

7

Elections

The Big Questions (Page - 161)**1. Why are elections essential to a democratic system?**

Ans. Elections are essential because they allow citizens to choose their representatives and hold them accountable. Regular and periodic elections ensure that representatives cannot continue in office indefinitely without seeking the people's mandate. Elections also promote representation, equality, accountability and legitimacy in a democracy.

2. How do electoral systems and rules shape political representation and fairness?

Ans. Electoral systems determine how votes are converted into seats in the legislature. For example, India uses the First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) system for Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections and proportional representation for the Rajya Sabha, President and Vice President. Electoral rules, including delimitation and laws related to electoral rolls and voting, help promote equal representation, fairness and transparency.

3. What role do institutions and laws play in ensuring free and fair elections?

Ans. Institutions and laws ensure that elections are conducted in an organised, impartial, transparent and fair manner. The Election Commission of India (ECI) supervises and controls the electoral process, while the Delimitation Commission helps ensure equal representation by fixing constituency boundaries. Laws such as the Representation of the People Acts of 1950 and 1951 govern electoral rolls, candidate nominations, campaigning, voting procedures and election disputes.

4. What challenges do elections face in practice, and how can these challenges affect democracy?

Ans.

Challenges Elections Face in Practice

- **Money Power:** Excessive expenditure on campaigns, gifts, or inducements creates an unequal playing field and distorts voter choices.
- **Criminalisation of Politics:** Candidates with criminal records or muscle power contesting elections can intimidate voters and undermine the democratic process.
- **Misinformation and Fake News:** The spread of unverified claims, rumors, and propaganda misleads citizens and hinders them from making informed decisions.
- **Intimidation and Booth Misconduct:** Threats against voters, voter suppression, or non-compliance with rules in vulnerable areas directly violate free and fair election standards.
- **Misuse of State Machinery:** Attempts by incumbents to use official government resources, personnel, or favors for partisan gain breach campaign fairness.

How These Challenges Affect Democracy

- **Erosion of Public Trust:** When electoral integrity is compromised, citizens lose faith in democratic institutions, constitutional bodies, and the fairness of election outcomes.
- **Reduced Quality of Governance:** Candidates who win using money, muscle power, or false promises are accountable to special interests rather than the electorate.
- **Disenfranchisement of Voters:** Intimidation and misinformation reduce public participation, leaving marginalized communities without a voice.
- **Weakening of Democratic Value:** Elections become a formal exercise rather than a true democratic process if fairness, transparency, and equal opportunity are stripped away.

LET'S EXPLORE (Page - 165)

Different democracies use different electoral systems. Make groups of 5–6 students. Each group will select six countries from different continents. Prepare and present a case study on the type of electoral system(s) operating in those countries, and discuss their latest election results of those countries.

Ans. Different democracies use different electoral systems to elect their representatives. The following six countries from different continents show how electoral systems vary across the world.

Continent	Country	Electoral System	Latest National Election	Main Result
1. Asia	- India	- FPTP	- Lok Sabha, 2024	- NDA formed government
2. Europe	- United Kingdom	- FPTP	- General Election, 2024	- Labour won majority
3. Africa	- South Africa	- List Proportional Representation	- National Election, 2024	- ANC largest party; coalition government
4. North America	- Canada	- FPTP	- Federal Election, 2025	- Liberal Party won most seats
5. South America	- Brazil	- Two-Round System for President	- General Election, 2022	- Lula won presidency
6. Australia/Oceania	- Australia	- Preferential/Alternative Vote	- Federal Election, 2025	- Australian Labor Party won

Conclusion: These six countries show that democracies use different electoral systems, including First-Past-the-Post, Proportional Representation, Mixed-Member Proportional, and Two-Round systems. Each system influences political representation, the role of political parties, and the formation of governments in different ways.

DON'T MISS OUT (Page - 166)

Article 82 of the Constitution of India mandates the establishment of a Delimitation Commission. India has had four Delimitation Commissions—in 1952, 1963, 1973, and 2002. Can you find out the reason for the long interval between 1973 and 2002 with the help of your teacher?

Ans. The long interval between the 1973 and 2002 Delimitation Commissions occurred because the number of Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assembly seats was frozen for a long period. This was done to ensure that states which had successfully controlled their population would not lose representation in Parliament. Therefore, a new Delimitation Commission was constituted only in 2002.

THINK ABOUT IT (Page - 168)

You will turn 18 in a few years. As a responsible citizen, you should register yourself as a voter. Find out the various steps of the procedure for registration and the list of required documents for the same. Discuss, with anyone who has just turned 18 and has registered as a voter, the ease or difficulty faced in the voter registration process.

Ans. A citizen who is 18 years of age or above can register as a voter by filling out the prescribed voter-registration application through the Election Commission's online or offline process. The applicant must provide the required proof of identity, age and residence. After verification of the application and documents, the eligible person's name is included in the electoral roll.

The registration process is generally designed to be simple and accessible. However, some first-time voters may face difficulties such as lack of awareness about the procedure, required documents, or verification process. Students can discuss the experience with a person who has recently turned 18 and registered as a voter. The textbook encourages every eligible young citizen to register as a responsible voter.

LET'S EXPLORE (Page - 168)

- Do you know what ETPBS is? - ETPBS stands for Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System. It enables service voters to cast their vote on an electronically received postal ballot from their preferred location, which is outside their originally assigned voting constituency.
- Find out who are classified as service voters and who can vote using ETPBS?

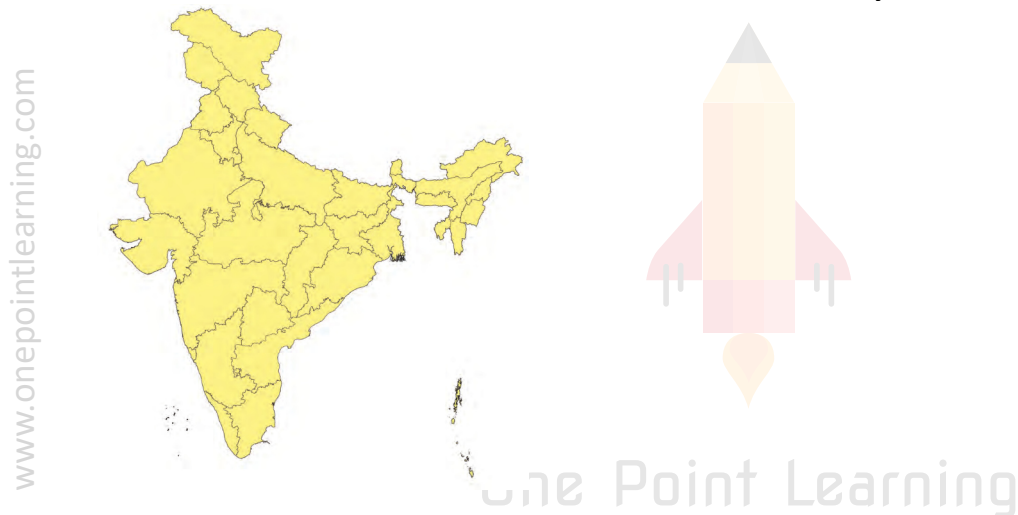
Ans. Service voters are certain categories of voters who are eligible to vote even when they are serving away from their ordinary place of residence. They include:

- Members of the Armed Forces of the Union.
- Members of a force to which the Army Act applies.
- Members of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) serving outside their home constituency.
- Government employees posted outside India.

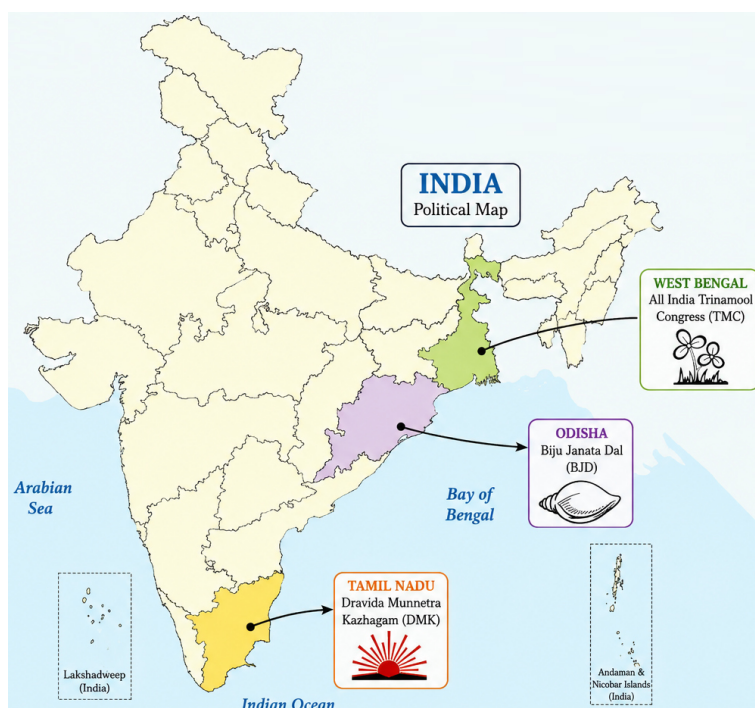
These eligible service voters can use the Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS). Under this system, the postal ballot is electronically transmitted to the voter, who can cast the vote according to the prescribed postal-ballot procedure from their location outside their assigned constituency.

LET'S MAP (Page - 173)

1. Choose any three states (including yours). Find the symbols of state parties belonging to those states and plot them on the given map of India. List down their major agenda, as mentioned in their manifesto in the latest Lok Sabha/Vidhan Sabha/Local Body Elections.



Ans.



2. Form groups of 4–6 students. Identify and compare the policy preferences on the following parameters for two political parties in the last Lok Sabha Elections using credible sources like party manifestos, newspapers, etc. Present the points of comparison in a poster using bullet points, symbols, colour coding, etc.

Ans.

Policy Area	BJP's Viewpoint	Congress's Viewpoint	Source
• Education	- Strengthen higher educational institutions, improve infrastructure and research, and promote skill-based education.	- Make education from Class I–XII in public schools free and compulsory; strengthen public education.	- BJP Sankalp Patra 2024; Congress Nyay Patra 2024 (Asianet News)
• National Security	- Strengthen border infrastructure, modernise defence and establish military theatre commands.	- Formulate a National Security Strategy, strengthen defence spending and replace the Agnipath recruitment system.	- BJP Sankalp Patra 2024; Congress Nyay Patra 2024 (The Economic Times)
• Social Welfare	- Continue free foodgrain support, expand housing and welfare schemes for poor, women, farmers and senior citizens.	- Strengthen social security, increase support for vulnerable groups and expand welfare programmes.	- BJP Sankalp Patra 2024; Congress Nyay Patra 2024 (India Today)
• Environment	- Promote renewable energy, improve air quality and protect rivers and the environment.	- Strengthen environmental protection, tackle air pollution and promote renewable energy and sustainable development.	- BJP Sankalp Patra 2024; Congress Nyay Patra 2024 (BJP e-Library)
• Economy	- Make India a global manufacturing hub, strengthen infrastructure, MSMEs and entrepreneurship, and aim for a developed India.	- Focus on job creation, support MSMEs and promote an open and competitive economy with social welfare.	- BJP Sankalp Patra 2024; Congress Nyay Patra 2024 (The Economic Times)
• Health	- Expand Ayushman Bharat, strengthen hospitals and healthcare infrastructure, and extend health coverage to senior citizens above 70.	- Provide universal and free healthcare in public health facilities and strengthen primary healthcare.	- BJP Sankalp Patra 2024; Congress Nyay Patra 2024 (India Today)

LET'S EXPLORE (Page - 176)

Find out the number of State parties and Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPP). You may visit the website of ECI.

Ans. According to the latest ECI information, India has 67 recognised State Parties and 2,046 Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPPs).

LET'S EXPLORE (Page - 177)

The year 1967 witnessed an end to the era of single-party dominated elections in India and an era of alliances began. Even though various states witnessed politics of alliance starting from 1967, it was in 1977 that various political parties formed an alliance as the Janata Party against the backdrop of the National Emergency (1975–1977). The Janata Party formed the first coalition government at the national level, which was popularly known as the Janata Government. Since the late 1990s, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), led by the Indian National Congress (INC) until its dissolution in 2023 and subsequent reconstitution as the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance, have been the major political alliances in Indian elections.

Find out the name and the composition (number and name of the national and state parties) of the alliances that won in the following elections to the Lok Sabha.

Year	Alliance Won	National parties	State parties
1977			
1999			
2004			
2009			
2014			
2019			
2024			

Ans.

Year	Alliance Won	National Parties	State Parties
1977	Janata Party	1 – Janata Party	1 – Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD)
1999	NDA – National Democratic Alliance	2 – BJP, JD(U)	8 – TDP, Shiv Sena, TMC, DMK, BJD, SAD, PMK, INLD
2004	UPA – United Progressive Alliance	1 – Indian National Congress (INC)	7 – DMK, NCP, RJD, PMK, TRS, JMM, LJP
2009	UPA – United Progressive Alliance	1 – Indian National Congress (INC)	8 – TMC, DMK, NCP, JMM, NC, IUML, VCK, Kerala Congress (M)
2014	NDA – National Democratic Alliance	1 – BJP	9 – TDP, Shiv Sena, SAD, PMK, LJP, RLSP, Apna Dal, Swabhimani Paksha, etc.
2019	NDA – National Democratic Alliance	1 – BJP	5 – Shiv Sena, JD(U), LJP, SAD, Apna Dal (S)
2024	NDA – National Democratic Alliance	1 – BJP	13 – TDP, JD(U), Shiv Sena, LJP(RV), JD(S), NCP, Jana Sena Party, RLD, Apna Dal (S), AGP, HAM(S), AJSU Party, SKM

LET'S ANALYSE (Page - 178)



Look at the road to free and fair elections above (Fig. 7.13). Fill in the empty potholes with some more challenges after discussing them with your teachers and parents. How can we overcome these challenges?

Ans. Some other challenges to free and fair elections are:

Ans.

Challenge	How can we overcome it?
• Money power – Candidates may spend large amounts of money to influence voters.	- Strictly enforce election expenditure limits and take action against violations.
• Muscle power – Threats or violence may be used to influence voters.	- Provide proper security and take strict action against those using violence or threats.
• Bribing voters – Voters may be offered money or gifts.	- Strictly punish candidates or parties offering bribes and spread voter awareness.
• Misuse of government machinery – Government resources may be used unfairly during elections.	- Election authorities should strictly monitor government officials and resources.
• False promises and misleading campaigns – Voters may be misled by incorrect information.	- Promote voter awareness and verify information before believing or sharing it.
• Caste and religious appeals – Votes may be sought in the name of caste or religion.	- Enforce the Model Code of Conduct and encourage voters to choose candidates based on their policies and work.

Questions and activities (Page - 179-180)

1. What reforms have been introduced by the ECI to make voting more inclusive for the following groups?

a. People with Disabilities

Ans. The ECI has introduced several measures to make voting accessible to PwDs, such as:

- EVMs with Braille for visually impaired voters.
- Saksham App for customised services, registration, and locating polling stations.
- Wheelchairs and volunteers at polling stations.
- Accessible polling stations and infrastructure.
- Home voting facility for persons with benchmark disabilities of 40% or more.

The ECI has focused on technology-assisted and infrastructure accessibility to ensure that no eligible voter is left behind.

b. Service Voters

Ans. Service voters can use the Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS). It allows them to receive a postal ballot electronically and cast their vote from a location outside their assigned constituency.

c. Senior Citizens—60 years and above; and 80 years and above

Ans.

- Eligible senior citizens can use the home voting facility.
- During the 2024 General Elections, home voting was extended across India to senior citizens above 85 years of age.
- This helps elderly voters who may have difficulty reaching polling stations.

d. Prisoners

Ans. The chapter does not provide specific details about reforms for prisoners. Therefore, this cannot be answered fully from the given chapter.

e. Persons in preventive detention

Ans. The chapter does not provide specific details about voting reforms for persons in preventive detention.

2. What are the various functions of the Election Commission of India? Which of these functions is most important for the conduct of free and fair elections? Explain.

Ans. The major functions of the Election Commission of India (ECI) are:

- Preparing and revising the electoral rolls.
- Deciding the schedule and dates of elections.
- Registering political parties.
- Allocating election symbols.
- Ensuring free, fair and transparent elections.
- Regulating election campaigns.
- Enforcing election laws and the Model Code of Conduct.
- Making arrangements for polling and counting of votes.
- Declaring election results.
- Resolving election-related disputes.

Most important function: Ensuring free and fair elections is the most important function because democracy can work properly only when voters can freely choose their representatives without fear, pressure, unfair practices or discrimination. Fair elections also maintain people's trust in democratic institutions.

3. Elections are the soul of a democracy. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Ans. Yes, I agree.

Elections are called the soul of democracy because they give citizens the opportunity to choose their representatives. Through regular elections, people can:

- Choose the government they want.
- Remove representatives who do not perform well.
- Hold elected representatives accountable.
- Participate in the democratic process.
- Give legitimacy to the government.

Therefore, regular and fair elections ensure that the government represents the wishes of the people.

4. Explain at least three differences between the national and state/regional political parties.

Ans.

National Political Party	State/Regional Political Party
• Has a significant political presence in several states.	• Mainly has a significant presence in one particular state or region.
• Must fulfil the ECI's criteria for recognition as a national party.	• Must fulfil the ECI's criteria for recognition as a state party.
• Its policies and activities generally have a wider, national focus.	• Its policies generally focus more on issues of a particular state or region.
• It may contest elections across different states.	• Its main electoral influence is concentrated in a particular state or region.

5. Why should you vote? Arrange the following in the descending order of your choice. Discuss the reasons for your choice.

a. Opportunity to choose my representative

b. Makes me a responsible person

c. Opportunity to change the non-performing representative

d. Strengthens democracy

Ans. Descending order of my choice:

- d. Strengthens democracy
- a. Opportunity to choose my representative
- c. Opportunity to change the non-performing representative
- b. Makes me a responsible person

Reason:

- **Strengthens democracy:** Voting allows citizens to participate in forming the government and gives people an equal voice.
- **Choose my representative:** Voting allows us to select the person who we think can represent our interests.
- **Change a non-performing representative:** Elections give people the opportunity to replace representatives who have not performed well.
- **Makes me responsible:** Voting is an important responsibility of citizens because elected representatives make decisions on our behalf.

The textbook explains that the vote is the principal means through which citizens exercise their right to elect representatives and hold them accountable.

6. What is the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) initiative of the ECI? Explain the objectives and the necessity of conducting SIR.

Ans. Special Intensive Revision (SIR) is an initiative of the Election Commission of India to update, verify and correct electoral rolls.

Objectives of SIR:

- To ensure that every eligible citizen is included in the electoral roll.
- To remove the names of ineligible voters.
- To correct errors in the electoral roll.
- To add newly eligible voters, especially those who have recently turned 18.
- To remove duplicate entries.
- To remove names of people who have died or permanently moved away.

SIR is necessary because accurate electoral rolls are essential for free and fair elections. It ensures that no eligible voter is left out and no ineligible person is included.

7. Match the political party name with its symbol.

Political Parties Name	Symbol
Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)	
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)	
Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)	
Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI (M)]	
Indian National Congress(INC)	
National People's Party (NPP)	

Ans.

Political Parties Name	Symbol
Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)	
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)	
Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)	
Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI (M)]	
Indian National Congress(INC)	
National People's Party (NPP)	

8. Read the case study below and answer the following questions.

- Ishani and her mother were in the local market, day before the state assembly elections. She noticed wall writing and campaign posters pasted everywhere. Large groups of campaigners were distributing pamphlets and raising slogans in support of the respective candidates. Ishani has turned 18 and will be voting for the first time. She had registered to vote through the ECI's online portal. The next morning, she, along with her mother and her disabled elder brother, went to the polling station, which was well guarded by the police personnel. A wheelchair was made available to them, and volunteers guided them to the polling booth. Inside the polling booth, there were only three people who were performing all duties. Ishani had forgotten her voter ID card and Aadhaar card, but she was surprised as no one asked for them. After casting her vote, she was also able to see the VVPAT slip. While leaving, she wondered how the police personnel vote, as they must be on duty from early morning till late evening. When she went home, she narrated her entire experience to her 89-year-old grandmother, who cast her vote from home.

a. What initiatives were taken by the ECI to enable the voters to cast their vote?

Ans. The ECI took several initiatives:

- Ishani was able to register online as a voter.
- A wheelchair was provided for her disabled brother.
- Volunteers guided voters to the polling booth.
- The polling station was properly secured.
- Ishani could see the VVPAT slip after voting.
- Her 89-year-old grandmother was able to vote from home.
- These facilities make elections more accessible and inclusive.

b. If Ishani was allowed to vote without carrying her Voter ID card or Aadhaar card, which other document might she be carrying that is valid for voting?

Ans. She might have been carrying another approved identity document accepted for voter identification at the polling station.

The key point is that Voter ID and Aadhaar are not the only possible identity documents that may be accepted for voting.

c. Cite the examples of violations of the Model Code of Conduct.

Ans. Examples from the passage include:

- Wall writing for election campaigning.
- Putting up campaign posters.
- Campaigners distributing pamphlets.
- Raising election slogans.

These are examples of campaign activities mentioned in the case study.

d. Give a suitable title to the passage.

Ans. "Inclusive and Accessible Elections in India"

- Other suitable title:** "Ishani's First Vote: A Journey through the Electoral Process."

e. Find out how the police and army personnel cast their votes.

Ans. Police and armed forces personnel who are eligible as service voters can use postal voting facilities. The chapter specifically describes ETPBS, which enables service voters to receive and cast postal ballots electronically from outside their constituency.

9. A comparative chart of three countries is given below. Based on the information given in the chart, answer the questions.

	Country A	Country B	Country C
Political Dimension	Written constitution, periodic elections, voting rights, party system varies from two-party to multi-party.	Written constitution, periodic elections, voting rights, one political party.	Written constitution, monarchy, no voting rights, no political party.
Economic Dimension	Average standard of living.	Above-average standard of living.	High standard of living.

a. What is the difference between having a voting right in a country with a multi-party system and another with a single-party system?

Ans. In a multi-party system, voters have many political parties to choose from. In a single-party system, voters have only one political party and therefore very limited choice.

b. In which of the above countries would you like to stay and why?

Ans. I would like to stay in Country A because it has voting rights, periodic elections and a multi-party system. This gives citizens the opportunity to choose their representatives and participate in democracy.

10. What are the challenges to conducting free and fair elections?

Ans. Some major challenges are:

- **Misinformation** – False information can mislead voters.
- **Fake news** – False news can influence people's voting decisions.
- **Intimidation** – Voters or candidates may be threatened or pressured.
- **Unfair influence on voters** – Personal favours or inducements can affect voting.
- **Inaccurate counting** – Incorrect counting can affect election results.
- **Accessibility problems** – Some voters may face difficulties in reaching or using polling facilities.
- **Discrimination or unfair practices** can reduce the democratic value of elections.

The ECI addresses such challenges through laws, the Model Code of Conduct, EVMs, VVPAT, voter-awareness campaigns and other measures.

11. On the Stage.

- Elections are to be held in your school for the posts of Head Girl, Head Boy, and Sports Captain. Assume the roles of an Election Commissioner, Returning Officer, Polling Agent, Candidate, Campaigner, Polling Officer, Police Personnel, and a Journalist, and perform their roles while ensuring free, fair, and transparent elections.

Ans. For the school election, we can perform the following roles:

- **Election Commissioner:** Announces the election schedule and ensures that the election is free and fair.
- **Returning Officer:** Conducts the nomination process and supervises polling and counting.
- **Candidate:** Gives a speech and asks students to vote for them.
- **Campaigner:** Spreads the candidate's ideas and election promises.

- **Polling Agent:** Observes the polling process on behalf of a candidate.
- **Police Personnel:** Maintains security and prevents intimidation or disturbance.
- **Journalist:** Reports the election process, candidates and final results.

Conclusion: All participants should follow the rules, avoid bribery and intimidation, and ensure that every eligible student gets an **equal opportunity to vote. This makes the school election free, fair and transparent.**

12. Try and make videos or audios on topics like: My Vote My Nation; No Voter to be Left Behind; How to Eliminate the Ill of Money Power, etc.

Ans. You can make a short video or audio on:

Topic: My Vote, My Nation IN

Script: “My vote is my voice. Every citizen should vote freely and responsibly. Voting helps us choose our representatives and strengthens democracy. We should not be influenced by money, fear, caste, religion or false information. Let us vote wisely and make our nation stronger. My Vote, My Nation!”

Other topics:

- No Voter to be Left Behind – Focus on making voting accessible to everyone.
- Eliminate Money Power – Explain why bribery and money should not influence elections.

13. Select one national or state political party. Using authentic and reliable sources such as the Election Commission of India (ECI) website, the official website of the selected political party, and newspapers. Prepare a comparative chart of the last two State Legislative Assembly elections. The chart should include the following details for the chosen party:

- Some promises made in the Election manifesto
- Percentage of votes polled
- Number of seats won
- Number of women who contested
- Number of women candidates elected

Present the data for both elections in a clear and comparative format, citing all sources used.

Ans. I have selected the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and compared its performance in the last two Maharashtra Legislative Assembly elections: 2019 and 2024. The ECI provides official election statistics, while newspaper reports help with the women-candidate data.

Details	2019	2024
a. Election manifesto – some promises	Women’s reservation, irrigation development, welfare of poor, infrastructure development	₹2,100 monthly assistance for women, farm-loan waiver, anti-conversion law, employment support for youth
b. Percentage of votes polled	25.75%	26.77%
c. Seats won	105	132
d. Women candidates contested	17	17
e. Women candidates elected	12	15

The BJP's 2019 result was 105 seats with 25.75% votes. In 2019, the BJP fielded 17 women and 12 were elected.

In 2024, the BJP won 132 seats with 26.77% votes. It fielded 17 women candidates, of whom 15 were elected. The 2024 manifesto included promises such as increased assistance for women, farm-loan waivers and an anti-conversion law.

14. Do you think 'One Nation, One Election' can improve the efficiency of the electoral process? Divide the class and discuss into two groups—one to examine its potential advantages and the other to analyse its limitations.

Ans. Yes, it may improve the efficiency of the electoral process, but it also has some limitations.

Group 1 – Advantages

- Saves time and money spent on repeated elections.
- Reduces frequent election-related disruption.
- Allows governments to focus more on development and governance.
- Reduces the repeated deployment of election staff and security forces.

Group 2 – Limitations

- Managing elections across the entire country at the same time is very difficult.
- National and State issues may get mixed together.
- Regional parties may receive less attention.
- If a government falls before its term ends, maintaining simultaneous elections can be complicated.

Conclusion: One Nation, One Election can improve efficiency, but it should be implemented only after carefully considering its practical and democratic limitations.

