approach to implementation[30].

Key Recommendations:[21][26]

1. **Phase I:** Synchronisation of Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assembly elections.
2. **Phase II:** Alignment of local body elections (Panchayats and Municipalities) within 100 days of general elections.
3. **Constitutional Amendments:** Modifications to Articles 83, 85, 172, 174, and 356.

One-time Transition: Dissolution of all state assemblies to align with the next Lok Sabha election.

Constitutional Framework Requirements

The implementation requires substantial constitutional amendments[3][26]:

- Article 83(2): Duration of Houses of Parliament
- Article 85: Dissolution of Lok Sabha by the President
- Article 172: Duration of State Legislatures
- Article 174: Dissolution of State Legislatures
- Article 356: President's Rule provisions Tenth Schedule: Anti-defection provisions

Legislative Changes

Beyond constitutional amendments, significant modifications to the Representation of the People Act (1950 and 1951) and related electoral laws are necessary to accommodate the unified electoral framework[29].

Arguments in Favour of Simultaneous Elections

Economic and Financial Benefits

Cost Reduction: Simultaneous elections could significantly reduce the massive expenditure associated with conducting separate elections[2][3]. The Election Commission estimates requiring approximately ₹10,000 crore every 15 years for EVMs alone under simultaneous elections, compared to higher cumulative costs under the current staggered system[41].

Economic Growth Impact: Research cited by the Kovind Committee suggests simultaneous elections could potentially increase India's GDP by up to 1.5%[9]. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) argues that perpetual election cycles constrain infrastructure development and capital expenditure projects due to approval delays during Model Code periods[44].

Resource Optimisation: Synchronised elections would optimise the deployment of security forces, administrative personnel, and electoral officers, reducing the prolonged diversion from their primary duties[27].

Governance Efficiency

Policy Continuity: Frequent elections create policy paralysis due to the recurring imposition of the Model Code of Conduct[3]. Simultaneous elections would ensure longer periods of uninterrupted governance and policy implementation.

Administrative Stability: The current system frequently disrupts administrative functions, with bureaucrats and teachers repeatedly deployed for election duties throughout the year[3].

Reduced Political Campaigning: Political leaders could focus more on governance rather than perpetual campaign activities across different states[3].

Democratic Participation

Enhanced Voter Turnout: Evidence from Indonesia shows increased voter participation when legislative elections are held simultaneously with presidential elections[39]. India witnessed similar trends with the 2019 simultaneous elections showing 81.69% turnout compared to 75.11% in 2014 when held separately[39].

Reduced Voter Fatigue: Staggered elections contribute to voter fatigue, potentially reducing democratic participation over time[2][3].

Arguments Against Simultaneous Elections

Federalism and Constitutional Concerns

Threat to Federal Structure: Opposition parties argue that simultaneous elections could undermine India's federal character by centralising electoral discourse[22][23]. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) describes it as "centralisation with a vengeance"[22].

State Autonomy: Regional parties fear that simultaneous elections would reduce state governments' autonomy and ability to address local concerns independently[25][42].

Basic Structure Violation: Several legal experts and opposition parties contend that the proposal violates the basic structure doctrine of the Constitution[42].

Political Representation Issues

Marginalisation of Regional Parties: Fifteen political parties, including Congress, AAP, TMC, DMK, and CPI(M), opposed the proposal, arguing it would marginalise regional concerns and strengthen national parties disproportionately[37][40].

Homogenization of Political Discourse: Critics argue that simultaneous elections would lead to nationalisation of political issues, overshadowing local and regional concerns that are crucial for India's diverse democracy[44].

Reduced Democratic Accountability: With fewer election cycles, governments might face less frequent public scrutiny, potentially reducing democratic accountability[3].

Practical and Logistical Challenges

Massive Infrastructure Requirements: Conducting simultaneous elections requires approximately 30 lakh EVMs and VVPATs, presenting enormous logistical challenges[38][41]. States like Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha, and Sikkim lack sufficient warehouse infrastructure for EVM storage[35].

Security Deployment: Simultaneous elections would require unprecedented security deployment across all states, straining central forces and security infrastructure[38].

Technical Challenges: The semiconductor supply chain issues that previously affected EVM manufacturing highlight the vulnerability of such massive simultaneous requirements[35].

International Comparative Analysis

The Kovind Committee studied seven countries with various simultaneous election models[36]:

European Models (Parliamentary Systems)

Sweden: Conducts elections to all three levels of government (national, regional, local) simultaneously, demonstrating the viability of comprehensive electoral synchronisation [36] [39].

Belgium: Holds parliamentary and provincial elections simultaneously with EU elections, showing partial synchronisation benefits[36].

Germany: Implements coordinated federal and state elections, though not completely simultaneous[36].

Presidential System Models

South Africa: Voters cast ballots for both the National Assembly and Provincial Legislatures simultaneously, though municipal elections remain separate[36].

Indonesia: Successfully transitioned to simultaneous presidential and legislative elections, showing increased voter turnout and system efficiency[36][39].

Philippines: Conducts national and local elections simultaneously, demonstrating feasibility in diverse democratic contexts[36].

Stakeholder Positions

Political Party Responses

Based on the Kovind Committee's consultations with 47 political parties[37][40]:

Supporting Parties (32 parties):

- Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)
- Biju Janata Dal (BJD)
- Janata Dal (United)
- YSR Congress Party
- Shiromani Akali Dal
- National People's Party (NPP)
- Shiv Sena
- Telugu Desam Party

Opposing Parties (15 parties):

- Indian National Congress
- Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)
- Communist Party of India (Marxist)
- Trinamool Congress (TMC)
- Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)
- All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM)
- Samajwadi Party (SP)
- Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) - expressed concerns rather than outright opposition

Public Opinion

The Kovind Committee received 21,558 public responses, with 80% supporting simultaneous elections[30]. This indicates significant public appetite for electoral reform, though the representativeness of these responses across India's diverse population remains debatable.

Judicial and Expert Opinion

The committee consulted four former Chief Justices of India, twelve former Chief Justices of High Courts, and four former Chief Election Commissioners[30]. Most supported the proposal, though former Delhi High Court Chief Justice A.P. Shah opposed it, citing concerns about democratic expression and voting pattern distortions[42].

Current Political Developments

Legislative Progress

The Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024, was introduced in the Lok Sabha by Law and Justice Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal on December 17, 2024[14][17]. The bill was passed in the Lok Sabha with 269 votes in favour and 198 against, and has been referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee for detailed examination[5][17].

Implementation Timeline

The Election Commission indicates the earliest feasible implementation date as 2029, considering the time required for constitutional amendments, EVM procurement, infrastructure development, and logistical preparations[35][41].

Key Issues for Deliberation

Constitutional and Legal Framework

1. **Amendment Process:** Should constitutional amendments for simultaneous elections require state ratification, given their impact on federalism?
2. **Presidential Rule Provisions:** How should Article 356 be modified to prevent misuse while maintaining electoral synchronisation?
3. **Anti-Defection Laws:** What changes to the Tenth Schedule are necessary to address midterm government collapses?

Federal Structure and Representation

1. **Regional vs. National Issues:** How can simultaneous elections ensure adequate attention to regional concerns?
2. **Coalition Dynamics:** Will simultaneous elections favour national coalitions over regional alliances?
3. **Linguistic and Cultural Diversity:** How will electoral synchronisation impact the representation of India's linguistic minorities?

Practical Implementation

1. **Logistical Challenges:** What infrastructure investments are necessary for successful implementation?
2. **Security Arrangements:** How can India ensure adequate security coverage for nationwide simultaneous elections?
3. **Technology Requirements:** What technological innovations could address EVM shortages and logistical constraints?

Democratic Accountability

1. **Governance vs. Elections:** How can the balance between governance efficiency and democratic accountability be maintained?
2. **Voter Education:** What measures are needed to ensure informed voter participation in simultaneous elections?
3. **Media Coverage:** How will simultaneous elections affect political communication and media coverage of regional issues?

Potential Compromise Solutions

Phased Implementation Models

1. **Two-Phase Approach:** The Kovind Committee's recommendation of first synchronising Lok Sabha and state elections, followed by local body alignment[21].
2. **Regional Clustering:** Grouping states geographically or administratively for gradual synchronisation rather than immediate nationwide implementation.
3. **Pilot Programs:** Testing simultaneous elections in selected states before national rollout.

Alternative Frameworks

1. **"One Nation, Two Elections":** Proposed by economists like Swaminathan Aiyar, involving Lok Sabha elections and midterm state elections[8].
2. **Flexible Synchronisation:** Allowing some variation in election timing while maintaining broad synchronisation benefits.

Research Questions for Delegates

1. How can India balance electoral efficiency with federal democratic principles?
2. What constitutional safeguards are necessary to protect regional interests in simultaneous elections?
3. How should India address the logistical and financial challenges of implementing simultaneous elections?
4. What lessons can India learn from international experiences with electoral synchronisation?
5. How can simultaneous elections be designed to enhance rather than diminish democratic accountability?
6. What role should technology play in facilitating simultaneous elections while ensuring electoral integrity?

Committee Dynamics and Representation

Delegates representing different political parties should consider their historical positions, regional interests, and ideological perspectives while engaging in consensus-building. The AIPPM format requires finding common ground among diverse viewpoints, reflecting the real challenges of Indian coalition politics and federal democracy.

Key Political Perspectives to Consider:

- **National Parties:** Focus on governance efficiency and economic benefits
- **Regional Parties:** Emphasise federal concerns and local representation
- **Left Parties:** Stress constitutional integrity and democratic principles
- **Coalition Partners:** Balance between national integration and regional autonomy

Conclusion

The debate over simultaneous elections represents a fundamental question about India's democratic future: how to balance efficiency with representation, national integration with federal diversity, and governance needs with democratic accountability. As delegates engage with this complex issue, they must consider not only the immediate practical challenges but also the long-term implications for Indian democracy.

The AIPPM committee provides a unique opportunity to explore these tensions through informed debate, seeking solutions that honour both India's constitutional principles and its practical governance needs. The outcome of these deliberations could significantly influence India's electoral and federal future, making this among the most consequential political discussions of contemporary India.

Bibliography

Note: This background guide is based on extensive research from government reports, academic sources, political party positions, and expert analyses, current as of October 2025. Delegates are encouraged to further research their specific party positions and regional interests.