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1. One nation, one election: Law Commission endorses proposal for simultaneous Lok Sabha, assembly polls

- What are the serious issues associated with the frequent elections?
- What are the significances of One Nation many elections?
- Why it is difficult to go for simultaneous elections?
- What is the way forward?

GS paper 2 (Parliament and State Legislatures – structure, functioning)

In this video, you can find detailed answers for all the above questions.

The above article has been retrieved from:

Express Web Desk. (2018, August , 31). One nation, one election: Law Commission endorses proposal for simultaneous Lok Sabha, assembly polls. Indian Express. Retrieved from

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/law-commission-simultaneous-elections-5333223/>

What is the context about?

- ❑ In its draft report submitted to the government, the Law Commission has endorsed simultaneous elections to Lok Sabha and state assemblies.
- ❑ Recommending changes in the Constitution and the electoral law to hold simultaneous polls, the panel said that it can prevent the country from being in constant election mode.
- ❑ The draft report further said, it will save public money, help reduce the burden on administrative setup and security forces and ensure better implementation of government policies.

What are the serious issues associated with the frequent elections?

- ❑ Frequent elections affect policymaking and governance as the government is trapped in short-term thinking.
- ❑ It also destabilises duly-elected governments and imposes a heavy burden on the exchequer.
- ❑ It also puts pressure on political parties, especially smaller ones, as elections are becoming increasingly expensive.
- ❑ The Model Code of Conduct (MCC) which comes into force with the announcement of poll dates, prevents government from announcing any new schemes, make any new appointments, transfers and postings without the

approval of election commission. This brings normal work of the government to a standstill.

- ❑ It also increases the cost of management to the election commission.

What are the significances of One Nation many elections?

- ❑ One, politicians, who tend to forget voters after the elections for five years have to return to them. This enhances accountability, keeps them on their toes.
- ❑ Two, elections give a boost to the economy at the grassroots level, creating work opportunities for lakhs of people.
- ❑ Three, there are some environmental benefits also that flow out of the rigorous enforcement of public discipline like non-defacement of private and public property, noise and air pollution, ban on plastics, etc.
- ❑ Four, local and national issues do not get mixed up to distort priorities. In voters' minds, local issues overtake wider state and national issues.
- ❑ Besides, a staggered electoral cycle also acts as a check against demagoguery, fascism and oligarchy, in that order.

Why it is difficult to go for simultaneous elections?

- ❑ The biggest challenge is achieving political consensus, which seems to be “chimerical”.

- ❑ Regional parties will be more opposed to the idea than national parties because there is always a tendency for voters to vote the same party in power in the state and at the Centre in case the Lok Sabha polls and the state elections are held together.
- ❑ Also, according to IDFC, there is a 77% chance that the Indian voter will vote for the same party for both the state and Centre when elections are held simultaneously.

What is the way forward?

- ❑ One India, One election is an interesting concept but whether it will decrease the evils that the nation/government wants to get rid of needs to be debated thoroughly.
- ❑ To be sure, there are multiple issues that will need to be addressed if the country intends to move in this direction.
- ❑ The concerns and suggestions of different stakeholders will have to be debated in order to build political consensus around the idea. That said, the proposal will not only have economic benefits but will free up precious political space for policy discussions. It will also help in taking forward the process of economic reforms as decisions will not always be hostage to assembly elections.