



## Nine Parties Oppose Proposal for Simultaneous Elections

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Nine political parties have expressed their reservations on the issue of holding simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections during consultations with the Law Commission of India.

### What are simultaneous elections?

- Simultaneous Elections broadly mean structuring the Indian election cycle in a manner that elections to Lok Sabha and State Assemblies are synchronized together.
- In such a scenario, a voter would normally cast his/her vote for electing members of Lok Sabha and State Assembly on a single day and at the same time.
- After the adoption of the Constitution, elections to Lok Sabha and all State Legislative Assemblies were held simultaneously over the period 1951 till 1967 when the cycle of synchronized elections got disrupted.

### Advantages of Holding Simultaneous Elections

- It will allow political parties to focus more on policy and governance. Frequent elections cause parties to devote more energy in winning elections.
- The huge economic **burden of frequent elections can be reduced** if simultaneous elections are conducted.
- Simultaneous elections would also **reduce pressure on manpower and resource deployment** necessary for conduct of elections.
- The **79th Report of the Department related Parliamentary Committee** has justified the simultaneous conduct of polls on several grounds, including a huge cut in expenditure incurred for conduct of separate elections every year.
- Frequent elections lead to **imposition of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) over prolonged periods** of time and puts on hold the entire development programme and activities of the Union and State Governments in the poll bound State. Simultaneous election will help in limiting amount of time in electioneering.
- The NITI Aayog has favoured conducting synchronised two-phase Lok Sabha and assembly elections from 2024 in national interest.

## **Concerns Related Simultaneous Elections**

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- Simultaneous elections enable people to vote at the adequate level of government, not having to vote in national elections for local issues, or for national issues in local elections.
- The simultaneous elections may benefit larger national parties at the cost of state/regional parties in case of a national wave in favor of large national parties.

## **Way Forward**

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Simultaneous elections are desirable provided they are juxtaposed with certain reforms that would require a prior political consensus to bring a constitutional amendment to curtail or raise term of some states to enable EC to synchronize poll schedule, raise necessary resources of EC such as EVMs, personnel, etc.