

Elections

Meaning of elections:

Elections are a democratic process in which citizens choose their representatives by voting. Through elections, people express their will and decide who will make laws and run the government on their behalf.

Elections in India are not a new phenomenon born in modern times. The practice of taking decisions collectively, whether within families or at the community level, has been a part of the Indian way of life since ancient times. Consensus and participation have long guided how people manage their social and political affairs. Ancient scriptures dating back to the Vedic age contain several references to republics and democratic forms of governance that existed in different parts of India. This shows that the spirit of democracy has deep roots in Indian history.

- The Uttaramerur Inscription, issued during the reign of Parantaka Chola I (10th century CE), provides one of the earliest detailed records of a structured local self-government system in India called the Kudavolai System.
- The Kudavolai system, meaning "ballot pot," was an early electoral method used in Chola village assemblies. Under this system, the names of eligible candidates were written on palm leaves and placed inside a pot, from which a young boy-chosen for his impartiality-would draw one name in full public view. The selected person would then assume a position in the village assembly. This randomised draw was not a game of chance but a civic ritual rooted in transparency, fairness, and collective consent. To prevent power from being monopolised by dynastic elites, the system followed strict eligibility rules.

In a democracy, power does not belong to a king or a small group of people. It belongs to the citizens. Elections are the means through which people exercise this power. By voting in elections, citizens choose their representatives and decide who will form the government. Elections make the government accountable to the people and ensure that leaders are selected through peaceful and fair competition. Thus, elections are the foundation of a democratic political system.

Highlighting the Importance of Elections :

India is the largest practising democracy in the world. It has become a role model for other democratic countries. Conducting elections in India is a massive administrative exercise. India has over 900 million registered voters, making it one of the largest electorate in the world. The scale of Indian elections is often compared to conducting elections across several large countries combined.

Since our Constitution makes India a representative democracy, at all levels, all political decisions have to be taken by the elected representatives of the people. Elections as such become an integral part of our political system. From the Panchayats to the Union Government, all political institutions function through elected representatives of the people. At the local level, people choose representatives to the Panchayats or Municipalities. These representatives are called Panchas or Councillors. At the national level, people elect Members of Parliament, known as MPs.

There is no other widely accepted democratic way of selecting representatives except through elections and voting. That is the only way to make sure that the government represents the will, the choice of the people. One could choose representatives based on education, wisdom, honesty, and experience, but this would be selection. They may not represent the will of the people. The most effective way to ensure true representation is through elections. In an election, voters can choose:

- The party that would make policies and guide the government in law-making.
 - They will choose the people who will make laws for them.
 - They will choose the people who will sit in the government and make major decisions.
- The choice of representatives is not made permanently; in a democratic election, people can reverse their previous decision and change the government if it fails to perform. Thus, the representatives are answerable to the people who elect them.
- Elections lead to political competition. The competition can take various forms.
 - It is a competition among various political parties.
 - It also involves competition among various ideologies and policies of different political parties.
 - At the level of a constituency, it takes the form of competition among many candidates.
 - Many times, it becomes a competition among the top leaders of various parties.
 - Elections also make the people aware of the national problems. Through the manifestos of different political parties, people come to know how each party is going to deal with the national problems.

Electoral system :

Elections allow every adult citizen of the country to participate in the democratic process and, in many cases, in forming the government. In India, elections are held regularly at different levels. These include elections to elect members of the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies (Vidhan Sabhas), Legislative Councils (Vidhan Parishad), the President and Vice-President of India. Elections are also held for local bodies such as municipalities, municipal corporations and Panchayati Raj institutions.

Types of Electoral System :

The three major electoral systems discussed in comparative political studies are the First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) system, the Proportional Representation (PR) system, and Mixed-Member systems such as Mixed Member Proportional Representation (MMPR). However, India primarily uses FPTP and PR systems.

Three Types of Electoral Systems:

1. First-Past-the-Post
 2. Proportional Representation (PR)
 3. Mixed-Member Proportional Representation (MMPR)
1. The First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) system is also called the plurality system. In this method of voting, the candidate who receives the most votes in a constituency is declared the winner. In India, direct elections to the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies are conducted using this system. Just like in a race, the candidate who leads others and reaches the winning post first is elected, even if they do not secure an absolute majority.
In the FPTP system, the entire country is divided into small geographical areas known as constituencies. Each constituency elects one representative, and every voter casts a vote for one candidate. The candidate who receives more votes than the other candidates is declared the winner. The winning candidate is not required to secure a majority, that is, 50%+1 of the total votes. Countries such as India, the United Kingdom, and Canada follow the FPTP system. Under the FPTP system, a political party may win a larger share of seats in the legislature than its overall percentage of votes.
 2. Proportional Representation (PR) is an electoral system used to elect a country's government in which political parties are allotted seats according to the number of votes they receive. In this system, the various groups or divisions within the electorate are represented in the legislature in proportion to their level of support. This means that if a political party secures a certain percentage of the total votes cast, it will receive approximately the same percentage of the seats in the elected body.

The fundamental principle of proportional representation is that every vote contributes to the final result, rather than only determining which party gains a simple plurality or bare majority. As a result, PR aims to ensure fair and balanced representation of different political viewpoints. The most widely used forms of proportional representation include the party-list system, the Single Transferable Vote (STV), and the Mixed-Member Proportional (MMP) system.

India follows the Proportional Representation (PR) system with the Single Transferable Vote (STV) method for certain indirect elections. This system is used for the election of members to the Rajya Sabha (the Upper House of Parliament) as well as for the offices of the President and Vice-President of India.

Unlike the Lok Sabha, whose members are elected directly by the people, members of the Rajya Sabha are elected indirectly by the elected members of the State Legislative Assemblies (Vidhan Sabhas). The number of Rajya Sabha members from each state is roughly proportional to the population of that state.

Under the STV system, voters (such as MLAs or Members of Parliament, depending on the election) cast one vote but rank candidates in order of preference - first preference, second preference, and so on. To be elected, a candidate must secure a fixed number of votes called a quota. If a candidate receives more votes than the quota, the surplus votes are transferred to other candidates based on the next preferences marked on the ballot. Similarly, if a candidate receives too few votes and is eliminated, their votes are transferred according to the voters' next preferences.

This method reduces the wastage of votes and ensures that representation more closely reflects the relative strength of political groups or the federal balance of the country. It also allows voters to indicate multiple preferences, making the system more representative and inclusive.

3. A third type of electoral system, often discussed in academic and reform debates, is the Mixed Member system. This system combines features of both the First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) and Proportional Representation (PR) systems. Under Mixed-Member Proportional Representation (MMPR), some representatives are elected from single-member constituencies using FPTP, while additional seats are allocated to political parties to ensure that the total number of seats they hold reflects their overall share of the votes. This system is used in several countries, but Germany and New Zealand are key examples.

Comparison Table for First-Past-the-Post and Proportional Representation (PR with STV)

Feature	First-Past-the-Post (FPTP)	Proportional Representation (PR with STV)
Type of Election	Direct elections	Indirect elections
Used For in India	Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies	Rajya Sabha, President, Vice-President
Constituencies	Single-member constituencies	Multi-member constituencies
Voting Method	Voter votes for one candidate	Voter ranks candidates in order of preference
Winner Decided By	Candidate with the highest votes wins	Candidates elected based on quota and preferences
Majority Required	Not required (no need for 50%+1)	Based on achieving a quota
Wastage of Votes	High (votes for losing candidates are wasted)	Low (preferences are transferred)
Representation	May not reflect the vote share accurately	Reflects the strength of parties more fairly
Example Countries	India, UK, Canada	India (for Rajya Sabha & President), Ireland

Election laws :

Since 1950, several laws have been enacted in India to regulate the conduct and functioning of elections. To regulate the electoral process in the country, the following important laws have been passed:

- The Representation of the People Act, 1950
- The Representation of the People Act, 1951
- The Delimitation Act, 2002

The Representation of the People Act, 1950

The Representation of the People Act, 1950: Articles 81 and 170 of the Constitution of India prescribe the maximum number of seats in Parliament and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States. They also lay down certain principles for the allocation of seats in the House of the People among the States and in the State Legislative Assemblies. However, the actual allocation of these seats is to be determined by law.

Similarly, Article 171 of the Constitution lays down the maximum and minimum number of seats in a State Legislative Council and specifies the different methods by which these seats are to be filled. The exact number of seats to be filled through each method is left to be decided by law.

Therefore, the Representation of the People Act, 1950, was enacted to provide for the allocation of seats in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assemblies and Legislative Councils of the States.

The Act makes the following provisions relating to elections:

- The Act provides for the allocation of seats in the Lok Sabha and, in the State Legislative Assemblies and the State Legislative Councils.
- It deals with the preparation and maintenance of electoral rolls for Parliamentary, Assembly, and Council constituencies.
- It specifies the manner of filling seats in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) by representatives of Union Territories.
- It defines local authorities for the purpose of elections to the State Legislative Councils.

Representation of the People Act, 1951 :

The Representation of the People Act, 1951, did not include all provisions relating to elections. It mainly dealt with the allocation of seats and the delimitation of constituencies for elections to the House of the People and the State Legislatures, the qualifications of voters at such elections, and the preparation of electoral rolls.

The Representation of the People Act, 1951, provides detailed provisions for the actual conduct of elections to Parliament and State Legislatures.

The Act includes provisions relating to the following electoral matters:

- Qualifications and disqualifications for membership of Parliament and State Legislatures
- Issue of notifications for general elections
- Establishment of the administrative machinery for conducting elections
- Registration of political parties
- Conduct of elections
- Free supply of certain materials to candidates of recognised political parties
- Disputes regarding elections

- Corrupt practices and electoral offences
- Powers of the Election Commission regarding inquiries into the disqualification of members
- Re-elections and the time limit for filling vacancies
- Miscellaneous provisions connected with elections

Delimitation Commission :

Delimitation means fixing or redrawing the boundaries of territorial constituencies in a country or a state that has a legislature. This work is done by an independent body called the Delimitation Commission. In India, Delimitation Commissions have been set up four times-in 1952, 1963, 1973, and 2002 under different Delimitation Acts.

The Delimitation Commission in India is a high-power body whose orders have the force of law and cannot be called in question before any court. These decisions come into effect on a date decided by the President of India. The copies of its orders are placed before the Lok Sabha (House of the People) and the concerned State Legislative Assemblies, but they cannot change or modify these orders.

What is the Significance of Delimitation?

- Delimitation ensures fair representation in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies by redrawing constituency boundaries based on population changes.
- Redraws constituency boundaries to ensure a more equal distribution of the population across constituencies and to prevent over-representation or under-representation of any region.
- Determines the constituencies to be reserved for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) to ensure their political representation.

Election commission of India and its role :

The Election Commission of India is an independent constitutional body that conducts elections in India. It was set up on 25 January 1950. Operating under Article 324 of the Constitution, it is a three-member body headquartered in New Delhi. The President appoints the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners. They have a tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.

The Election Commission of India enjoys a high degree of independence, similar to that of the judiciary. Though the President appoints the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), he is not answerable to the President or the government in the discharge of the constitutional duties. The Chief Election Commissioner can be removed only through a process similar to that for the removal of a Supreme Court judge, and not merely because the government disagrees with decisions or actions.

The Commission can take action against the governments for their lapses. If it thinks that the polling was not fair, it can cancel the poll and order a repoll in some booths or even the entire constituency.

Powers of the Election Commission of India :

The Election Commission has important powers to ensure that elections in India are free and fair.

- **Administrative Powers:** Decides the election dates, manages polling arrangements, and appoints election staff.
- **Advisory Powers:** Advises the President and Governors on the disqualification of members.
- **Quasi-Judicial Powers:** Settles disputes related to political party recognition and election symbols.
- **Regulatory Powers:** Enforces the Model Code of Conduct and monitors election expenses.
- **Disciplinary Powers:** Can transfer or suspend officials involved in election misconduct.

Role and Functions of ECI :

The ECI performs multiple functions to ensure free, fair, and periodic elections in accordance with democratic principles. Major Functions:

- **Conduct of Elections:** Supervises, directs, and controls elections to Parliament, State Legislatures, and high offices.
- **Delimitation:** The Election Commission of India (ECI) does not directly have delimitation powers. It oversees the process, which is conducted by a separate, temporary Delimitation Commission established by the Central Government.
- **Electoral Rolls:** Prepares, revises, and updates voter lists through continuous revision and SIR (Special Intensive Revision).
- **Registration of Political Parties:** Recognises parties and allots election symbols.
- **Voter Education:** Promotes awareness under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme.
- **Monitoring Expenditure:** Ensures transparency through election expenditure audits and monitoring teams.

Constituency, electoral roll and enumerator :

Constituency :

A constituency is a fixed geographical area from which voters elect their representative to a legislative body. In a democratic country like India, it is not possible for all citizens to gather in one place to elect their representatives. Therefore, the entire country is divided into smaller areas called constituencies. Each constituency elects one representative who speaks and works on behalf of the people living in that area.

In India, there are two main types of constituencies. For elections to the Lok Sabha, the country is divided into Parliamentary constituencies. Each Parliamentary constituency elects one Member of Parliament (MP). Similarly, for elections to the State Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha), states are divided into Assembly constituencies. Each Assembly constituency elects one Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA). Thus, constituencies ensure fair representation and help people participate effectively in the democratic process.

Electoral Roll :

An electoral roll, also known as the voters' list, is an official list of all eligible citizens who are registered to vote in a particular constituency. Only those whose names appear on this list are allowed to cast their vote during elections.

In India, the preparation and updating of electoral rolls is carried out under the supervision of the Election Commission of India (ECI).



Verifying names in the electoral roll.



ECINet Voters' Service Portal.

Key Features of an Electoral Roll

- **Universal Inclusion:** Every Indian citizen who is 18 years or above and is ordinarily resident in a constituency can register.
 - **No Discrimination:** No exclusion on the basis of religion, caste, gender, or race.
 - **Constituency-wise List:** Each constituency has its own separate electoral roll.
 - **Regular Updating:** The roll is revised annually and also updated before elections to include new voters and remove the names of deceased or shifted persons.
 - **Photo Electoral Roll:** Most electoral rolls include photographs for better identification.
- Why is the Electoral Roll Important?
- It ensures free and fair elections.
 - It prevents bogus voting and duplication.
 - It protects the principle of political equality.
 - It ensures that only eligible citizens participate in the democratic process.

Process of Enrolment :

Citizens can apply for inclusion in the electoral roll through:

- **Online:** Use the Voters' Service Portal (voters.eci.gov.in) or the Voter Helpline App.
- **Offline:** Submit Form 6 to your local Booth Level Officer (BLO) or Electoral Registration Officer (ERO).

Key Steps :

1. **Submission:** Fill out Form 6 (for new voters or those who have shifted).
2. **Verification:** A Booth Level Officer (BLO) conducts a field visit to confirm your residence.
3. **Approval:** Once verified, your name is added to the official list.
4. **ID Issuance:** You receive a physical Elector's Photo Identity Card (Voter ID).

Enumerator-Meaning and Role

An enumerator is a trained person who collects, verifies, and records information directly from people during surveys, censuses, or field investigations. They usually work on a temporary or contract basis for government, research, or private organisations. Enumerators visit households or businesses and use questionnaires or digital devices to gather accurate data.

Role of an Enumerator (Election Context)



The enumerator plays a vital role in ensuring that the electoral roll is accurate and up to date. This strengthens the work of the Election Commission of India and supports free and fair elections in a democracy.

Key learnings :

- A constituency is a geographical area from which voters elect their representative to Parliament or a State Legislature. Each constituency has its own separate voters' list.
- An electoral roll is the official list of eligible voters in a particular constituency. Only those whose names appear on the roll can cast their vote.
- The electoral roll is based on the principle of Universal Adult Franchise, allowing every citizen aged 18 years and above to register without discrimination.
- An enumerator is a trained person appointed during surveys or electoral roll revision to collect and verify the details of eligible voters through door-to-door visits.

Party system in india :

A political party is an organised group of people who share similar political ideas and aim to form the government through elections. Political parties present policies and programmes to the people and seek their support. In India, political parties are recognised and regulated by the Election Commission of India.

The contemporary party system in India originally evolved in the context of the freedom struggle. The purpose of political parties changed after Independence. Before Independence, political parties were part of the national movement, with the primary aim of achieving freedom. After Independence, their objective shifted towards gaining power and forming the government. For this reason, they began to compete with one another. Consequently, the party system in India transformed from the dominance of a single party to the emergence of multiple parties.

Although India follows a multi-party framework, it has passed through several phases. For instance, during the first two decades after Independence, the country experienced the dominance of one party within a broader multiparty framework. The idea of a multi-party system and coalition governments at the Centre became prominent after 1989.

Political parties and the party system in India have been deeply influenced by cultural diversity; social, ethnic, caste, community, and religious pluralism; the traditions of the nationalist movement; differing styles of party leadership; and conflicting ideological perspectives. The Indian Constitution has established a parliamentary form of government at both the Centre and State levels. Members of the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha are elected by the citizens of the country. Therefore, the political parties that contest elections become an integral part of the political system (party system). The party system serves as a vital link between the people and the government.

Types of Party System :

There are mainly three categories of the party system:

One-Party System: Only one political party is legally allowed to hold power and form the government. This system is typically found in authoritarian regimes. Examples: China, North Korea, Cuba.

Two-Party System: Two major political parties dominate the political landscape. Although other parties may exist, only two have a realistic chance of forming a majority government. Examples: The United States (Democrats/Republicans), the United Kingdom (Conservatives/Labour).

Multi-Party System: More than two political parties have the potential to gain control of the government, often leading to coalition governments. Examples: India, France, Israel.

India follows a Multi-Party System. Several political parties contest elections at the national and state levels. Because of the presence of many parties, sometimes no single party wins a clear majority in the legislature. In such cases, two or more parties may come together to form a coalition government. In simple words, it is like a team of parties working together to run the country or the state.

Features of a Coalition Government

The main features of a coalition government are:

Multi-party composition: Formed by two or more political parties when no single party secures a majority.

Common Minimum Programme (CMP): Coalition partners agree on a shared policy agenda to govern effectively.

Power sharing: Cabinet positions and responsibilities are allocated among the coalition partners.

Consensus-based decision-making: Major policies require consultation and mutual agreement among the allies.

Flexible political arrangements: Alliances may shift depending on political support and changing interests.

Limited stability: The survival of the government depends on the continued support of coalition partners.

Checks on dominance: It prevents the concentration of power in a single party, thereby strengthening democracy.

Types of Political Parties in India

Political parties in India are broadly classified into:

1. National Parties: These parties operate across the country and fulfil conditions laid down by the Election Commission. They influence several states. The national parties are also known as All-India parties.

2. State (Regional) Parties: These parties operate mainly within a particular state and focus on regional issues and interests. The state parties are also known as regional parties.

Criteria for National and State Party Recognition

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has laid down specific criteria for a political party to be recognised as a National or State Party. A party may gain or lose this status from time to time, depending on whether it fulfils the prescribed conditions.

Criteria for Recognition as a National Party

According to the ECI's Political Parties and Election Symbols, 2019 handbook, a political party is recognised as a National Party if it fulfils any one of the following conditions:

- It is recognised as a State Party in four or more states; or
- Its candidates secure at least 6% of the total valid votes in any four or more states in the latest Lok Sabha or Assembly elections, and it has at least four Members of Parliament (MPs) in the most recent Lok Sabha; or
- It wins at least 2% of the total seats in the Lok Sabha from not less than three states. There are currently six recognised National Parties in India (as per the latest ECI notification). These parties have a permanent election symbol reserved for their exclusive use across the entire country.

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

Recognised National Parties in India

The All India Trinamool Congress, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), and the Communist Party of India (CPI) lost their National Party status in 2023 following an ECI review.

Criteria for Recognition as a State Party

To be recognised as a State Party, a party must fulfil any one of the following conditions:

- at least 6% of the valid votes in the last Assembly election and have at least 2 MLAs; or have 6% of the valid votes in the last Lok Sabha elections from that state and at least one MP from that state; or
- at least 3% of the total number of seats or three seats, whichever is higher, in the last Assembly elections; or
- at least one MP for every 25 members or any fraction allotted to the state in the Lok Sabha; or
- have at least 8% of the total valid votes in the last Assembly election or Lok Sabha election from the state.

This recognition grants parties certain privileges, such as reserved election symbols, free broadcast time on state media during elections, and other electoral benefits.

Some prominent regional parties are-RJD (Bihar), SP (Uttar Pradesh), DMK (Tamil Nadu).

Key learnings :

- A political party is a group that contests elections to form the government.
- India follows a multi-party system, where many parties compete for power.
- When no party gets a majority, parties join together to form a coalition government.
- Political parties are classified as National Parties and State (Regional) Parties.
- The Election Commission of India decides the recognition and symbols of political parties.

Anti-defection law :

Defection refers to switching political allegiance, particularly when a member of a political party leaves the party and joins another party or becomes independent. The Anti-Defection Law was introduced to prevent elected representatives from changing political parties after being elected. This law aims to ensure stability in governments and maintain discipline among political parties.

The Anti-Defection Law was added to the Constitution through the 52nd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1985. It is included in the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

Key Provisions of Anti-Defection Law

1. **Disqualification:** A member of a House belonging to a political party is disqualified from being a member of the House:
 - If he voluntarily gives up the membership of that political party; or
 - If he votes or abstains from voting in the House against any direction (whip) issued by his political party without prior permission, and such action is not condoned by the party within 15 days.
2. **Independent Members:** An independent member of a House becomes disqualified if he joins any political party after the election.
3. **Nominated Members:** A nominated member of a House is disqualified if he joins any political party after six months from the date on which he takes his seat in the House.
4. **Exceptions:** Disqualification on the ground of defection does not apply in the following cases:
 - (a) **Merger:** If a member leaves his party due to its merger with another party. A merger is considered valid when at least two-thirds of the members of the legislature party agree to such a merger.
 - (b) **Presiding Officer:** If a member, after being elected as the Presiding Officer of the House, voluntarily gives up the membership of his party or rejoins it after ceasing to hold that office. This exception is provided to maintain the dignity and impartiality of the office.
5. **Deciding Authority:** Under the tenth Schedule of the Indian Constitution (Anti-Defection Law), if any question arises as to whether a Member of the House has become subject to disqualification, the decision is made by the Speaker (Legislative Assembly/Lok Sabha) or Chairman (Rajya Sabha/Legislative Council) of the House, subject to judicial review.
6. **Rule-Making Power:** The Presiding Officer of the House has the authority to frame rules to implement the provisions of the Tenth Schedule. According to these rules, a defection case can be taken up only when a petition is received from a member of the House.
An anti-defection law is needed in India to prevent elected representatives from switching political parties or factions frequently, which can lead to instability and a lack of accountability in government.

- How Did the Anti-Defection Law Evolve?
- In 1967, an MLA from Haryana, Gaya Lal, changed his political party three times in a single day.
- After this incident, the phrase 'Aaya Ram, Gaya Ram' became popular in Indian politics.
- Party switching soon became common across many States, leading to the fall of several state governments.
- This situation raised serious concerns in the Lok Sabha, and a committee was formed under the then Home Minister Y. B. Chavan, to examine the issue.
- The Chavan Committee recommended that legislators who changed parties for monetary or other gains should be disqualified from Parliament and barred from contesting elections for a certain period.
- To prevent such frequent defections, the Anti-Defection Law was enacted in 1985 during the tenure of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi through the 52nd Constitutional Amendment, which added the Tenth Schedule to the Constitution.
- In 1992, the constitutional validity of the Tenth Schedule was challenged before the Supreme Court in the landmark case of Kihoto Hollohan v. Zachillhu and Others.
- In 2003, through the 91st Constitutional Amendment Act, the anti-defection law was strengthened.
- It deleted the provision relating to 'split' (one-third members), which had earlier protected defectors.
- It also stated that a member disqualified under the Tenth Schedule would not be eligible to hold any executive or ministerial office.

The Need for Anti-Defection Measures :

The Anti-Defection Law was introduced to address serious problems in India's political system caused by frequent party switching. The main reasons for its need are:

- **Political Stability:** These measures prevent frequent "floor-crossing," which previously led to the collapse of multiple state governments and caused administrative instability.
- **Curbing Corruption:** By imposing penalties such as disqualification, the law seeks to curb "horse-trading," where legislators' support is influenced by money or promises of ministerial posts.
- **Upholding Voter Mandate:** Defection is often seen as a betrayal of the voters who elected a representative based on a specific party's ideology and platform.
- **Enforcing Party Discipline:** The law enables political parties to maintain cohesion by ensuring members vote in line with the party "whip" on critical issues.
- **Reducing Electoral Costs:** Stable governments reduce the likelihood of frequent and costly mid-term elections caused by the fall of ruling coalitions.