



# One Nation One Election 'The Constitution 129th Amendment Bill 2024'

**For Prelims:** Key Features of the Constitution 129th Amendment Bill 2024, [Constitution Amendment Bills](#), [Lok Sabha](#), [President](#), [Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act 2019](#)

**For Mains:** Key Features of the Bill, Implications of Simultaneous Elections in India

[Source: PIB](#)

## Why in News?

Recently, the government initiated steps towards implementing "One Nation, One Election" by introducing two [Constitution Amendment Bills](#) namely **One Nation One Election-'The Constitution 129<sup>th</sup> Amendment Bill 2024'** and the '**The Union Territories Laws Amendment Bill 2024**' in [Lok Sabha](#).

- Simultaneous elections in India, where both Lok Sabha and state assembly elections were held together, took place from 1951 to 1967.

## What are the Key Features of the Bills?

- **One Nation, One Election 'The Constitution 129th Amendment Bill 2024':** The bill proposes **adding Article 82A(1-6) to the Constitution** to align the terms of the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, as recommended by the [committee headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind](#).
  - **Article 82 (1-6):**
    - **82A (1)** provides for the **timeline** for the [President](#) to bring into force the proposed changes on the **date of the first sitting** of the Lok Sabha after a general election, designating this as the "**appointed date**."
    - **82(2)** states that the **terms** of all **state Assemblies elected** after the appointed date and before the Lok Sabha's full term ends **will conclude** with the Lok Sabha's term.
    - **Article 82A(3)** states that the [Election Commission of India \(ECI\)](#) shall conduct general elections to the House of the People and all Legislative Assemblies **simultaneously**.
    - **Article 82 A(4)** defines **simultaneous elections** as "**general elections** held for constituting the House of the People and all the Legislative Assemblies together".
    - **Article 82A(5)** gives the **ECI the option of not holding** any particular Assembly election along with the election to Lok Sabha.
      - The **ECI can advise the President** to issue an order allowing **elections for a Legislative Assembly to be held at a later date**.
    - **Article 82A(6)** states that if an **Assembly election is deferred**, the **full term** of that Assembly **will also end** with the full term of the Lok Sabha elected in the

general election.

- **Amendment to Article 83 and 172:**
  - The bill states that if the **Lok Sabha** is dissolved before the end of its full term, the **next Lok Sabha will only be for the unexpired term** — “the period between its date of dissolution and five years from the date of the first meeting”.
    - This means that **Bills pending in the House will expire**, as it happens even when the House has functioned for a full term.
  - For state assemblies, amendments proposed for Article 172, which governs the duration of state legislatures.
    - If a state assembly is **dissolved** before its term ends, **elections would be held for the remaining term of the previous assembly**.
- **Amendment to Article 372:**
  - The Bill proposes **amending Article 372** to include "**conduct of simultaneous elections**" after "**delimitation of constituencies**," expanding Parliament's power over state legislature elections.
    - The bill excluded the election of Local bodies and Municipalities.
- **The Union Territories Laws Amendment Bill 2024:**
  - The Bill aims to **amend Section 5** of the **Government of Union Territories Act 1962**, **Section 5** of the **Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act 1991**, and **Section 17** of the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act 2019** to facilitate simultaneous elections with the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies.

## What are the Constitutional Provisions Related to Elections in India?

- **Part XV (Article 324-329):** It deals with elections and establishes a commission for these matters.
- **Article 324:** Empowers the ECI to supervise, direct, and control the entire process of elections to the Parliament and State Legislatures.
- **Article 325:** Provides for the establishment of a single electoral roll for all elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.
- **Article 326:** Specifies that elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies shall be based on adult suffrage.
- **Articles 82 and 170:** Mandate the delimitation of constituencies after each census to ensure fair representation.
- **Article 172:** States that every Legislative Assembly shall have a term of five years unless dissolved earlier.

## High-Level Committee Report on Simultaneous Elections

- **Formation and Purpose of the Committee:**
  - The **High-Level Committee**, chaired by former **President Ram Nath Kovind**, was formed by the central government in **September 2023**.
  - The committee was tasked with examining the feasibility of conducting **simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha**, state assemblies, and local bodies.
- **Rationale for Simultaneous Elections:**
  - The committee noted that **frequent elections create uncertainty**, while simultaneous elections would ensure stable governance and reduce disruptions.
    - Additionally, holding elections simultaneously is **expected to lower costs** and **increase voter participation**.
- **Electoral Roll Management:**
  - To streamline the electoral process, the committee suggested adopting a single electoral roll prepared by the **Election Commission of India (ECI)** in consultation with **State Election Commissions (SECs)**.
    - This would minimize duplication and improve efficiency across multiple agencies involved in election management.
- **Logistical Considerations:**
  - The committee emphasized that both the ECI and SECs must undertake detailed planning and estimation for logistical arrangements to ensure smooth execution during simultaneous elections.

## What are the Challenges Associated with Implementing Simultaneous Elections?

- **Infrastructure Development:** Ensuring that the **technological infrastructure is robust** enough to handle the complexities of simultaneous elections is critical.
  - This includes the effective deployment and management of **Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)** and **Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs)**.
  - In the **2024 general elections**, approximately **1.7 million Control Units** and **1.8 million VVPAT systems were deployed** across 1.05 million polling stations nationwide.
- **Legal Challenges:** Any **amendments and the process of implementing** simultaneous elections may face **legal challenges** and require judicial scrutiny to ensure compliance with constitutional provisions.
- **Regional Disparities:** Some political parties express **concerns that simultaneous elections may marginalise** regional voices and issues during national campaigns.
  - Ensuring that local issues are not overshadowed by national narratives is crucial for maintaining diverse representation.
- **Administrative Challenges:** Organizing simultaneous elections across states poses significant logistical challenges, including **managing electoral rolls and ensuring security**.
  - A comprehensive voter **education campaign** will be necessary to inform citizens about the new electoral process and its implications.

## What Strategies can be Employed to Facilitate the Transition to Simultaneous Elections?

- **Legal Clarity:** Establish **clear instructions** for conducting simultaneous elections, detailing the **schedules and procedures for voter registration**.
  - Ensure that **necessary constitutional amendments** are made to facilitate the synchronization of elections **across all levels of government**.
- **Strengthening Electoral Infrastructure:** Develop a **unified electoral roll system** that serves all three tiers of government—Lok Sabha, State Assemblies, and local bodies—to reduce duplication and errors, as **recommended by the Kovind Committee**.
  - **Utilize technology** for efficient management of electoral processes, including voter verification and results tabulation.
  - **Election Commission's Recommendations (2016)** suggested changes to enhance the efficiency of the electoral process, including the use of technology for voter registration and electronic voting machines.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Initiate nationwide campaigns to inform voters about the **advantages of simultaneous elections** and its impact on their voting experience.
  - **Engage NGOs and community organizations** to disseminate information and gather public feedback on the proposed changes.
- **Capacity Building:** **Conduct training sessions for election officials** on new technologies and processes associated with simultaneous elections to ensure smooth implementation.

### Drishti Mains Question

Critically analyze the implications of implementing 'One Nation, One Election' in India. Also mention the challenges related to regional representation and administrative efficiency.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

### Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements: (2017)

1. The Election Commission of India is a five-member body.
2. The Union Ministry of Home Affairs decides the election schedule for the conduct of both general elections and bye-elections.
3. Election Commission resolves the disputes relating to splits/mergers of recognised political parties.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 3 only

**Ans: (d)**

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**Mains**

**Q.** Discuss the role of the Election Commission of India in the light of the evolution of the Model Code of Conduct. **(2022)**

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