CHAPTER - II

definition of election

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CHAPTER-II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF ELECTION SYSTEM:
ITS ORIGIN AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND
ELECTION PROCESS IN INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

2.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

In olden days the democracy of ancient Athens did not allow women, foreigners, or slaves to vote, and the original United States Constitution left the topic of suffrage to the states; usually only white male property owners were able to vote. Much of the history of elections involves the effort to promote suffrage for excluded groups. The women's suffrage movement gave women in many countries the right to vote, and securing the right to vote freely was a major goal of the American civil rights movement. Extending the right to vote to other groups which remain excluded in some places such as convicted felons, members of certain

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minorities, and the economically disadvantaged continues to be a significant goal of voting rights advocates.

Suffrage is typically only for citizens of the country. Further limits may be imposed: for example, in Kuwait, only people who have been citizens since 1920 or their descendants are allowed to vote, a condition that the majority of residents do not fulfill. However, in the European Union, one can vote in municipal elections if one lives in the municipality and is an European Union citizen; the nationality of the country of residence is not required.

In some countries, voting is required by law; if an eligible voter does not cast a vote, he or she may be subject to punitive measures such as a small fine. A representative democracy requires a procedure to govern nomination for political office. In many cases, nomination for office is mediated through pre-selection processes in organised political parties. Non-partisan systems tend to differ from partisan systems as concerns nominations. In a direct democracy, one type of non-partisan democracy, any eligible person can be nominated. In some non-partisan representative systems no nominations or campaigning, electioneering, etc. take place at all, with voters free to choose any person at the time of voting with some possible exceptions such as through a minimum age requirement in the jurisdiction. In such cases, it is not required that the members of the electorate be familiar with all of the eligible persons, though such systems may involve indirect elections at larger geographic levels to ensure that some first-hand familiarity among potential electees can exist at these.
levels i.e., among the elected delegates. As far as partisan systems, in some countries, only members of a particular political party can be nominated or an eligible person can be nominated through a petition; thus allowing him or her to be listed on a ballot. The government positions for which elections are held vary depending on the local status. In a representative democracy, such as the United States, some positions are not filled through elections, especially those which are seen as requiring a certain competency or excellence.

In some cases, as for example, in soviet democracy there may exist an intermediate electors between constituents and the elected figure. However, in most representative democracies, this level of indirection usually is nothing more than a formality. For example, the President of the United States is elected by the Electoral College, and in the Westminster System, the Prime Minister is formally chosen by the head of state and in reality by the legislature or by their party. In most democratic political systems, there are a range of different types of election, corresponding to different layers of public governance or geographical jurisdiction. Some common types of election are:

- Presidential election
- General election
- Primary election
- By-election
- Local election

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3 Kashyap, Subhash C., Constitutionalism in the Coalition Age, Times of India, 9 Sept., 1998, p 21

4 e.g., Judges are usually appointed rather than elected to help protect their impartiality. There are exceptions to this practice, however; some judges in the United States are elected, and in ancient Athens military generals were elected.
A referendum is a democratic tool related to elections in which the electorate votes for or against a specific proposal, law or policy, rather than for a general policy or a particular candidate or party. Referendums may be added to an election ballot or held separately and may be either binding or consultative, usually depending on the constitution. Referendums are usually called by governments, however many democracies allow citizens to petition for referendums directly, called initiatives. Referendums are particularly prevalent and important in direct democracies, such as Switzerland. The basic Swiss system, however, still works with representatives. In the most direct form of democracy, anyone can vote about anything. This is closely related to referendums and may take the form of consensus decision-making. Reminiscent of the ancient Greek system, anyone may discuss a particular subject until a consensus is reached. The consensus requirement means that discussions can go on for a very long time. The result will be that only those who are genuinely interested will participate in the discussion and therefore they vote. In this system there need not be an age limit because children will usually become bored. This system is however only feasible when implemented on a very small scale.

2.2 ELECTORAL SYSTEMS: Electoral systems refer to the detailed constitutional arrangements and voting systems which convert the vote into a determination of which individuals and political parties are elected to positions of power. The first step is to tally the votes, for which various

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5 Plural referendums or referenda
6 Kashyap, Subhash C., Polls in Times of War, The Hindustan Times, 6 July 1999, p33
different vote counting systems and ballot types are used. Voting systems then determine the result on the basis of the tally. Most systems can be categorized as either proportional or majoritarian. Among the former are party-list proportional representation and additional member system. Among the latter are First Past the Post (FPP) relative majority and absolute majority. Many countries have growing electoral reform movements, which advocate systems such as approval voting, single transferable vote, instant runoff voting or a conducted method; these methods are also gaining popularity for lesser elections in some countries where more important elections still use more traditional counting methods. While openness and accountability are usually considered cornerstones of a democratic system, the act of casting a vote and the content of a voter's ballot are usually an important exception. The secret ballot is a relatively modern development, but it is now considered crucial in most free and fair elections, as it limits the effectiveness of intimidation.

In April 1936, the congress and the league were in meeting separately. Both bodies decided to contest the provincial elections. Many congressmen, including the president, Jawaharlal Nehru, at first wanted to boycott the elections completely, but a meeting in February 1936 showed that many members were in favour of taking office. Eventually even Jawaharlal had to admit that there was no choice but to contest the election. At the least, by contesting congress could carry its message to the millions of voters and to the scores of millions of the dis-enfranchised. They are the 5/6th of the Indian people who had not been given the vote.

The question of whether congress would accept office could be decided later.

Campaigning began towards the end of 1936. By March 1937 the results were announced. The Congress had swept the polls. It won absolute majorities in five provinces and was the largest single party in four others. This result was a surprise even to most congressmen. It gave a new turn to the office acceptance question. Congress could hardly ignore the authorization the voters had given it. But some were still hesitant. President Nehru said he did not wish congress to become "responsible for many things that we utterly dislike". This might have happened if governors used their special powers to overrule legislation, through by the ministries. Accordingly, the working committee demanded assurances from the government that the special powers would not be used. Lord Linlithgow was too clever to give a clear assurance, but a "gentleman's agreement" of June 1937 opened the way for congress to form ministries in the united provinces, the central provinces, Bihar, Orissa, Madras, and Bombay. Later, Assam and the North-West Frontier Province also came under congress rule. The rise of the Muslim and the new ministries, the rise of the Congress ministry and ultimately the rise of the congress left wing delineated the characteristic of the provincial election in India.

India acquired its long cherished independence on 15th August, 1947, after British government decided to lay down all claims of the Indian dominion. India was no longer to stay a slave nation under British Empire.

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and a decision was arrived fast, under Lord Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of British-occupied India. Chakravarti Rajagopalachari began to serve in the office of the Governor General of India, the first ever Indian under this category. Jawaharlal Nehru became the first Prime Minister of India and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was named the Deputy Prime Minister of India and its Minister of Home Affairs. However, behind all these rosy and promising state of affairs, there also was underlying the extreme dark side of post independence India, in the terrible fate of Partition of India into India and Pakistan, a nation largely dedicated to Muslim living, in the aftermath of various bloodbath of divide and rule during British administration. Post independence India was not only a concern of India and Indians, but also Pakistan and Pakistanis and their ministerial matters.

When the British dispensed with their claims to paramountcy, the 562 independent princely states were afforded the option to join either of the two nations. A few princely states voluntarily joined Pakistan, but the rest, excluding Hyderabad united with India.

In this wake of post Independence India and its soon to burst balloon of the Swaraj illusion, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated on January 30, 1948, in New Delhi, by a Hindu extremist, Nathuram Godse. He was grossly opposed to Gandhi's candidness towards Muslims, thus ending the fragile celebration of independence and deepening the
revulsion and mutual suspicion in Hindu-Muslim relations. Amidst such commotion, Indian government post independence was to behave in a secular and sovereign manner, taking decisions pertaining to economy, foreign relations, border security and the likes. Keeping these sublime important key facts to mind and looking towards establishing India as a respected free nation worldwide, the country framed its one of a kind Constitution on 26th November, 1949\textsuperscript{13}. The Constituent Assembly adopted and embraced the Constitution of India, drafted by a colossal committee, headed by the enigmatic B. R. Ambedkar. India from then onwards became a federal, democratic republic after its Constitution came to effect on January 26, 1950, the day which was declared henceforth as Republic Day to its citizens. Dr. Rajendra Prasad became the first President of India. With the path of gradual increase of post independence India towards a socialist secular and sovereign republic, the country held its first national elections under the Constitution in 1952. A first time breathtaking turnout of over 60 percent footfall was recorded. The Congress Party won a sweeping majority and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru began his second term as Prime Minister. President Rajendra Prasad was also re-elected to a second term by the electoral college of the first-ever formed Parliament of India.

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru led the Congress to amazing election victories in 1957 and 1962. The Parliament went on to pass extensive reforms that amplified the legal rights of women in Hindu society and further legislated strictly against caste discrimination and untouchability. Nehru had much to do with these deeds, with India shining

in leaps and bounds, by adapting a view of absolute democracy. However, much as was being examined to uplift post independence India towards betterment, dark forces still hovered around, in the form of the Jammu & Kashmir issue and its delimitations, one of the primary causes that was to lead to the Indo-China War in 1962, a war fundamentally fought on the basis of border disputations. Additional Kashmir conflicts erupted in the form of Indo-Pak War in 1971, wherein Pakistan had dangerously come down onto Indian control line-ups, forcing Indian Army to take dire measures. Both of the wars were however magnificently won by Indian brave-hearts. Industrialization and commercialization of technology and general goods product was another domain that was laid primary emphasis by the post independence Indian government to verify the influence foreign trade and import.

While the National Conference in Calcutta was going on, Indian National Congress, conceived on the same lines, was holding its first sitting at Bombay. The movements were simultaneous; the preliminary arrangements were made independently, neither part knowing what the other was doing until on the eve of the sittings of the Conference and of the Congress. The two conferences met about the same time, discussed similar views and voiced the same grievances and aspirations. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the official historian of Indian National Congress says that it still is a mystery that originated the idea of an All India Congress. It is also said that the idea was conceived in a private meeting of seventeen men after Theosophical Convention held at Madras in December 1884. The Indian Union started by Mr. Hume after his retirement from the Civil Service is also supposed to have been instrumental in convening the

14 Nurul Chakravarthy, Seriela publications, New Delhi. P 123
Congress. "The Congress was founded as a precautionary move against an apprehended Russian invasion of India."15

The constitutional agitation has to be always supported by overtly or covertly inspired revolutionary agitation. This view is corroborated by the manner of quitting India in 1947. The external pressure generated by the result of the Second World War together with the discontent in the army exemplified by the marine revolt in 1944-45 hastened their departure. The Indian National Congress founded by Hume in 1885 became the main channel of voicing the political grievances of the Indian people. Mahatma Gandhi was the unofficial spiritual leader of the party after First World War. The party was in many ways an umbrella organization, sheltering within itself radical socialists, traditionalists and even Hindu and Muslim conservatives. It was founded with the objective of obtaining a greater share in government for educated Indians.16

Before the Gandhi Era came leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Mohammed Ali Jinnah all starting with the first legendary icon of Indians: Dadabhai Naoroji, the president of the Indian National Association and later Member of Parliament in the British House of Commons, the first Indian to win a seat there. Although predominantly Hindu, it had members from virtually every religion, ethnic group, economic class and linguistic group. At the time of the Quit India movement, the Congress was undoubtedly the strongest political and revolutionary organization in India. The Indian

16 Scotsman, Allan Octavian Hume, brought about its first meeting in Bombay, with the approval of Lord Dufferin, the then-Viceroy. Womesh Chandra Bonerjee was the first President of the Indian National Congress.
National Congress could claim to be the true representative of the Indian people. It was to commemorate this date particularly that The Indian Constitution was formally adopted on 26 January 1950.17

First general election in India, on the basis of adult suffrage, was held in 1951-52. This was simultaneous election both for the Lok Sabha and all state legislative assemblies.18 Second general election, held in 1957, shortly after reorganization of states, was also simultaneous election. In third general election in 1962, elections to state assemblies of Kerala and Orissa became out of step with general election with the result that simultaneous elections could not be held in these two states. Similarly in 1967, simultaneous elections could not be held in Nagaland and Pondicherry along with fourth general election to the Lok Sabha. After 1967, election most of the assemblies had to be held earlier that normally due with the result that Orissa, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal had simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and state assemblies at fifth general election held in 1971. In 1977, Kerala was the only state where election to Legislative Assembly was held simultaneously with sixth general election. When seventh general election was held in January 1980, elections to constitute new assemblies were held simultaneously only in Manipur. Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Daman and Diu and Pondicherry. Daman and Diu were also held simultaneously.19 The Ninth Lok Sabha did not serve its full term. The House was dissolved on 12

17 The 1929 Lahore session under the presidency of Jawaharlal Nehru holds special significance as in this session "Pooma Swaraj" was declared as the goal of INC. 26 January 1930 was declared as the "Pooma Swaraj Diwas".
19 Polling for eighth Lok Sabha election was held on 24, 27 and 26 December 1984 in 20 states and nine union territories except Assam and Arunachal Pradesh and Goa.
March 1991\textsuperscript{20}. The term of tenth Lok Sabha was up to 8 July 1996. The general election to eleventh Lok Sabha was held on 27 April, constitute new assemblies in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, West Bengal, Assam and Pondicherry. Assembly election in the state of Jammu and Kashmir was conducted in September 1996 after a gap of nearly nine years. The elections to constitute new assembly in Uttar Pradesh were also held in September – October 1996. On January 1, 1998, the commission announced a four phase schedule for 12\textsuperscript{th} General Elections. Accordingly, the polling was scheduled on February 16, 22, 28 and March 7. India, Election Commission of India, Model Code To Conduct For The Guidance Of Political Parties And Candidates And Related Recent Instructions Of The Election Commission Of India., New Delhi : Election Commission of India, 1991.

Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel are said to have held the view that the Indian National Congress was formed only for achieving independence and should have been disbanded in 1947. However, at the time of independence, the Indian National Congress led by Jawaharlal Nehru was a major political organization in the country, and was established as the major political party. The Congress thus, considering the perceived need for a stable leadership and guiding vision after the terrible chaos and confusion following the Partition of India and Independence, was re-established as an electoral party in independent India. Across several general elections, the party ruled uninterrupted until 1977, and has remained a major political force.

\textsuperscript{20} Elections to the 511 Kashmir and 13 seats in Punjab, were held on 20 May, 6 assemblies of Assam, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry. Bye election to 15 Lok Sabha seats and 56 assembly seats in 14 seats was held on 16 November 1991. Elections to the Lok Sabha and Assembly seats in Punjab was held on 9 February 1992.
Nehru embraced secularism, socialist economic policies and a non-aligned foreign policy, which became the hallmark of the modern Congress Party. Nehru’s policies challenged the landed class, the business class and improved the position of religious minorities and lower caste Hindus. A generation of freedom fighting leaders were soon replaced by a generation of people who had grown up in the shadow of Nehru. Nehru led the Congress Party to consecutively awesome majorities in the elections of 1952, 1957 and 1962.

Gradually, Indira Gandhi grew more and more authoritarian. Following allegations of widespread rigging in the general elections, a court overturned Indira Gandhi’s victory in the Parliamentary constituency. Facing growing opposition she proclaimed a state of National emergency in 1975, curtailed the powers of the courts, and unleashed a police.

After Indira, her son Rajiv Gandhi, took over as Congress leader and led the party to victory with a large majority in the 1984 Lok Sabha elections. It governed from 1984-89 and then was defeated in the 1989 general election. Rajiv Gandhi was also assassinated by the Liberation of Tamil Tigers of Elum during the course of the election campaign in 1991. Following Rajiv Gandhi’s assassination, P.V. Narasimha Rao succeeded him as Congress leader and became prime minister. Nonetheless, his involvement in the bribery of members of parliament was a major issue.

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21 Engineer, Asghar Ali, Essays in contemporary politics of identity, religion, and secularism, Delhi: Ajanta, 1999, p33
22 After she lifted the emergency in 1977, more Congress factions were formed, the one remaining loyal to Indira Gandhi being popularly known as Congress(I) with an ‘I’ for Indira. The Congress (I) was routed in the general elections by the Janata Party. The party was able to return to power in the 1980 elections.
which led to the downfall of the Congress in 1996, and subsequently his own disgraced exit from politics. Sitaram Kesri took over the reins of the party and oversaw the Congress support to the United Front governments than ran from 1996-1998. During his tenure, several key leaders broke away from the party, and serious infighting broke out among those left. In 1998, Sonia Gandhi is considered by some to have finally saved the Congress from extinction by accepting the presidency of the party.

India is a constitutional democracy with a parliamentary system of government, and at the heart of the system is a commitment to hold regular, free and fair elections. These elections determine the composition of the government, the membership of the two houses of parliament, the state and union territory legislative assemblies, and the Presidency and vice-presidency. Elections are conducted according to the constitutional provisions, supplemented by laws made by Parliament. The major laws, which mainly deals with the preparation and revision of electoral rolls, the Representation of the People Act, 1951 which deals, in detail, with all aspects of conduct of elections and post election disputes. The Supreme Court of India has held that where the enacted laws are silent or make insufficient provision to deal with a given situation in the conduct of elections, the Election Commission has the residuary powers under the Constitution to act in an appropriate manner.

Elections in India are events involving political mobilisation and organisational complexity on an amazing scale. In the 2004 election to Lok Sabha there were 1351 candidates from 6 National parties, 801 candidates from 36 State parties, 898 candidates from officially recognised parties and

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23 The Representation of the People Act, 1950
A vast number of civilian police and security forces were deployed to ensure that the elections were carried out peacefully.

Conduct of General Elections in India for electing a new Lower House of Parliament (Lok Sabha) involves management of the largest event in the world. The electorate exceeds 670 million electors in about 700000 polling stations spread across widely varying geographic and climatic zones. Polling stations are located in the snow-clad mountains in the Himalayas, the deserts of the Rajasthan and in sparsely populated islands in the Indian Ocean. The country has been divided into 543 Parliamentary Constituencies, each of which returns one MP to the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Parliament. The size and shape of the parliamentary constituencies are determined by an independent Delimitation Commission, which aims to create constituencies which have roughly the same population, subject to geographical considerations and the boundaries of the states and administrative areas. Delimitation is the redrawing of the boundaries of parliamentary or assembly constituencies to make sure that there are, as near as practicable, the same number of people in each constituency. In India boundaries are meant to be examined after the ten-yearly census to reflect changes in population, for which Parliament by law establishes an independent Delimitation Commission, made up of the Chief Election Commissioner and two judges or ex-judges from the Supreme Court or High Court. However, under a constitutional amendment of 1976, delimitation was suspended until after the census of 2001, ostensibly so that states' family-planning programs

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24 A total number of 38,99,48,330 people voted out of total electorate size of 67,14,87,930. The Election Commission employed almost 4 million people to run the election.
would not affect their political representation in the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas.\textsuperscript{26}

The Constitution puts a limit on the size of the Lok Sabha of 550 elected members, apart from two members who can be nominated by the President to represent the Anglo-Indian community. There are also provisions to ensure the representation of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, with reserved constituencies where only candidates from these communities can stand for election. Elections to the Lok Sabha are carried out using a first-past-the-post electoral system. The country is split up into separate geographical areas, known as constituencies, and the electors can cast one vote each for a candidate\textsuperscript{26} the winner being the candidate who gets the maximum votes\textsuperscript{27}.

The democratic system in India is based on the principle of universal adult suffrage; that any citizen over the age of 18 can vote in an election (before 1989 the age limit was 21). The right to vote is irrespective of caste, creed, religion or gender. Those who are deemed unsound of mind, and people convicted of certain criminal offences are not allowed to vote. The electoral roll is a list of all people in the constituency who are registered to vote in Indian Elections. Only those people with their names on the electoral roll are allowed to vote. The electoral roll is normally revised every year to add the names of those who are to turn 18 on the 1st

\textsuperscript{25} This has led to wide discrepancies in the size of constituencies, with the largest having over 25,00,000 electors, and the smallest less than 50,000. Delimitation exercise, with 2001 census data released on 31st December 2003, is now under process
\textsuperscript{26} Although most candidates stand as independents, most successful candidates stand as members of political parties
\textsuperscript{27} Singh, Mahendra Prasad, Lok Sabha elections 1989 : Indian politics in 1990s, Delhi : Kalinga, 1992. p53
January of that year or have moved into a constituency and to remove the names of those who have died or moved out of a constituency. If you are eligible to vote and are not on the electoral roll, you can apply to the Electoral Registration Officer of the constituency, who will update the register. The updating of the Electoral Roll only stops during an election campaign, after the nominations for candidates have closed.

In 1998 the Commission took a historic decision to computerise the entire electoral rolls of 620 million voters. This work has been completed and now well printed electoral rolls are available. The photo identity card number of the voter has also been printed in the electoral rolls, for cross linking. The printed electoral rolls as well as CDs containing these rolls are available for sale to general public. National and State parties are provided these free of cost after every revision of electoral rolls. Entire country's rolls are also available on this website. In an attempt to improve the accuracy of the electoral roll and prevent electoral fraud, the Election Commission ordered the making of photo identity cards for all voters in the country in Aug, 1993. To take advantage of latest technological innovations, the Commission issued revised guidelines for program in May 2000. More than 450 million identity cards have been distributed till now.

Elections for the Lok Sabha and every State Legislative Assembly have to take place every five years, unless called earlier. The President can dissolve Lok Sabha and call a general election before five years is up, if the government can no longer command the confidence of the Lok

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Sabha, and if there is no alternative government available to take over. Governments have found it increasingly difficult to stay in power for the full term of a Lok Sabha in recent times, and so elections have often been held before the five-year limit has been reached. A constitutional amendment passed in 1975, as part of the government declared emergency, postponed the election due to be held in 1976. This amendment was later rescinded, and regular elections resumed in 1977. Holding of regular elections can only be stopped by means of a constitutional amendment and in consultation with the Election Commission, and it is recognised that interruptions of regular elections are acceptable only in extraordinary circumstances. During the election campaign the political parties and contesting candidates are expected to abide by a Model Code of Conduct evolved by the Election Commission on the basis of a consensus among political parties. The model Code lays down broad guidelines as to how the political parties and candidates should conduct themselves during the election campaign. It is intended to maintain the election campaign on healthy lines, avoid clashes and conflicts between political parties or their supporters and to ensure peace and order during the campaign period and thereafter, until the results are declared. The model code also prescribes guidelines for the ruling party either at the Centre or in the State to ensure that a level field in maintained and that no cause is given for any complaint that the ruling party has used its official position for the purposes of its election campaign.

Once an election has been called, parties issue manifestos detailing the programmes they wish to implement if elected to government, the

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30 Election Commission of India, Political Parties and Election Symbols, New Delhi ECI, 1999, p231
strengths of their leaders, and the failures of opposing parties and their leaders. Slogans are used to popularise and identify parties and issues, and pamphlets and posters distributed to the electorate. Rallies and meetings where the candidates try to persuade, cajole and enthuse supporters, and denigrate opponents, are held throughout the constituencies. Personal appeals and promises of reform are made, with candidates traveling the length and breadth of the constituency to try to influence as many potential supporters as possible. Party symbols abound, printed on posters and placards. Polling is normally held on a number of different days in different constituencies, to enable the security forces and those monitoring the election to keep law and order and ensure that voting during the election is fair. After nomination of candidates is complete, a list of competing candidates is prepared by the Returning Officer, and ballot papers are printed. Ballot papers are printed with the names of the candidates (in languages set by the Election Commission) and the symbols allotted to each of the candidates. Candidates of recognised Parties are allotted their Party symbols. Voting is by secret ballot. Polling stations are usually set up in public institutions, such as schools and community halls. To enable as many electors as possible to vote, the officials of the Election Commission try to ensure that there is a polling station within 2km of every voter, and that no polling stations should have to deal with more than 1500 voters. Each polling station is open for at least 8 hours on the day of the election. On entering the polling station, the elector is checked against the Electoral Roll, and allocated a ballot paper. The elector votes by marking the ballot paper with a rubber stamp on or near the symbol of the candidate of his choice, inside a screened

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31 Election Commission of India, Political Parties and Election Symbols, New Delhi: ECI, 1999. p 22
compartment in the polling station. The voter then folds the ballot paper and inserts it in a common ballot box which is kept in full view of the Presiding Officer and polling agents of the candidates. This marking system eliminates the possibility of ballot papers being surreptitiously taken out of the polling station or not being put in the ballot box. Since 1998, the Commission has increasingly used Electronic Voting Machines instead of ballot boxes. In 2003, all state elections and bye elections were held using Electronic Voting Machines. Encouraged by this the Commission took a historic decision to use only Electronic Voting Machines for the Lok Sabha election due in 2004. More than 1 million Electronic Voting Machines were used in this election.

2.3 POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTIONS: Political parties are an established part of modern mass democracy, and the conduct of elections in India is largely dependent on the behaviour of political parties. Although many candidates for Indian elections are independent, the winning candidates for Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections usually stand as members of political parties, and opinion polls suggest that people tend to vote for a party rather than a particular candidate. Parties offer candidates organisational support, and by offering a broader election campaign, looking at the record of government and putting forward alternative proposals for government, help voters make a choice about how the government is run.

Political parties have to be registered with the Election Commission. The Commission determines whether the party is structured and

committed to principles of democracy, secularism and socialism in accordance with the Indian Constitution and would uphold the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India. Parties are expected to hold organisational elections and have a written constitution.

2.3.1 THE ELECTORAL PROCESS: As in the British parliamentary system, elections to the Lok Sabha (Lower House) of Parliament must be held within five years of the election of the previous parliament, by they may be called by the president upon the advice of the Prime Minister at any time before the expiration of the normal five year term of the House. The actual mechanics of the election, including the delimitation of constituency boundaries, the setting of specific dates for the polling in different parts of the country, the establishment and manning of polling booths the allocations of party symbols, the acceptance of rejection of nominations according to the electoral laws and rules, the counting of votes, the publication of the results, and the like are all supervised by the Election Commission, a semi-autonomous body whose functions are defined in the Constitution of the country.

Until 1971, when Prime Minister Gandhi called the first mid-term election for the Lok Sabha, the general practice was that a general election included the simultaneous scheduling of polling for both the Lok Sabha and the state legislative assemblies. The call by Mrs. Gandhi for a mid-term election in 1971 and the consequent "de-linking" of parliamentary and legislative assembly elections at that time included the clear design to separate the national from the state elections and there by to capitalize
upon the appeal of Mrs. Gandhi against her rivals in the Congress organization and in state politics generally.

At present the electoral unit, as in Britain, is a single member constituency, in which the winning candidate is the person who succeeds in gaining the plurality of votes on the first ballot. The only distinction among constituencies concerns whether they are reserved for Scheduled castes or Scheduled Tribes or not. In a reserved constituency, only persons from designated low caste or tribal groups may contest, but all adults are eligible to vote. The number of reserved constituencies is proportionate to the total population of scheduled castes or tribes within a state. In the country as whole, approximately 22% of the total Lok Sabha state legislative assembly seats are reserved. Most Indian constituencies are overwhelmingly rural, containing only a few small towns in which each polling booth covers a single village or several adjacent villages. In the urban areas, there will naturally be a large number of polling booths set up in ways familiar in industrialized societies within public buildings such as schools.

2.3.2 ELECTION CAMPAIGNS: A campaign in a rural constituency requires a candidate who aspires to success to visit as many as possible of the 100 or so villages in an assembly constituency and at least a sample of the 500 or 600 villages of a parliamentary constituency. Such campaigning, concentrated within the statutory three-week period, is an extraordinarily grueling experience, carried out by jeep, by foot, and by bullock cart, with each candidate scheduling perhaps as many as six

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33 Since 1971, the general practice has been to hold parliamentary and state legislative assembly elections separately, although they do sometimes coincide in particular states.
village visits a day. In the cities, election campaigning involves neighborhood street corner rallies, house-to-house canvassing by the candidates' workers, and parades through the city with the candidate himself riding in a jeep saluting the crowds as he drives through the town.

There are three principal means of communicating the message of a party or of independent candidates during a campaign. Each well organized party will issue a printed manifesto in both English and the vernacular language, stating the distinctive positions of the party on the major issues of the day. The second means of communicating is through public speeches by candidates and their supporters in the villages and city street corners. The third type of approach to the voters is through private and implicit appeals. Canvassers will, in this respect, depart from the printed manifestoes and public statements of their candidates and will stress ties of caste between the candidate and his brethren, his accomplishments or promises to do things for particular villages and localities, the candidate's probity and his rivals' venality, with emphasis especially on any evidence that can be found or concocted that the candidate's principal rival has had some criminal record or has had some criminal charges filed against him.

2.3.4 INDIAN VOTING BEHAVIOR: A multiplicity of factors affect voter decisions at election time, including appeals to class, community, caste, and faction loyalty as well as the personal attractions of popular and charismatic leaders. In some areas in some elections, especially recently, criminal violence and intimidation of voters also occurs. At the local level, in the country side by far the most important factor in voting behavior remains caste solidarity. Large and important castes in a constituency
tend to back either respected member of their caste or a political party with whom their caste members identify. However, local factions and local state factional alignments, which involve inter-caste coalitions also are important factors in influencing voting behavior. Splits, mergers and alliances have frequently disrupted the compositions of political parties. This has led to a number of disputes over which section of a divided party gets to keep the party symbol, and how to classify the resulting parties in terms of national and state parties. The Election Commission has to resolve these disputes, although its decisions can be challenged in the courts.

Any elector or candidate can file an election petition if he or she thinks there has been malpractice during the election. An election petition is not an ordinary civil suit, but treated as a contest in which the whole constituency is involved. Election petitions are tried by the High Court of the State involved, and if upheld can even lead to the restaging of the election in that constituency. The Election Commission appoints a large number of Observers to ensure that the campaign is conducted fairly, and that people are free to vote as they choose. Election expenditure Observers keeps a check on the amount that each candidate and party spends on the election.

After the polling has finished, the votes are counted under the supervision of Returning Officers and Observers appointed by the Election Commission. After the counting of votes is over, the Returning Officer

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34 Kashyap, Subhash C., Basic Constitutional Values, New Delhi: Ajanta, 1994, p.21
declares the name of the candidate to whom the largest number of votes have been given as the winner, and as having been returned by the constituency to the concerned house. In order to bring as much transparency as possible to the electoral process, the media are encouraged and provided with facilities to cover the election, although subject to maintaining the secrecy of the vote. Media persons are given special passes to enter polling stations to cover the poll process and the counting halls during the actual counting of votes.

2.4 ELECTION SYSTEM IN OTHER COUNTRIES:

2.4.1 THE UK ELECTORAL SYSTEM: The United Kingdom has the oldest electoral system in the world. Dating back to 1172, when King John placed his signature on the Magna Carta, it has remained largely unchanged to this day. The process of choosing a new leader, which can seem complex and arcane to those from outside the country, is explained here.

A term of the UK parliament lasts five years. Before this time is up the Prime Minister may call a General Election. In an age-old, untelevised ceremony, he visits the Queen, wearing an ermine robe and carrying a large staff made from the charred remains of Clarence House, the location of the signing of the Magna Carta. Tradition states that his head must be shaved in the manner of King John (in the shape of the crucified Christ); however, nowadays a bald wig is used instead. The Prime Minister knocks on the inner door of Buckingham Palace three times, the Queen answers

with a cup of tea, and from that moment the government is considered a 'caretaker' administration for four weeks, after which a national poll must be held.  

Unlike most countries, proper accountability to the electorate is ensured by having one Member of Parliament (MP) for each local constituency. The MP, who need not live in or near the constituency, or know anything about it, sits in parliament and may debate the issues of the day. Although parliamentary votes are taken, the MP is instructed how to vote, and the process is purely ceremonial.  

The UK is split into one hundred constituencies: one for each English county, and one each for Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. When the election is called, the MPs visit their constituencies: they have just four weeks to persuade the local people that they are worth voting for. From many possible candidates, each constituency must decide who will be their MP. They will have the opportunity, in the months before the poll, to see the candidates debating, arguing and publicly fighting their opponents. Newspaper editors may be paid in future honors to swing votes: in the UK this is perfectly legal providing no-one admits to it. In addition, each party produces a manifesto, a glossy document containing policies and promises the party would like to fulfill, should they be elected. At the end of its term of office, a government is tested by the High Court to verify that the manifesto commitments were adhered to; if they were not, severe reprimands may be printed in the classified sections of some local gazettes. A national holiday is taken on the day of the poll. Throughout

each constituency disused buildings (usually schools and libraries) are taken over by the army and made ready for voting. Printed on each polling card is a secret code number which the voter must read to the invigilator (usually an old woman), who says "what love?" before writing it in the official book. After the count the code number may be used to match the polling card with the name and address of the voter, assuring complete confidentiality. When the votes are counted, the party with the highest number of MPs wins, and they will be officially asked by the Queen to form the next government.\textsuperscript{38}

In the 1997 election many constituencies experimented with electronic polling. In this system people cast their vote by pressing buttons on a remote keypad stapled to their knees, ensuring that they do not have to move away from the TV. However, after a baby seal became MP for Truro this system was abandoned. For the 2001 election, voters have the chance to vote over the internet through web portals placed in McDonalds restaurants a first for any country in the world. Anyone who is a citizen of the UK, the Republic of Ireland, or of a Commonwealth country, who is legally resident in the UK, and who is 18 or over on the date of the election is eligible to vote, provided they are on the electoral register, unless they are currently a member of the House of Lords, imprisoned for a criminal offence, mentally incapable of making a reasoned judgement, an undischarged bankrupt, or have been convicted of corrupt or illegal practices in connection with an election within the previous five years. Members of the House of Lords may, however, vote in local and European Elections as well as elections to the Scottish Parliament and National

\textsuperscript{38} By its unique, tried-and-tested system of constituency MPs, British democracy ensures that no small
Assembly for Wales. Voting is not compulsory. In addition, whilst UK, Irish and Commonwealth citizens may register to vote in all elections, European Union nationals resident in the UK may register to vote in local, European, Scottish and Welsh elections.

In theory, members of the Royal Family, including the Monarch, are eligible to vote, although in practice it would be seen as unconstitutional if they ever did. UK citizens who have moved abroad remain eligible to vote for 15 years thereafter. They would vote for the MP of the constituency in which they lived before they moved abroad. This is also applicable to people who were under 18 before they moved abroad; when they reach 18 they can vote. "Service voters" - including forces personnel, diplomats and other public servants resident overseas - are also eligible. Voters must appear on the electoral register in order to vote; they can now be added to the register until eleven working days before the election. The right of Irish and Commonwealth citizens to vote is a legacy of the Representation of the People Act 1918, which limited the vote to British subjects. At that time, "British subjects" included the people of Ireland, then part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and all other parts of the British Empire. Though most of Ireland (see Ireland Act 1949) and the majority of the colonies became independent nations, their citizens have retained the right to vote in the UK if they live in the UK.

Traditionally, the UK effectively has had a two party system, arising from the use of the First-Past-The-Post system for general and local elections. Duverger's law certainly seems borne out in the history of British

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39 The electoral register in 2000 listed 44,423,440 people registered to vote in the UK, of whom 36,994,211 were in England.
parliamentary politics. Before World War I, Britain had a true two-party system, the main parties being the Tories (which became the Conservative Party) and the Whigs (which became the Liberal Party), though after Catholic Emancipation there was also a substantial Irish Parliamentary Party. After World War II, the dominant parties have been Conservative and Labour. No third party has come close to winning a parliamentary majority.40

However, some have challenged the view that Britain still has a two party system, since the Liberal Democrats have won around 15%-25% of the votes in recent elections. The Liberal Democrats won 62 of the 646 seats in the House of Commons in the recent 2005 elections, and several nationalist (regional) groupings sit, leading some spectators to regard the Westminster parliament as a "two and a half" party system. Smaller parties receive many more votes (and seats) in the elections using a proportional system, which are the regional elections for the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly, Northern Ireland Assembly and London Assembly, and the European Parliament elections. Regional parties, such as the Scottish National Party or Plaid Cymru receive many more votes than at general or local elections, and at European elections, the United Kingdom Independence Party and Green Party of England and Wales perform better. It can be argued that in these elections, there is a multi-party system.

It is relatively easy to stand for election as an independent candidate, although wins are very rare and usually involve special

40 Kashyap, Subhash C., History of Parliamentary Democracy, Shipra, Delhi, 1991.p 55
circumstances (for example Martin Bell's 1997 victory against the discredited Conservative MP Neil Hamilton was aided by the major parties standing aside and not contesting the election). Following the 2005 general election, there are three independent MPs, the highest number since 1945. To stand as a candidate in a particular constituency, a British citizen needs the signatures of 10 people registered to vote there, and pay a deposit of £500.\(^1\)

United Kingdom general elections are the elections held when the Members of Parliament (MPs) forming the House of Commons of the Parliament of the United Kingdom are elected. Following the Parliament Act 1911, parliamentary sessions last a maximum of five years, and are ended with the dissolution of Parliament. Therefore elections are not fixed, and the time is chosen by the governing party to maximise political advantage. The next election is due on or before 3 June 2010.

Candidates aim to win particular geographic constituencies in the UK. Each constituency elects one MP by the first past the post system of election. At the 2005 general election, there were 646 constituencies, thus 646 MPs were elected to Parliament. Boundary changes in Scotland reduced the number of MPs from 659 at the 2001 election to 646. The party with the most seats, i.e. the most MPs, usually forms the government, and the second largest party forms Her Majesty's Opposition. Almost all candidates are members of a political party and the majority of

\(^1\) Which is returned if he/she gains more than 5% of the vote in that seat.
voters in the UK choose who to vote for based on the candidates’ parties, rather than the personalities or opinions of the individual candidates.

2.4.2 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS: European Parliament elections have taken place since the European Parliament became democratically elected in 1979. Members of the European Parliament are elected on a regional basis using the party list, a closed list i.e. candidates are chosen by parties, since 1999 in England, Scotland and Wales. In Northern Ireland the Single Transferable Vote system is used. The UK is divided into twelve electoral regions, which are the three smaller nations such as Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and the nine Regions of England.

The use of proportional representation greatly increased the representation of minor parties. Until the 1999 election, the First Past the Post system was used, which had prevented parties with large, but geographically spread out vote shares from receiving any seats. One of the famous instances of this was in the 1989 election the Green Party received 2,292,718 votes, constituting a 15% vote share, but no seats.

2.4.3 REGIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS: In local elections, councilors are elected forming the local administrations of the United Kingdom. A number of tiers of local council exist, at region, county,

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district/borough and town/parish levels. A variety of voting systems are used for local elections. In Northern Ireland and Scotland, the single transferable vote system is used, whilst in most of England and Wales the single member plurality system is used. The remainder of England (including all of the London Boroughs) and Wales use the plurality at-large system, except for the elections of the Mayor and Assembly of the GLA.\textsuperscript{45}

Local elections are held every year, but different parts of the UK vote in each case. In years with a general election it is usual practice to hold both general and local elections on the same day. In 2004, for the first time, local elections were held on the same day as European elections, and London Mayoral and Assembly elections. The date was referred to as 'Super Thursday'.

The Representation of the People Act 1918 expanded the electorate to include all men over the age of 21 and all married women over the age of 30 (because young women were thought to be too radical). Later that year, the Parliamentary Qualification of Women Act 1918 gave women over 30 the right to stand for election as MP's. The first woman to become an MP was Constance Georgine Markiewicz in 1918. However, she declined to take up her seat, being a member of Sinn Féin. Nancy Astor, elected in 1919, was the second woman to become an MP, and the first to sit in the Commons. The Equal Franchise Act 1928 lowered the minimum age for women to vote from 30 to 21, making men and women equal in terms of suffrage for the first time.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{45} Greater London Authority
\textsuperscript{46} The Representation of the People Act 1949 abolished additional votes for graduates (university constituencies) and the owners of business premises.
The Act lowered the voting age from 21 to 18. The Representation of the People Act 1985 gave British citizens abroad the right to vote for a 5 year period after they had left Britain. The Representation of the People Act 1989 extended the period to 20 years and citizens who were too young to vote when they left the country also became eligible. Prior to 1997, and the Labour Party government of Tony Blair, there were only three types of elections: general elections, local government elections, and elections to the European Parliament. Most elections were conducted under the (FPTP) electoral system, though in Northern Ireland local government and European elections were conducted under the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system.

The hybrid Additional Member System was introduced in 1999 for the newly created devolved assemblies: the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and London Assembly and STV was used for the newly created Northern Ireland Assembly. The regional party list (Closed list) system was introduced for European elections in Great Britain though Northern Ireland continues to use STV. Labour passed the Political Parties, and suitable piece of legislation, which created the Electoral Commission, which since 2000 has been responsible for the running of elections and referendums and to a limited extent regulating party funding. It also reduced the period during which British expatriates can vote, from 20 years after they emigrate to 15.

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47 The Representation of the People Act 1969
48 The constitutional reforms of Labour drastically changed elections, introducing elected regional assemblies and elected mayors in certain cities. Proportional Representation (PR) was introduced outside of Northern Ireland for the first time
49 Field, John Osgood, Consolidating democracy: politicisation and partisanship in India, Delhi: Manohar, 1980, p321
50 which had previously used single member constituency FPTP
51 The Elections and Referendums Act 2000
In 2008 the Ministry of Justice delivered a report that failed to conclusively recommend any particular voting system as "best" and instead simply compared working practices through the UK's different elections and governments. The Minister of State for Justice, Ministry of Justice (Michael Wills) issued a statement following its publication stating that no action would be taken on the various reports that, since 1997, have suggested a move towards proportional representation for the UK general election until reform of the House of Lords is completed. Critics have claimed that failure to move away from First Past the Post is disenfranchising voters. Some UK parties, mainly the Liberal Democrats, have long proposed that the current First Past the Post system used for general elections be replaced with another system. The broad-based Make Votes Count Coalition currently brings together those groups advocating reform.52

2.4.4 PARLIAMENTARY AND PARTY POSITIONS: The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Electoral Reform is a cross party group consisting of 150 MPs that support electoral reform, chaired by Richard Burden. Labour pledged in its manifesto for the 1997 general election to set up a commission on alternatives to the first-past-the-post system for general elections and hold a referendum in the future on whether to change the system. The Independent Commission on the Voting System, headed by Lord Jenkins of Hillhead and known as the Jenkins Commission, was

52 The introduction of proportional representation has been advocated for some time by the Liberal Democrats, and some pressure groups such as Charter 88, Unlock Democracy and the Electoral Reform Society. Recently, following the 2005 election in which Labour was elected with the lowest share of the national vote for any single party majority government in British history, more public attention has been brought to the issue. The Independent started a petition campaign for the introduction of a more proportional system immediately after the election, under the title "Campaign For Democracy".

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established in December 1997. It reported in October 1998 and suggested the Alternative vote top-up or AV+ system. The government had expected a recommendation which could have been implemented within the Parliament and decided that it would be impractical to have a general election using First Past the Post after a referendum decision to adopt a different system, and therefore delayed the referendum until after the next general election. In practice, forces within the Labour Party opposed to any change persuaded the party not to repeat the pledge for a referendum in the 2001 manifesto and therefore none was held once the party was re-elected.\(^53\)

After the 2005 election, Lord Chancellor Lord Falconer said there was "no groundswell" for change, although a Cabinet committee was given the task of investigating reform. John Prescott was made Chair; given his known opposition to change, proponents were critical and dismissive of the move. Several prominent Labour MPs have expressed a desire for investigating electoral reform, including Peter Hain\(^54\), Patricia Hewitt, Tessa Jowell and Baroness Amos. As mentioned above, in January 2008 the government produced a "desk-bound" review of the experience to date of new voting systems in the UK since Labour came to power in 1997. This review was non-committal as to the need for further reform in the UK, especially as regards reform of the voting system used in General Elections.


\(^{54}\) Who made a speech in the House of Commons in March 2004 arguing for the Alternative Vote
2.5 ELECTORAL SYSTEM OF JAPAN: The politics of Japan is in a framework of a parliamentary representative democratic monarchy, where the Prime Minister of Japan is the head of government, and of a multi-party system. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in both the government and the two chambers of parliament; the Diet with the House of Representatives and the House of Councillors. The Judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature. In academic studies, Japan is generally considered a constitutional monarchy, based largely upon the British system with strong influences from European continental civil law countries such as the German Bundestag. For example, in 1896 the Japanese government established Minpo, the Civil Code, on the French model. With post-World War II modifications, the code remains in effect in present-day Japan.

The Imperial Household of Japan is headed by the Emperor of Japan. The Constitution of Japan defines the emperor to be "the symbol of the state and of the unity of the people." He performs ceremonial duties and holds no real power, not even emergency reserve powers. Power is held mainly by the Prime Minister and other elected members of the Diet. Sovereignty is vested in the Japanese people by the constitution. Though his official status is disputed, on diplomatic occasions the emperor tends to behave as though he were a head of state (with widespread public support). Japan is the only country in the world headed by an emperor.

2.6 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: The political system is an important component of democratic governance. It needs to be properly structured so that it nurtures responsible politics and enable the society to prevent self-seekers and the corrupt from holding public offices. In this, proper
definition of roles and jurisdictions, regulation of political parties, and an electoral system that ensures direct accountability to the people play important roles. There shall be elected governments at the local, state and national levels each having exclusive jurisdiction over local, state and national matters. To take democracy close to the people, the local level may be further divided into local, sub local and grassroots. The grassroots government will be most important from the perspective of the people being direct democracy while all others are representative democracy.

In grassroots governments, the parliament consisting of all adult men and women shall be the supreme authority. All other governments shall have an elected chief executive, a parliament and judiciary, all accountable to its people. The chief executive and his deputy shall be directly elected. The chief executive and ministers appointed by him shall not be a member of any parliament. The parliament shall consist of an elected assembly and a council of stakeholders. It shall approve the budget, perform watchdog functions, and approve the appointment of the political ministers and professional departmental heads selected by the chief executive.

The National Election Commission shall make rules regarding inner party democracy. If an election commission is satisfied that a recognised political party had violated the requirement of inner party democracy, it may

(1) revoke its recognition,

(2) deny symbol to its candidates for election, and/or

(3) take such other action as it deemed fit.

Such an order will not be passed without giving the political party reasonable opportunity of being heard. All reservations are anti-people and anti-democracy. They prevent candidates from contesting an election and voter from voting for a person of their choice. Requiring political parties to field stipulated number of women candidates is however legitimate. Through open contest, women will develop leadership qualities to win that or later elections. There should be no reservation for any chief executive as it is a highly responsible position and may lead to aberrations like "Sarpanch pati".

The local, state and national assemblies shall have jurisdiction to promulgate legislation as described in Schedule A. The concerned chief executive, assembly or council can initiate a proposal for legislation. If the assembly approves a proposed legislation, it will forward it to the council for concurrence. If the council does not concur or proposes any changes, the assembly will consider the observations of the council. If it still wishes to pursue the legislation, it will forward it with such modifications, as it considers appropriate, to the concerned chief executive for his signature of approval. If the chief executive approves it, it will become law. The chief exercise shall have the right to veto a bill. If he does not approve the bill, the assembly can override the veto and promulgate the bill through two-third majority of members present and voting.

The UK's electoral system is based on the first-past-the-post system. All the winning party needs is a majority of MP's elected to Westminster to win a general election. For 2005, all the winning party will
need is 324 MP's to have an overall majority in Parliament. In America, some say that there are 50 elections as opposed to just one. Whoever wins a state, gets all of that state's Electoral College votes and the loser gets none. Once a presidential candidate gets a majority of Electoral College votes, he is declared the winner even if some states have yet to declare. In 2000, Bush won with fewer public votes but with a majority of Electoral College votes. The same oddity has happened in the UK. In 1951, the Conservatives won the general election with 11.62 million votes\textsuperscript{56} while the Labour Party got 11.63 million votes. However, the Conservatives won 259 seats in Westminster to Labour's 233. It is accepted that class-oriented behaviour can be a significant factor in American elections and in American politics in general. However the problem is to determine how significant class is in elections. The 1920's and 1930's - with the New Deal aiding the underprivileged - did, in fact, establish a direct relationship between class and party allegiance; though this allegiance was subject to considerable variation from election to the election.

Research by Alford indicates that from 1936 to 1960 there was a clear preference towards the Democrat Party among manual workers when compared to non-manual workers. The peak for this was in 1948 when 79 per cent of manual workers supported the Democrat Party, while only 38 per cent of non-manual workers voted for them. The majority of non-manual workers voted for the Republicans.

Research by Lipset broke down the category of the "manual workers" and analysed who exactly voted for the Democrat Party. He\textsuperscript{56} Including National Liberal and Conservative MP's

\textsuperscript{56} Including National Liberal and Conservative MP's
found that the lower down the social scale you went, the far greater numbers in that social level voted for the Democrat Party. In 1982 the Democrat Party leader, Jimmy Carter, received 50 percent of the vote of the electors who had an income of less than $10,00 per year but only 28 percent of the votes of those with an income of over $30,000 per annum. This trend has continued with the time in office of Clinton; as the man who lead the party that looked after those with the least in society. However, it is by no means clear that those in the lower social levels consistently vote for the Democrat Party, as there have been considerable variations from one election to the next. When an election has been fought on economic issues then those in the lower social levels have supported the Democrat Party. However when issues other than economic have been of more importance then the Republican Party has received more votes from manual workers.

Research by Angus Campbell in his book "The American Voter" also shows that one-third of the American population is unaware of its class position and therefore it can be assumed that those people would not necessarily vote for a 'class' as they lack knowledge on which class they belong to and this would indicate that class is not an issue for them.  

Campbell also claims that his research shows that the whole class issue only plays a significant role at a conscious level in the political voting behaviour of the population in only a relatively small and sophisticated portion of the population which would be the group of people who keep themselves informed on politics on a day-to-day basis and get themselves informed, Pradeep and Kollman, ken, "Party aggregation and the number of parties in India and the United States", American Political Science Review, 92(2), Jun 1998 : p. 329-42.
actively involved in politics. An issue that further complicates the prediction of voting behaviour is the relative volatility of the American electorate especially those that change parties. American elections can produce a "landslide" election result that would be unlikely in a system where stable class voting was the norm. An examination of the total votes in presidential elections for the Democrat Party indicates that there are marked swings in support of the party. In 1936 the party got 61% of the total vote. By 1956 as a dropped to 42%. By 1964 this had increased to 61% and in 1984 dropped to 41 per cent. By the 1992 election this has risen to 52% and was at 49% for the 1996 and 2000 elections. Therefore there has been as much as a 20% shift in the support for the Democrats which makes predicting party support and election results with the exception of the 1996 election difficult. Why people switch their allegiance from one party to the other in elections is an issue that is constantly being analysed by both parties. Another key issues is the decline of the classic "working-class person" which, as a group, appears to be in continuous decline. More Americans are employed in the information sector such as communications, administration or finance. The manual working-class (with the accompanying trade unions), is shrinking in number and its impact on American politics is likely to change accordingly.

Attachment to a community or a region is important in explaining political loyalty - though care has to be taken not to overstate this issue. If a community is associated with one particular party, it is likely that the majority of that population there will support that party. In the southern states of America, the culture in many regions has been anti-civil rights. The Democrat Party has become associated with civil rights acts (see the work done by Lyndon-Johnson, ironically a Texan) and therefore support
for the Republican Party is stronger in this region now than for a long time. The region was historically associated with the Democrat Party as it was the Republican Party that was linked with the victorious north after the civil war. The shift away from the Democrats occurred in the late 1950's and early 1960's and has remained since though Clinton did go some way to changing this in the 1996 election. By the 2000 election, the south had once again stated its Republican credentials. Sectionalism is more likely to link a community to a particular party rather than class - especially if the findings of Campbell are true.56

Regional differences in political behaviour are most seen in Congress where sectionalism has its greatest impact on government decisions as Representatives and Senators have to be seen by their voters to be supporting the area that they represent - possibly even at the expense of party loyalty/unity. If they are not seen to be doing so, it is likely that they will not be voted for again at any future election. It is possible that sectionalism as expressed in a general election is in decline in 1990's America. As a result of communication developments, America is a 'smaller' country and society is bombarded with information from outside of the area of one community or region. This form of education may well be diluting the impact of sectionalism. Another reason is that America has become a transient society and this movement has by itself weakened what might be deemed local views and attitudes.59 Sectionalism has been of great importance in the general elections of the past. In the 1964

56 However, the impact of sectionalism can be overstated. A community that has always voted for one particular party might have a substantial minority within it that votes for the opposite party. Their input is usually lost as elections based on the 'first-past-the-post' system are only concerned with the winner as the party that loses does not win anything.

election, there was a national wave of sympathy after Kennedy's assassination that swept Johnson back into power as a Democrat. He won 42 out of 50 states. However, the association of the Democrats with civil rights still meant that despite this sympathy, five southern states did not vote for him and supported the Republican Party.

Kennedy was also subject to sectionalism. He was a Catholic and he found support in the regions that had a large number of Catholics living there. As these were invariably built-up industrial areas this too seemed to link the Democrats with the workers. Kennedy did not do well in areas where there were few Catholics and where some form of Protestantism thrived. That this lack of support was down to Kennedy seems to be supported by the figures that show that in the mid-term elections, the Democrats who were standing in the west got 4% more votes than the Democrat Kennedy, while in the south there was a massive 16% more votes for the Democrats standing for election. Therefore it was not as if these regions were completely anti-Democrat - more anti an individual for whatever reason.

The support for the Republicans in the south in the 1980 election was overwhelming. The party only lost Georgia and this was the home state of the Democrat choice to run in the election. This would also be an example of sectionalism - a state supporting its 'own' man. In the mid-west Reagan only lost Minnesota. But this was the home state of Walter Mondale who was Carter's vice presidential running mate and once again the state voted for 'its' man. In the 1984 election Reagan lost only Minnesota. The victory of Clinton in 1996 did indicate that sectionalism is

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60 Jimmy Carter.
dying. But that election was considered a forgone conclusion. When America seems to be unsure as to who should be her leader in the White House, the country does have a tendency to retreat back into its sectionalist ways. The industrial cities of the north and the east offered some degree of hope to this group. This was also true for the immigrants who came into America by the millions each year. Cities became flooded with the poor. Poor farmers from rural areas also went to the cities to improve their lot.

Pluralism is the belief that modern society is made up of heterogeneous institutions and organisations that have diversified religious, economic, ethnic and cultural interests and share in the exercise of power. The whole concept believes that society can be democratic even if a variety of elite compete for the decision making process. New groups of elite can gain access to power through the use of elections. Therefore, society has the right to reject one group of elite and elect another if the former has not lived up to expectations. Thus the power rests with the people with the result that no group within a democracy has the ability to govern without the consent of the people. Thus the two elite political groups in America, the Democratic and Republican parties, only have political power on a temporary basis and that power is given to them on a conditional basis.

As America is so multi-layered as a society, both parties would be on dangerous ground if any one section of society was ignored by them or if one section of society was penalised by either party in power. Therefore, those who support the theory of pluralism believe that the greater variety within American society means that all groups have to be represented
within politics for either party to survive i.e. the poor may be poor but they have a constitutional right to vote and express their political views. Therefore, either party in power has to at the very least make gestures towards this group but at the same time not offend those who believe in individualism. The multi-layered nature of American society has lead to many groups flourishing which represent minorities and they have had a role to play in developing public policy on all manner of interests. This, believe the supporters of pluralism, can only expand democracy.61

A general presidential election is held in November of election year. The incumbent president, should he lose this election, stays in office until January so that he can run down his government in a controlled manner and so that the newly elected president can a) select his cabinet in an orderly manner b) allow the standing president to deal with issues such as foreign policy which a president-elect might not be in a position to fully understand all the difficulties involved and domestic issues also for the same reason. Logically a president in power for 4 years is more likely to have a more structured understanding of complex problems than a president-elect. It is traditional for an incoming president to be joined by the outgoing president at the swearing in ceremony held at Capitol Hill as this is seen as a gesture of unity and a symbol that both have the heart of America at the forefront of their minds and that political disunity that might affect other nations does not do so in America.

A general election does not elect the president. It states in numeric terms how many people voted for each candidate but only that. The

61 Frankel, Francine R. et. al., Transforming India : social and political dynamics of democracy, New Delhi : Oxford Univ. Press, 2000. p121
election of a president is determined by the Electoral College though their votes usually follow the popularity of the voters. Voting behaviour has absorbed a great deal of the time of both political parties in America. Much effort has been put into analysing voting behaviour and patterns in previous elections - be they national, state or local elections etc\textsuperscript{62} - in an effort to predict their own voter base and those social groups they could concentrate their efforts on and those groups that would appear to be a lost cause and therefore a waste of time in terms of money spent and time invested in targeting as potential voters.