One Nation One Election: A New Democ[racy]

With growing public and political support, the concept of simultaneous elections may help enhance governmental efficiency and str[eng...]

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India is a democratic country, the framework thrives on the vibrancy of its electoral process, enabling citizens to actively shape governance at every level. As the former Chief Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan once said, "The essence of democracy lies in the fairness and transparency of elections." To strengthen this process, a committee was formed under the chairmanship of Ramnath Kovind, former President of India.

Since independence, Transparency and Fairness has always been aim of the Election commission, a body responsible for holding election at center and state level. Fairness of elections have always been aim of the government. However, there are some sparked discussions on the holding of free and fair elections. This sparked the concept of "One nation One election".

There was inconsistency in the process of election since 1951-1967, elections to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies were held simultaneously. The Practice continued for four general cycles, 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967. The fourth Lok Sabha dissolved early. This caused political instability and split in the Indian National Congress. Indira Gandhi lost majority support in Parliament in 1970. This marked a decisive break from simultaneous elections in India.

In 1983, first formal Recommendation was made by Election Commission of India, recommendation of returning to simultaneous elections. And Law Commission of 1999 also extended support to simultaneous elections. This suggested constitutional amendments for implementation. The renewed political attention was given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi publicly advocated for ONOE.

In 2015, Parliamentary Standing Committee examined the issue. And 2016, Government released a discussion paper through NITI Aayog. After 2018, 21st Law Commission, drafted working paper on Simultaneous election and amendments to article 83, 85, 172, 356. In 2019, ONOE was mentioned again

after the general elections, and finally in September 2023, High level Committee formed under the former President Ram Nath Kovind.

This committee was constituted on September 2023 by the Government of India. The purpose of the committee was to examine the feasibility of holding elections to the Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies, and local bodies across India. Thus, Ramnath Kovind committee acted as breakthrough in the process of holding free and fair elections in India.

The Committee recommended a Phased Implementation Approach.

Phase I proposes that simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and all State Legislative Assemblies should be restored, similar to the 1952–1967 model.

Phase II recommends that elections to Municipal Corporations, Municipalities, and Panchayati Raj Institutions be conducted within 100 days of the general elections. The Committee further emphasized that the fixed five-year tenure of the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies must be maintained, with the tenure linked to the election cycle rather than to the date of government formation.

The Committee also addressed the challenge of premature dissolution. It recommended that if a government falls mid-term, an alternative government should first be explored within the same House. If elections become unavoidable, they should be

conducted only for the remaining term, not for a fresh five-year period. For this purpose, constitutional amendments were proposed:
- Article 83, read as to allow curtailment or extension for synchronization.
- Article 85, gave power to the President to dissolve Lok Sabha and regulate under ONOE framework.
- Article 356 was further amended to prevent the misuse merely to align elections. These amendments require ratification by at least 50 percent of the states.

The Committee further emphasized strengthening the role of the ECI as the central coordinating authority, responsible for preparing long-term election calendars. It recommended robust logistics, especially upgrading EVMs and VVPATs and maintaining adequate reserves. The Committee also highlighted the importance of preserving federalism—respecting state autonomy while ensuring uniform electoral practices. These are the recommendations made by Ram Nath Kovind committee, and is yet to be implemented. The challenges are the constitutional amendments, managing premature dissolution of government, federalism, state autonomy, and voters behavior.

An eminent Political scientist Rajni Kothari emphasized on the advantages of Simultaneous elections, this leads to Political Stability, consolidation of the party system. The simultaneous

Digital divide and Older Adults

Bridging the digital divide is not a charity; it is justice and respect for those who have shaped our present and whose perce[...]

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A typical household around us depicts a common scene around noon, a "quiet lunch" a youngster with his grandparents around where in apart from the sounds of cutlery the room is filled with an eerie silence as grandson is locked to his phone sq thumbs moving quickly to a group chat reply while grandparents wait

In India 85.5% of Indian households have at least one smartphone, showing wider penetration but study also shows 66% of senior citizens find technology confusing and about half are afraid of making mistakes when using digital tools. This endorses a broader trend of digital exclusion among older adults.

Research further indicates that older adults are less likely to use digital technology citing lack of confidence or interest in engaging online. As per one study, only [...] % of elders use the internet [...] suggests that a large majority of older adults have either never used the smart phone or

try. Other significa[...] of digital literacy a[...] older adults-strug[...] those who have lim[...] to technology and [...] newer been to school [...] digital exclusion that exacerbates social isolation.

Social isolation as mentioned is a major issue exacerbated by the digital divide. Technology plays an increasingly important role in maintaining social connections with many people using social media but elderly individuals who are not comfortable using these tools lead to