

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW MANAGEMENT & HUMANITIES

[ISSN 2581-5369]

Volume 7 | Issue 2

2024

© 2024 *International Journal of Law Management & Humanities*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://www.ijlmh.com/>

Under the aegis of VidhiAagaz – Inking Your Brain (<https://www.vidhiaagaz.com/>)

This article is brought to you for “free” and “open access” by the International Journal of Law Management & Humanities at VidhiAagaz. It has been accepted for inclusion in the International Journal of Law Management & Humanities after due review.

In case of **any suggestions or complaints**, kindly contact Gyan@vidhiaagaz.com.

To submit your Manuscript for Publication in the **International Journal of Law Management & Humanities**, kindly email your Manuscript to submission@ijlmh.com.

One Nation One Election

GAJENDRA GIRI¹

ABSTRACT

The idea of aligning and synchronizing the timing of elections across India has garnered much debate over the past few years. Commonly referred to as 'One Nation Election', this proposal envisions structuring the electoral calendar so that elections to Lok Sabha, State Assemblies, and local government bodies occur simultaneously or get clustered together in a predetermined cycle.

Critics argue that this electoral reform will result in significant cost savings, improve governance efficiencies, reduce pressure on political parties, check populist measures, and induce a more coherent outlook on national issues. By avoiding frequent election mode, governments can focus on long-term policymaking rather than short-term electoral considerations. Currently, state and central governments are in perpetual campaign mode which hinders effective administration.

This paper discusses impact of One Nation One Election on the economic stability, society and the government of India in an elaborative manner.

Keywords: elections, electoral, campaign, government, state and etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has supported the proposal for simultaneity of elections. They highlight that the multifarious election cycle imposes a massive logistical and administrative burden on the ECI as it has to repeatedly deploy staff, equipment and security forces. Further, enforcing the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) for prolonged periods due to staggered state elections disrupts governance and policy implementation.²

1.1 Research Questions

1. How does 'One Nation One Election' impact regional representation and federalism in India, and what are the implications for state accountability?
2. What is the impact of simultaneous elections on economic stability, investor confidence, and policy consistency in India?

¹ Author is an Advocate in India.

² Vivek Kumar, 'One nation one election: Indian perspective' (2023) 5(1) International Journal of Political Science and Governance 165-168 (2023).

1.2 Research Methodology

The researcher has used a doctrinal research methodology to procure information and data. The researcher has consulted various books, journal articles, judgments and commentaries to gather awareness and knowledge about the subject.

II. IMPACT OF ONE NATION ONE ELECTION

Simultaneous elections would dilute regional interests, erode federalism, and reduce state accountability. Synchronization requires political consensus and major constitutional changes. Local political groups believe it unfairly benefits national groups. Incumbent governments will have too much power and no incentive to address issues or perform within their brief term. India's Law Commission's draft report considered 'One Nation One Election' among other possibilities. The worst-case scenario is changing the constitution to give the Lok Sabha and state assemblies five-year terms. However, hung assemblies, house dissolution, and no-confidence motions make this approach difficult, requiring simultaneous elections.³

One option is to combine the national and state elections into one, allowing states to choose their own dates by a few months. This staggered synchronization model has concerns with security, combining elections of just a few states, and MCC enforcement across long periods. The third option proposes separate Lok Sabha and state assembly elections. The projected benefits of electoral synchronization are reduced. The Law Commission recommends diverse parties for feasibility reviews. Importantly, 'One Nation One Election' requires political consensus, which is difficult.

Previous election cycle alignment efforts failed. After the 1970 Lok Sabha dissolution, legislature and assembly elections were separated. Dissolution or motions of no confidence can break synchronization. The current political climate makes constitutional amendment impossible. Finally, simultaneous elections have theoretical advantages, but the practical problems are too large to ignore. Synchronizing the electoral calendar for a big, diverse nation like India with a federal structure raises problems about regional representation, accountability, campaign focus, and power sharing between the central government and the states. The change will yield significant rewards but also pose significant governance issues that must be evaluated. As the discussion progresses, achieving a compromise is most important.

The danger is that conducting elections all at once would give large parties like the BJP and Congress power at the expense of smaller, more local ones by focusing on national issues and

³ Louise Tillin, *Indian Federalism* 154-161 (OUP India).

leadership. Regional parties can rally supporters based on their credentials, state leadership, and regional interests in the current state assembly elections.

State elections independent of Lok Sabha voting can focus on regional issues instead of national ones. When Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections are held simultaneously, national leadership, ideology, security, etc. would be prioritized. This may make it harder for regional parties to showcase their unique state vision and government record.⁴

III. ECONOMIC STABILITY

Elections increase investor confidence, capital, and growth, strengthening the economy. Political instability discourages new corporate capital expenditure, whereas policy consistency during five-year government terms stimulates public and private investment. Progress will come from focusing more on development than electioneering, lowering election costs, and streamlining administrative logistics surrounding unified polls.

Without election pressures, economic decisions may stagnate. Thus, transparency systems like the Right to Information Act (RTI), independent regulators, and state policy innovation and competition are essential, especially during simultaneous election cycles.

Simultaneous elections could lead to a government that separates campaigning from governance. This can lead to more stable leadership and stronger economic growth that is less susceptible to political unrest. Increasing numbers of developed democracies are adopting this shift.

However, institutional safeguards must be systemically improved during the transfer. Harmonizing India's national and state election cycles could promote political stability and economic prosperity. Educational institutions need more protections to maintain accountability, electoral, and policy efficacy.⁵

IV. CONCLUSION AND THE WAY FORWARD

Simultaneous elections can improve government by reducing disruptions and enabling uninterrupted policy execution over five years. Instead of electioneering, state and federal governments should fund economic development and welfare programs. Stable policy enhances investor and macroeconomic system trust, accelerating growth. Instead of conducting monthly surveys, the Election Commission and political parties should coordinate campaign operations

⁴ Shubhank Khare, 'One Nation One Election in India' (2022) 5(3) IJLMH 1309-1315.

⁵ Bidyut Chakrabarty, *Indian Politics and Society Since Independence: Events, Processes and Ideology* 78-89 (Taylor & Francis 2018).

to save money on logistics. Instead of holding many state or national elections, a single nationwide election improves security, enforcement, and administrative logistics.

Despite the benefits of simultaneous polls, a solid national consensus requires balancing diversity and efficiency, continuity and accountability, and stability and change. Improved institutional safeguards are needed to prevent long-term authority abuse without political restraints. By aligning electoral cycles, national and state policies can be optimized and government resources maximized. Diversity, federalism, and voter responsibility must be addressed for India's simultaneous election cycle to succeed.

States should have the choice to accept EC's voter list as part of the mature approach. Although it is a tiresome operation, technology can be used to make the EC's voter list meet the wards of the State Election Commissions.
