Date –4 September 2023

ONE NATION ONE ELECTION

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "One Nation, One Election". The topic "One Nation, One Election" has relevance in the section Polity and Governance of the UPSC CSE exam.

For Prelims:
About One Nation, One Election?

For Mains:
GS 2: Polity and Governance
Challenges to Implementing 'One Nation One Election'?
Solutions for Implementing 'One Nation One Election'?

Why in the news:
The Union government has formed a committee led by former President Ram Nath Kovind to examine the viability of the "one nation, one election" concept.

One Nation, One Election

- "One Nation, One Election" is a proposed electoral system that **aims to synchronize elections across all Indian states and the Lok Sabha (the lower house of parliament)**. This concept calls for a significant restructuring of the Indian electoral cycle, enabling voters to participate in both state assembly and Lok Sabha elections on the same day or through phased voting.
- **Historical Context:** Simultaneous elections were a standard practice in India until 1967. However, this practice began to change following the dissolution of certain Legislative Assemblies in 1968 and 1969. The idea of reverting to simultaneous polls gained traction over the years:
  - o **1983- Election Commission's Proposal:** The concept of simultaneous elections was initially proposed in the annual report of the Election Commission in 1983.
  - o **1999- Law Commission's Inclusion:** The Law Commission's report in 1999 also discussed the idea of "One Nation, One Election."
  - o **2017- Niti Aayog's Working Paper:** In January 2017, Niti Aayog prepared a working paper on the subject, further exploring the feasibility of this electoral reform.
  - o **2018- Law Commission's Recommendations:** In April 2018, the Law Commission emphasized that implementing "One Nation, One Election" would require at least "five Constitutional recommendations."

Challenges to Implementing 'One Nation One Election'
1. **Synchronization of Terms**
- A critical challenge is aligning the terms of the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies to enable simultaneous elections.
- Currently, terms vary, leading to different completion dates. Some assemblies had elections recently, while others are due soon.
2. **Constitutional Amendments Required**
- Achieving term synchronization necessitates amendments to several key articles of the Indian Constitution, including:

Article	Description
Article 83	Specifies the Lok Sabha's five-year term.
Article 85	Empowers the President to dissolve the Lok Sabha.
Article 172	Defines the legislative assembly's five-year term.
Article 174	Empowers the Governor to dissolve the Legislative Assembly.
Article 356	Allows the Central Government to impose President's Rule under certain circumstances.

- Additionally, amendments to the Representation of the People Act and related parliamentary procedures are also necessary.
3. **Parliamentary Form of Government**
- India's parliamentary system makes it accountable to the Lower House (Lok Sabha or Legislative Assembly).
- Government can fall before completing its term, triggering the need for a new election, posing a challenge to the concept of fixed-term elections.
4. **Political Consensus**
- Convincing all political parties to support "One Nation One Election" is a formidable obstacle.
- Parties may have differing views and interests, making consensus difficult to achieve.

Logistical Challenges in Implementing 'One Nation One Election'

1. **Increased EVM and VVPAT Requirements**
- Currently, one voting machine is utilized per polling station for elections. However, the move to simultaneous elections would necessitate double the number of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verified Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs) since both Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha elections would require separate sets.
2. **Augmented Polling Staff**
- Simultaneous elections would demand additional polling staff to manage the increased workload, further straining existing resources.
3. **Transportation Challenges**
- The logistics of transporting election materials to polling stations become more complex with the need for multiple sets of EVMs and VVPATs.
4. **Enhanced Security Demands**
- Conducting simultaneous elections would require a substantial increase in security arrangements. Central Police Forces would need augmentation to ensure the safety and integrity of the electoral process.
5. **EVM Storage Issues**

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) is already grappling with storage challenges for EVMs after individual elections. This problem would exacerbate with the accumulation of more voting equipment due to simultaneous elections.

Solutions for Implementing 'One Nation One Election'

1. **Historical Precedent**
- Drawing from India's electoral history, where simultaneous elections were held from 1951-52 to 1967, reaffirms the feasibility and effectiveness of 'One Nation One Election.' This historical precedent can serve as a basis for implementing the concept.
2. **Expanding to Local Body Elections**
- India could consider extending the concept of simultaneous elections to include local body elections, further streamlining the electoral process.
4. **Fixed Election Dates**
- Emulating the United States, India could establish fixed election dates for national and state elections. For example, the Lok Sabha elections could be set to occur on a specific date every five years, ensuring synchronization.
5. **Alternative Government Formation**
- Under the current Parliamentary system, when a government falls before completing its term, India could explore alternative methods of government formation. This might involve inviting the second or third leading person in the house or a leader of a political party to form the government. Alternatively, the House could be provided with the chance to choose its leader.
6. **Constitutional Amendments**
- To facilitate synchronization, constitutional amendments could be made. For instance, if any state assembly's term is set to end within six months before or after Lok Sabha elections, the state election could be held concurrently with the Lok Sabha polls.

Q.1 In a parliamentary system of government, which of the following statements is true?
(a) All political parties in the parliament have representation in the government.
(b) The government is accountable to the parliament and can be ousted by it.
(c) The government is elected by the populace and can be dismissed by them.
(d) The government is selected by the parliament but cannot be dismissed by it before serving a predetermined term.

ANSWER: B

Q.2 Consider the following statements about Lok Sabha:
1. The Constitution has specified a term of five years for Lok Sabha.
2. Term of the Lok Sabha cannot exceed five years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER: A

Q.3 Discuss the potential advantages and challenges of implementing the 'One Nation, One Election' concept in India. Provide recommendations for a successful transition to simultaneous elections.

Rishabh

G20, ORIGINS AND PREVIOUS SUMMITS

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "G20, Origins and Previous Summits". The topic "G20, Origins and Previous Summits" has relevance in the "International Relations" section of the UPSC CSE exam.

For Prelims:
G20, Origins?
Members?

For Mains:
GS2: International Relations

Why in the news?
The G20 Heads of State and Government Summit in New Delhi is scheduled for September 9 and 10, marking the 18th annual summit. This event represents the culmination of year-long G20 processes, including meetings among ministers, senior officials, and civil societies.

About G20 (Group of 20)

- **Origins:**
  - The G20 was established in 1999 in response to the financial crisis that had a significant impact on East Asia and Southeast Asia in the late 1990s.
  - On the advice of the G7 Finance Ministers, the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors began convening meetings to examine the reaction to the global financial crisis that happened.
- **Objectives:**
  - Policy collaboration among its members to ensure sustainable growth and global economic stability;
  - To encourage financial rules that lower risks and stop upcoming financial catastrophes; and
  - To create a new international financial architecture.
- **Members & guests:**
  - **Members**: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union.
  - Spain has also been invited as a permanent invitee.
  - Every year, the Presidency invites guest countries to participate fully in the G20 exercise.
  - Numerous international and regional groups also take part, giving the meeting a more diverse presence.
- **Presidency of G20 & Troika:**

- o The G20 presidency is rotated among members each year.
- o The country holding the presidency, along with the previous and future presidency-holders, constitute the 'Troika' to assure the G20 agenda's continuation.
- o In 2023, the troika is composed of Indonesia, India, and Brazil.

G20 Member Countries

Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, EU, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, USA, UK

A brief overview of all previous G20 summits

Year	Month	Presidency Country	Key Outcomes
2008	November	USA	The first G20 summit was held in Washington DC, focusing on Global Financial Market Reform, Common principles for financial market reform, Action plan
2009	April	United Kingdom	The second G20 summit in London, addressing the global economic crisis, $5 trillion stimulus to global economy; IMF resources pledge; Strengthening of financial oversight and regulation
2009	September	USA	The third G20 summit in Pittsburgh, designating G20 as the premier forum for international economic cooperation.
2010	June	Canada	The fourth G20 summit in Toronto, addressing the fragile global economy and deficit reduction commitments.

2010	November	South Korea	The fifth G20 summit in Seoul, featuring development policy issues known as the 'Seoul Development Consensus.' Inclusion of development policy issues.
2011	November	France	The sixth G20 summit in Cannes, focusing on international monetary system reform; Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) established
2012	June	Mexico	The seventh summit in Los Cabos focussed on Addressing youth unemployment and quality job creation; Link between development, agriculture, and environment
2013	September	Russia	The Eighth Summit led to passing of Agreement on automatic exchange of tax information; Action Plan on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS)
2014	November	Australia	The Brisbane summit set ambitious goals to increase collective GDP by 2%; Reducing gender gap in the labor force by 25% by 2025
2015	November	Turkey	The 10th summit focussed on migration and refugee crisis; Financial sector reforms; Support for climate change plans
2016	September	China	The G20 summit in Hangzhou, China, included the digital economy in the agenda for the first time and adopted the 'G20 Action Plan on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'.
2017	July	Germany	The summit in Hamburg, Germany, emphasized counter-terrorism efforts and reaffirmed the importance of the Paris Agreement on climate change.
2018	November December	Argentina	The summit in Buenos Aires, Argentina, reaffirmed support for the UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, addressed climate change, and emphasized multilateral trade and WTO reform.
2019	June	Japan	The summit in Osaka, Japan, focused on combatting the exploitation of the Internet for terrorism and urged online platforms to prevent the spread of extremist content.
2020	November	Saudi Arabia	Held via video conference due to COVID-19, leaders pledged to work together to overcome the pandemic and build a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient future.
2021	October	Italy	The Rome summit committed to fighting climate change, aiming to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees and achieve global net-zero greenhouse gas emissions

			by mid-century.
2022	November	**Indonesia**	The Bali summit was the first physical leaders' meeting since the COVID-19 pandemic and condemned the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the use or threats of nuclear weapons.

Sources:
A guide to all previous G20 summits (indianexpress.com)

Q1. With reference to G20, consider the following statements:
1. The G20 was formed in response to the financial crisis that struck East Asia and Southeast Asia in the late 1990s.
2. The G20 presidency is rotated among members each year.
3. The current troika is composed of Indonesia, India, and Italy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 3 only
(d) None

Answer: (a)

Q2. Consider the following pairs:

G20 Summit	Description
1. 2008- USA	Focussed on Global Financial Market Reform
2. 2020- Singapore	Aimed to build a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient future
3. 2021- Spain	Committed to fighting climate change, aiming to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees
4. 2022- Indonesia	Condemned the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the use or threats of nuclear weapons

How many of the abovementioned pairs are correctly matched ?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All Four

Answer: (b)

Q3. Explain the origin and objectives of the G20. How did the financial crisis of the late 1990s influence its formation?

Gaurav Nikumbh