

# Institutional Representation of Democracy

## Answer the following Question

1. 'The right to vote was not always a universal right.' Explain with examples.

- The right to vote was not always a universal right. In early democracies, only some people were allowed to vote.
- Lower caste and also women were not allowed to vote because they thought that they are not talented or intelligent like men or upper caste.

For example, in the United Kingdom only male landowners who were Protestant by faith, could vote.

In South Africa, till as recently as 1994, non-whites were not allowed to vote in national elections.

**CHANGING YOUR TOMORROW**

## 2. What are elections? 'What are the requirements for fair elections?

Elections are the process by which the citizens of a democracy select or choose their representatives. Requirements for fair elections are:

1. All citizens should have only one vote and all votes should carry the same value.
2. If people have to vote, they should have choices. In India, we have many political parties and candidates to choose from. This makes our democracy true and vibrant.
3. Election should be held regularly
4. Elections should be conducted in an atmosphere free of fear or violence.
5. There should be no compulsions on the voters to vote for particular candidate.

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**3. Name any four political parties of India.**

**Answer:** Indian National Congress (INC), Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP), Samajwadi Party , Biju Janata Dal ( BJB)

**4. Differentiate between a bye-election and a mid-term election.**

**Answer:** When a member of parliament or state legislature dies in office or resigns, elections are held in his or her constituency before the completion of five years is called bye-election.

If for certain reason, the president, on the advice of the Prime minister, dissolves the Lok Sabha or a state assembly, elections will be conducted ahead of five years is called mid-term election.

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## 5. What is a constituency? Why are some constituencies reserved in India?

To make elections truly representative, each state is usually divided into a number of small units called constituencies.

Some constituencies are reserved for people from more disadvantaged backgrounds, like people from scheduled castes and tribes. They are people who have been discriminated against for generations due to the caste system.

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## 6. Differentiate between absolute majority and simple majority.

**Absolute Majority:** When a candidate secures more than half of the votes polled, he or she is said to have won by an absolute majority.

**Simple Majority:** Sometimes, the votes polled may be divided in such a way that none of the candidates may get an absolute majority. In such a case the person who gets the most votes, even if it is only one more than that won by his rival, is declared the winner by simple majority.

## What are the different types of party systems in the world? What system does India have?

Countries around the world have different party systems: Single-party system, Two-party system and Multi-party system.

**Single-party system:** China, have a single party system, here people have limited choice of candidates. All the candidates are from the same party and the party has tremendous power which it can at times misuse to crush the freedom of the people.

**Two-party system:** The United States of America (USA) and United Kingdom, have two party system. In USA, people choose candidates from either the Democratic Party or Republican Party. The electorate selects a party based on the stand the party takes on different issues.

**Multi-party system:** India have a multi party system, here the electorate can choose from several parties, each with its own agenda, or plan of action, for tackling issues facing the nation.

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## 8. What is a coalition government?

When no single party wins majority seats to form the government, a group of political parties who may have common interests come together to collectively achieve the majority and form the government. This kind of government is called coalition government.