History of electoral politics in India

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[**Manifest pedagogy**](#):

This year the General Election has taken the center stage and newspapers and news channels in their high audible discussions talked about the possible results. This might pike the examiners interest in the history of democratic politics in India. They have asked questions on analysing the changing trends in electoral politics in India. The current article is an attempt to provide students with necessary data to answer such questions.

In news

17th General Election

Placing it in the syllabus

Modern Indian History

Dimensions

- A brief history of Indian democracy
- List of the general elections in India along with the party that came in power
- The representation of various parties in all the general elections

Content

A brief history of Indian democracy

Like so many other features of modern India we need to begin the story about modern Indian democracy from the colonial

period. Many structural and cultural changes that British colonialism brought deliberately. Some of the changes that came about happened in an unintended fashion. The British did not intend to introduce them. For instance, they sought to introduce western education to create a western educated Indian middle class that would help the colonial rulers to continue their rule. A western educated section of Indians did emerge. But, instead of aiding British rule, they used western liberal ideas of democracy, social justice and nationalism to challenge colonial rule.

Following are the key events that shows how the democracy evolved in India;

- **Indian councils Act of 1861:** It made a beginning of representative institutions by associating Indians with the law-making process. In 1862, Lord Canning, the then viceroy, nominated three Indians to his legislative council—the Raja of Benaras, the Maharaja of Patiala and Sir Dinkar Rao(as non official members).
- **Indian councils Act of 1892:** It increased the number of additional (non-official) members in the Central and provincial legislative councils, but maintained the official majority in them.
- **Morley-Minto Reforms 1909:** It provided (for the first time) for the association of Indians with the executive Councils of the Viceroy and Governors. Satyendra Prasad Sinha became the first Indian to join the Viceroy's Executive Council. He was appointed as the law member. It introduced a system of communal representation for Muslims by accepting the concept of 'separate electorate'. Under this, the Muslim members were to be elected only by Muslim voters. It also provided for the separate representation of presidency corporations, chambers of commerce, universities and zamindars.
- **The Government of India Act of 1919(Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms):** It extended the principle of communal

representation by providing separate electorates for Sikhs, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans. It also granted franchise to a limited number of people on the basis of property, tax or education.

- **Motilal Nehru 1928:** The Motilal Nehru In his report **advocated unlimited adult franchise** and equal rights for women.

- **Karachi session of 1931:** in this session Indian National Congress adopted a resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Policy which encapsulated the notion of **universal adult franchise.**

- **The Government of India Act of 1935:** It further extended the principle of communal representation by providing separate electorates for depressed classes (scheduled castes), women and labour (workers). It extended franchise. About 10 per cent of the total population got the voting right

- **Freedom of India and drafting of the constitution of India :** India adopted the principle of universal adult franchise when the present Constitution was enacted in 1949 which was implemented on January 26, 1950. The Indian Constitution has granted the right to vote to all Indian citizens of sound mind above the age of 18(*21 earlier-reduced to 18 later*), irrespective of an individual's caste, religion, social or economic status. This right is universally granted to all Indians, with a few exceptions.

List of the general elections in India along with the party that came to power

When the democratic India voted, chose and elected its first government, Democracy took a step forward. These elections turned out to be one of the world's biggest democratic experiments. Since Independence the elections in India are being conducted on the basis of universal adult franchise. Following are the list of general elections in India and their

outcomes;

General elections	Year	Winning Party(seats) and Prime Minister	Other large parties and seats won
1st	1951-52	The India National Congress(364/489) Jawaharlal Nehru	Second-CPI(16 seats) Third-Socialist Party(12) Fourth-Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party(9) Fifth- Peoples Democratic front(7)
2nd	1957	The India National Congress(371/494) Jawaharlal Nehru	CPI-(27) Praja Socialist Party(19) Ganatantra Parishad(7) Jharkhand Party(6)
3rd	1962	The India National Congress(331) Jawaharlal Nehru/Lal Bahaddur shastri	CPI-(29) Swatantra Party-(18) Bharatiya Jana Sangh(14) Praja Socialist Party(12)
4th	1967	The India National Congress(283) Indira Gandhi	Swatantra Party-(42) Bharatiya Jana Sangh(35) Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam(25) CPI(23)

5th	1971	The India National Congress(352) Indira Gandhi	CPI(M)(25) Communist Party(23) Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam(23) Jan Sangh(22)
6th	1977	Janata Party(295) Morarji Desai/ Charan Singh	Indian National Congress(154) CPI(M)(22) All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazahagam(AIDMK)(18) Akali dal(9)
7th	1980	The India National Congress(I)(353) Indiara Gandhi	Janata Party(Secular)(41) CPI(M)(37) Janata Party(31) DMK(16)
8th	1984	The India National Congress(414) Rajiv Gandhi	Telugu Desam Party(30) CPI(M)(23) Janata Party(16) AIDMK(12)
9th	1989	National Front coalition(led by Janata Dal) V.P Singh/ Chandra Shekhar	The India National Congress(197) Janata Dal(142) Bharatiya Janata Party(85) CPI(M)(34)
10th	1991	The India National Congress(252) PM- P.V Narasimha Rao	BJP(121) Janata Dal(63) CPI(M)(36) CPI(14)

11th	1996	Bharatiya Janata Party(161) + 26 of Allies 1. PM- Atal Bihari Vajpayee United Front (332) 2) PM- H.D Deve Gowda 3) PM- I.K Gujral	INC(141) Janata Dal(79) CPI(M)(52) Samajwadi Party(46) CPI(32)
12th	1998	Bharatiya Janata Party(182) PM-Atal Bihari Vajpayee	INC(141) CPI(M)(32) Samajwadi Party(SP)(20) AIADMK(18)
13th	1999	NDA led by BJP(298) PM-Atal Bihari Vajpayee	INC(114) CPI(M) (33) TDP(29) SP(26)
14th	2004	UPA led by INC(335) PM-Manmohan Singh	BJP(138) CPI(M) (43) SP(36) Rashtriya Janata Dal(21)
15th	2009	UPA led by INC(261) PM- Manmohan Singh	BJP(112) SP(21) BSP(21) JDU(19)
16th	2014	NDA led by BJP(336) PM- Narendra Modi	INC(44) AIADMK(37) All India Trinamool Congress(TMC) (34) Biju Janata Dal(BJD) (20)

17th	2019	NDA led by BJP(353) PM- Narendra Modi	INC(52) DMK(23) TMC(22) Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party(YSRC)(22)