



ONE NATION, ONE ELECTION: AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION

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Abstract

The Government of India is considering a proposal called "One Nation, One Election" that aims to coordinate elections for all state assemblies and the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament. It plans to conduct these elections concurrently, either on the same day or during a predetermined window of time. One nation, one election is among the critical reforms in the current central government's agenda. The purpose of this research is to study the opinion of citizens regarding one nation one election. This research paper is also discussing the stand of political parties, political leaders and election commission of India regarding one nation one election. For this study, the researcher collected data from primary and secondary resources. Survey was done on 30 people as primary resource. For secondary resource, mainly data taken from websites and social media platform. The researcher used one discussion paper of Mr. Bibek Debroy and Kishore Desai (former members of Niti Aayog). From this study, it is clear that It is a very complex thing to conclude as people whom I asked question were not aware of one nation one election properly, they just knew it because of media, majority of them did not have even basic knowledge of it. But if we look at the survey which I did as per that people want it to be implemented as they know it will say cost and time. Moreover, the election commission also seems ready to conduct one nation one election as soon as they can. And know if we talk about the political parties, majority are not in favour of one nation one election. As they think it would affect the state elections and they would lose elections as it could overshadow the regional interests. It is difficult to implement one nation one election but not impossible.

Keywords: Nation, Election, Government

Introduction

The Government of India is considering a proposal called "One Nation, One Election" that aims to coordinate elections for all state assemblies and the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament. It plans to conduct these elections concurrently, either on the same day or during a predetermined window of time. The central government is prioritizing the significant reform of implementing a unified election system across the nation. In fact, the former President of India, Ram Nath Kovind, in his address to Parliament in January 2018, mentioned this as one of the reforms proposed by the government. He said that citizens are concerned about frequent elections in one part of the country or another, which adversely impact the

economy and development. The Prime Minister has firmly emphasized the need for a unified election system across the nation. If we ask, why is it a hot topic today? So the answer is – centre has formed a high level committee which will explore the possibility of simultaneous election in the country. This committee is headed by former president of India Ram Nath Kovind including 5 more members: 1. Amit shah(Home Minister), 2. Harish Salve(senior advocate), 3. Ghulam Nabi Azad, 4. S.K singh (Ex-chairman of Finance commission), 5. Subhash C Kashyap (Former Lok Sabha General secretary).

This concept is not new to India as it was followed for first three subsequent general elections 1957-1962-1967. Now the questions arise – how did elections stop taking place simultaneously? So the answer is- It happened first in 1959 when center invoked article 356 in kerala. After this center government invoked article 356 in many states to dismiss state governments:

Kerala	1964-1967
Haryana	1967-1968
Assam	1968-1969
Punjab	1968-1969
U.P	1968-1970

The general assembly election was supposed to take place 1972 but Indira Gandhi called for early general election and it took place in 1971. After all these episodes, simultaneous election stopped taking place in India.

Research Objective

The objectives of this research is

1. To study the opinion of citizens regarding one nation one election.
2. To study the stand of political parties, political leaders and election commission of India.
3. To study the discussion paper of Bibek Debroy and Kishore Desai.
4. To study whether it is practical or not.

Research Design

For this study, the researcher collected data from primary and secondary resources. Survey was done on 30 people as primary resource. To conduct survey, the researcher, ask three questions from respondent related to One Nation One Election. For secondary resource, mainly data taken from websites and social media platform. The researcher used one discussion paper of Mr. Bibek Debroy and Kishore Desai (former members of Niti Aayog).

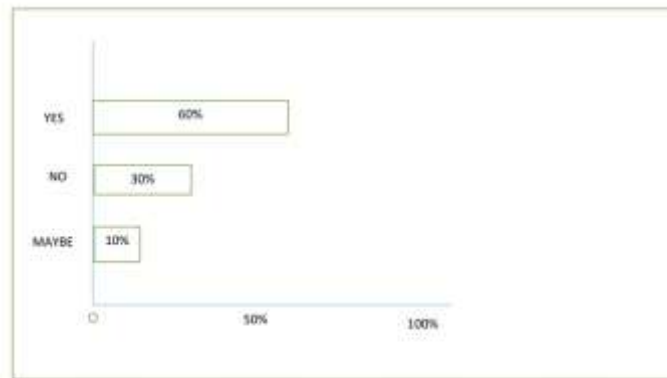
Result and Discussion

Objective 1. To study the opinion of citizens regarding one nation one election

To know the opinion of citizens regarding one nation one election the researcher conducted a survey on 30 people. In the survey three questions asked related to one nation one election. The three questions were:

- Should we implement one nation one election?
- Will it be cost effective?
- Will one nation one election help government to be more productive?

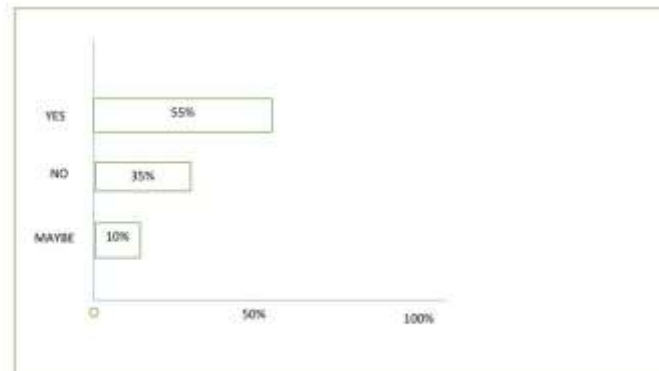
- Should we implement one nation one election?



Ques. Should we implement one nation one election?

In this, there were three options- yes/no/maybe. 60% people said “YES”, 30% People said “NO”, and 10% people said “MAYBE”.

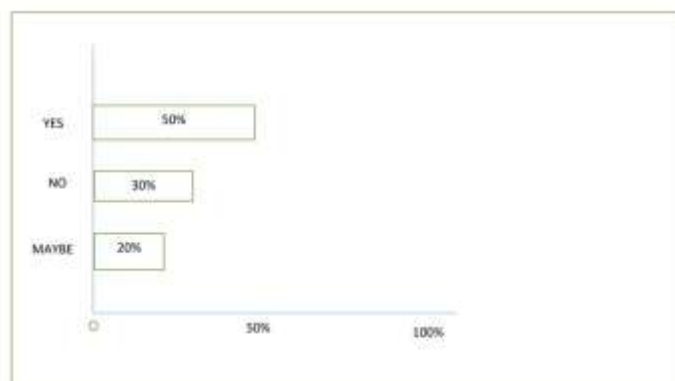
- Will it be cost effective?



Ques. Will it be cost effective?

In this, there were three options- yes/no/maybe. 55% people said “YES”, 35% People said “NO”, and 10% people said “MAYBE”.

- Will one nation one election help government to be more productive?



Ques. Will one nation one election help the government to be more productive?

In this 50% people said “YES”, 30% people said “NO” and 20% people said “MAYBE”.

Objective 2. To study the stand of political parties, political leaders and election commission of India.

One Nation One Election is an important to be reviewed meticulously. Many political parties and leaders have given their opinion on it. Let's have a look at leaders and political parties which have given their opinion.

Now let's talk about statements and stand of political parties and political leaders.

- Starting with AIMIM chairman- Asaduddin Owaisi, he says- from where will they get thousands of crore to buy VVPAT.
- Rahul Gandhi- the move was branded a "distraction".
- Yogi Adityanath- it is revolutionary policy.
- Arvind Kejriwal- it is abuse of power and BJP's secret instrument to win elections.
- TMC- had said that simultaneous elections could lead to an "Emergency-like situation.
- Congress- we are against the idea of one nation one election.
- DMK- had said that the idea of simultaneous elections goes against the basic tenets of the Constitution.
- CPI- claimed that 'One Nation, One Election' is merely a wish of PM Modi.
- TDP- a former ally of the BJP and also a potential ally in the 2024 polls, had opposed the proposal stating that the simultaneous elections may be good but require detailed study and investigation.
- AAP-, which joined hands with the likes of Congress and the RJD recently, after previously dubbing them corrupt, said that the regional parties will have a disadvantage with the One Nation, One Election proposal.
- The Shiromani Akali Dal- which was a BJP ally in 2018, had supported the idea then. The Naveen Patnaik-led Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and the Jagan Mohan Reddy-led YSRCP had also backed the proposal.
- BJD- The idea of simultaneous elections was first mooted by BJD and also implemented by them in 2004 when they shortened the Assembly tenure by 1 year. The then Chief Minister Mr Naveen Patnaik took the unprecedented step of dissolving the Assembly, which helped in saving money, and also helped in the implementation of MCC for once only in 2004. Since then the elections to the Odisha Assembly have been held with the Centre," the draft said.
- S.P- the Akhilesh Yadav-led Samajwadi Party (SP) and the KCR-led Bharat Rashtra Samithi (then TRS) extended support to the proposal.

If talk about some major institute like election commission and law commission, so they have also made their stand very clear.

- Election commission- it has been in favor of one nation election for so many years now. In 1983 it said "Bring back simultaneous elections". Former chief election commissioner Sushil Chandra said – "Election commission is fully prepared and capable of conducting simultaneous elections. Former Chief Election Commissioner OP Rawat said that the government needs to make amendments to the Constitution and law for the proposal to be implemented."
- Law commission – as we can see how active law commission is right now looking at the possibilities of bring back simultaneous election. It even pushed for it in 1999.

Objective 3. To study the discussion paper of Bibek Debroy and Kishore Desai.

- Mr. Bibek Debroy and Kishore Desai (former members of Niti Aayog) came up with a discussion paper named The “what”, “why”, AND “HOW”. In this discussion paper they have talked about almost every aspect of simultaneous elections- from finance to religion issues and how it will impact our nation. In this discussion paper, they have tried to say that one nation one election is possible after looking at all the aspects.

Objective 4. To study whether it is practical or not.

Whether it is practical to implement one nation one election or not, on the basis of above data we can conclude that, it is not impossible but indeed very difficult as it has its own legal challenges. The Law Commission headed by justice B.S Chauhan reported the simultaneous elections are not feasible within the existing framework of the constitution. It was stated that relevant revisions to the constitution, the representation of the people act of 1951, and the rules of procedure of the lok sabha and state assemblies would be needed to hold simultaneous elections. The commission also recommended to receive ratification from at least 50% of the states which may not be an easy task.

Conclusion

It is a very complex thing to conclude as people whom I asked question were not aware of one nation one election properly, they just knew it because of media, majority of them did not have even basic knowledge of it. But if we look at the survey which I did as per that people want it to be implemented as they know it will say cost and time. Moreover, the election commission also seems ready to conduct one nation one election as soon as they can. And know if we talk about the political parties, majority are not in favour of one nation one election. As they think it would affect the state elections and they would lose elections as it could overshadow the regional interests. It is difficult to implement one nation one election but not impossible.

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- Discussion paper named- the “What”, “Why” and “How” by Bibek Debroy and Kishore Desai (former members of Niti Aayog)