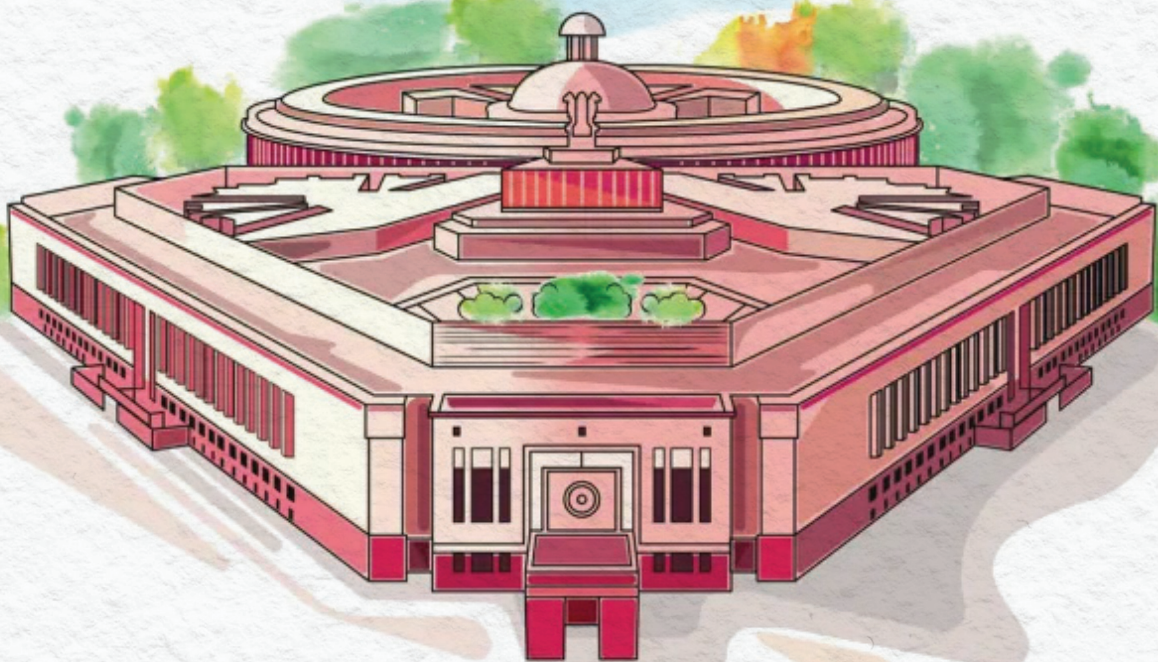


BJYM *Magazine*

NOVEMBER 2025 VOL 50

**ONE NATION
ONE ELECTION**



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“

Today, there is an important debate about 'one nation, one election'... holding Lok Sabha and state elections simultaneously could alleviate disruptions and enable a more focused governance approach,”

Prime Minister
Shri Narendra Modi



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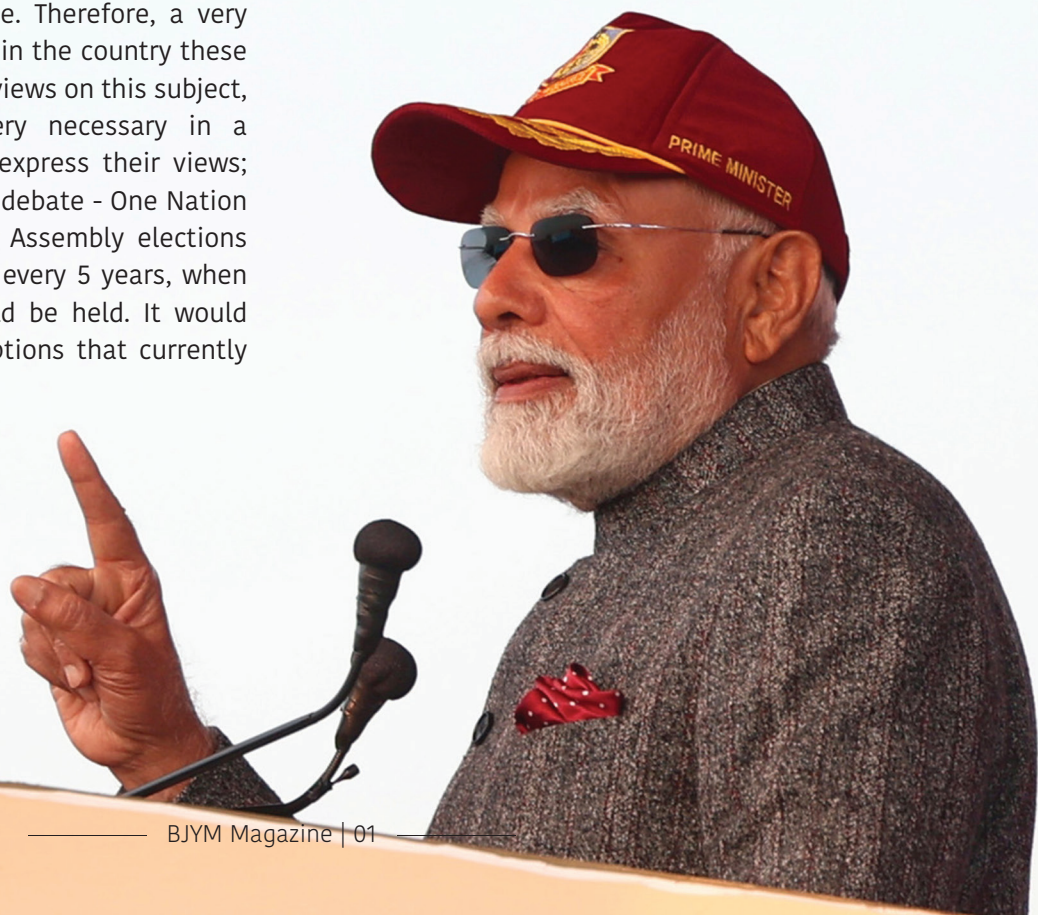
Remarks of
Prime Minister
Shri Narendra Modi
at at NCC Rally 2025

An important issue related to the future of the youth is the electoral system of the country. Just two days ago, we celebrated National Voters' Day. Many of you have become first-time voters. The purpose of Voters' Day is that the maximum number of voters should participate and use their right. Today, the world's biggest elections are held in India, but another aspect of this is that elections keep happening in India every few months. After independence, it used to happen for a long time when Lok Sabha and Assembly elections used to be held simultaneously. But then this pattern broke, and the country has suffered a lot due to this.

In every election, the voting list is updated, a lot of work is done, and you must have seen that our teachers are often put on duty in this, due to which studies are affected, and preparations for exams are affected. Due to frequent elections, there are also difficulties in governance. Therefore, a very important debate is going on in the country these days. Everyone is giving their views on this subject, and this deliberation is very necessary in a democracy. Everyone should express their views; this is necessary, and what is debate - One Nation One Election. Lok Sabha and Assembly elections should be held together, and every 5 years, when the time is fixed, they should be held. It would prevent the frequent interruptions that currently halt new development work.

Today, I especially request the youth of India, I request the NCC cadets, I request the volunteers of MY Bharat, I request the NSS comrades, wherever we are, we should conduct this debate, take the debate forward, lead the debate, and we should participate in this debate in large numbers. This is a subject directly related to your future. Even in a country like America, the date of formation of a new government is fixed; its elections are held every four years. In your own college or school, the student council elections are also completed in one go. Just think, if elections keep happening every month, will it be possible to study in a university or college? Therefore, you should lead the debate on One Nation-One Election; there should be a nationwide discussion so that the country can decide to move in the right direction.

Source: narendramodi.in

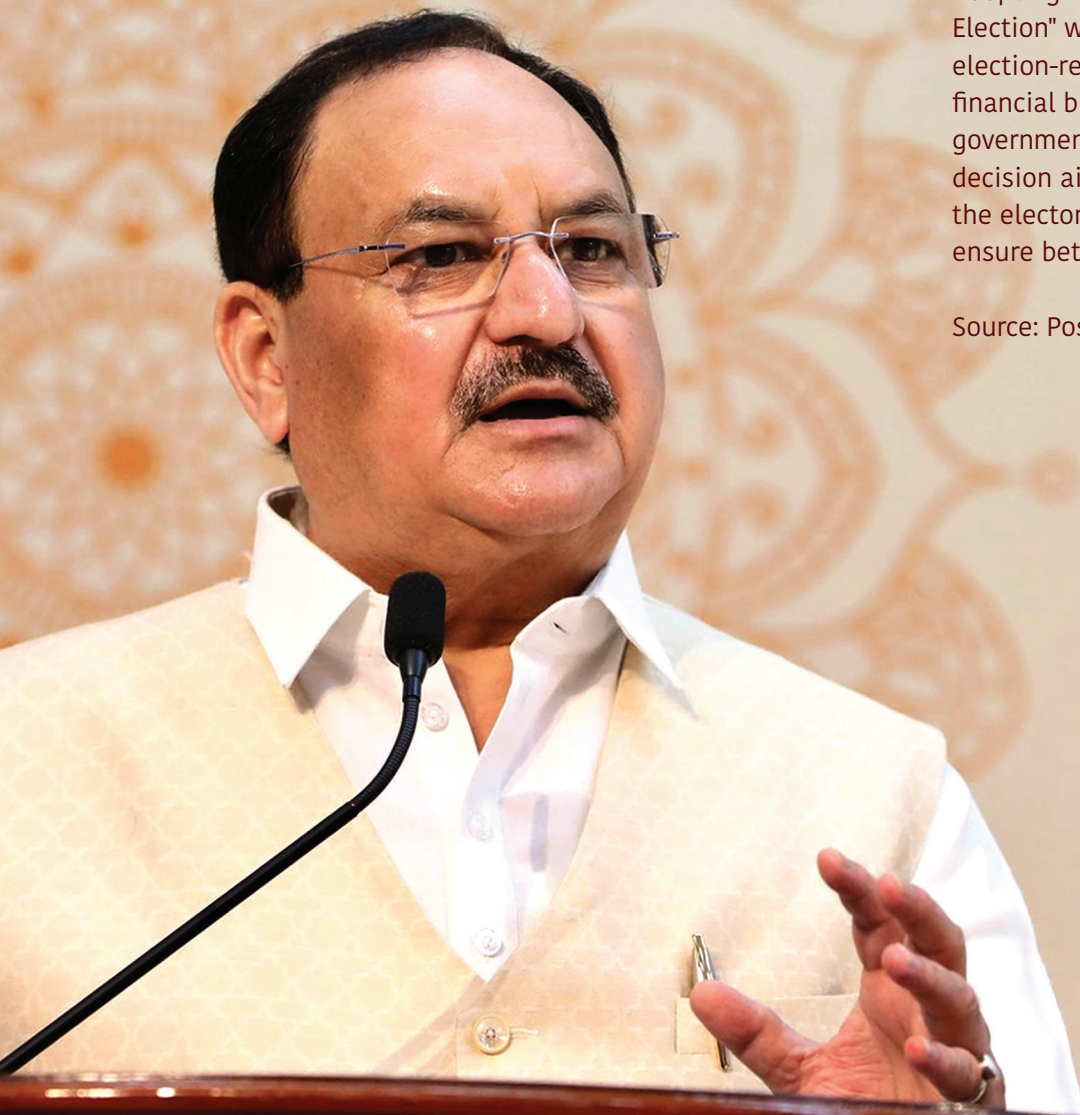


Remarks of the BJP President **Shri J.P Nadda**



Union Cabinet, chaired by Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi ji has accepted the recommendations of the High Level Committee on 'One Nation One Election' initiative. The current system of holding elections at different times across states hampers development efforts and burdens the national treasury. Adopting "One Nation, One Election" will help lower election-related expenses and financial burden on the government. This landmark decision aims to streamline the electoral process and ensure better governance.

Source: Post on X



India stands on the threshold of becoming a developed nation by 2047. To get there, we must modernise not only our economy and infrastructure but also the very machinery of our democracy. The answer lies in a bold reform being undertaken by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji: One Nation, One Election (ONOE). This is not merely a technical change; it is a declaration that we will no longer allow our institutions to be hostage to electoral disruption.

Today, our democracy functions in a perpetual state of campaigning. Every few months, one state or another goes into poll mode. Decisions pause. Schools become polling stations. Police and administrators are diverted from serving citizens to serving election logistics. The Model Code of Conduct locks policy, halts investment, and freezes governance. Meanwhile, a dynamic and ambitious India loses precious time. For a nation that dreams big, this is not acceptable.

Message from the BJYM National President **Shri Tejasvi Surya**

.....



ONOE offers a powerful path forward. By synchronising elections for the national Parliament and State Assemblies, we anchor governance into a predictable cycle. We align the rhythm of democracy with the tempo of development. When governments know that they have a full five-year span without election-induced distractions, they can focus on bold reforms in education, skilling, infrastructure, digital governance and climate resilience. Policy will be about progress, not poll-play.

There are three major pillars that make ONOE essential. First, stability of governance. When a government is free from continuous electoral pressures, it can think long-term about re-imagining agriculture, modernising health, transforming urban spaces or integrating digital India across the nation. Second, economic efficiency. Elections are expensive for administration, for security, and for logistics. The 2024 Lok Sabha elections alone cost thousands of crores of rupees. Imagine redirecting a significant portion of that into young Indians' education, startups, jobs, rural infra, and tech ecosystems. Third, political renewal. With frequent elections, parties slip into a loop of populism and freebies. They fear reform because a regional poll is looming. ONOE forces politics out of activist mode into governance mode. It demands vision rather than vote bank tactics.

To our youth: this matters to you more than anyone. When politics is in perpetual campaign mode, your joining the workforce, your ambition, your startups, and your dreams suffer from frequent disruptions caused by repeated elections. ONOE means less rhetoric, more results. It means clarity of purpose, predictable terms, and uninterrupted governance. It means a democracy where your voice is not drowned in constant noise but leveraged once, decisively, for transformational change.

There will be critics. Some will argue that simultaneity threatens federal autonomy or sidelines regional voices. Let us be clear: federalism is about constitutional powers, not about poll timing. India held simultaneous elections in its formative decades, and the federal balance

remained intact. In fact, aligning mandates will enable State and Central governments to work in sync, matching vision, sharing momentum, and executing together. Regional issues won't vanish. If anything, they will be amplified because parties will need to address national and local agendas at the same time.

At this juncture, ONOE is no longer optional. It is necessary. It is not a reform for the sake of reform; it is a reform for India's future, for the youth's future, for a democracy that delivers. India's ancient wisdom taught that when your foundation is strong, the edifice rises without a crack. Let us strengthen the foundation of our democracy today.

I call upon the nation's decision-makers, our youth, our political class: Let us evolve a consensus on One Nation, One Election. Let us break the cycle of disruption. Let us commit to governance that is continuous, responsive and focused on the people. For India's ascent to the world stage, our democratic process must stay uninterrupted. It must progress in one direction, cohesive, consistent, and dignified.

Vande Mataram!

Tejasvi Surya

MP Lok Sabha,
Bengaluru South



electoral exercise. Each election is an administrative feat, a constitutional affirmation and a civic moment that binds the nation. But the sheer frequency of these exercises has produced a democratic rhythm increasingly out of sync with the demands of a rapidly transforming India. As the country prepares for the next phase of economic expansion and institutional reform, the debate over One Nation, One Election (ONOE) deserves serious attention, not as a partisan slogan but as a structural correction whose time may have arrived.

Over the last five decades, India has drifted into a pattern where elections recur with remarkable regularity. In a single five-year cycle, citizens may be called to vote for the Lok Sabha, state assemblies, panchayats, municipal bodies and occasionally for mid-term polls triggered by political instability. Each such round triggers the Model Code of Conduct, halts new policy decisions, diverts administrative capacity and compels governments to shift focus from implementation to political management. Election fatigue is no longer just a metaphor; it is a measurable governance cost.

A democracy as large as India does not need fewer elections. It needs better-timed elections. Simultaneous polls, held once every five years, could provide that coherence. Historically, India followed a synchronised cycle between 1952 and 1967. The transition away from it was not by design but by circumstance, premature dissolutions, political volatility, and constitutional disruptions gradually pulled the system apart. The present debate, therefore, is less about reinventing the wheel and more about restoring a lost alignment with stronger safeguards.

The arguments for ONOE rest on three pillars: governance continuity, fiscal prudence and democratic clarity. When governments face elections every few months somewhere in the country, long-term policymaking suffers. Administrators become reluctant to pursue major decisions, fearing that a new Model Code or shifting political arithmetic may interrupt their work. Schemes tend to be front-loaded or back-loaded around election schedules rather than calibrated for efficiency. A synchronised electoral calendar can reduce these distortions, allowing governments at both the Centre and the state to plan in uninterrupted five-year blocks.

The financial case, too, is compelling. National elections are costly; state polls multiply that cost. The Election Commission mobilises hundreds of thousands of personnel, security forces are redeployed across states, and civic infrastructure from schools to local administration is routinely paused. Conducting these exercises once every five years could generate significant savings that can be redirected toward social spending and public investment. The argument is not that democracy should be cheap; it is that democracy should be efficient.

There are also democratic dividends. A consolidated election moment sharpens voter engagement. Instead of multiple, staggered campaigns competing for attention and exhausting citizen interest, a single national event can elevate the quality of debate. It encourages parties to present comprehensive visions rather than fragmented promises tailored to state-specific calendars. It

offers voters a clearer, more coherent political choice.

Critics warn that simultaneous elections may overshadow regional issues or disproportionately benefit larger parties. These are not trivial worries. Safeguards ensuring state autonomy, adequate representation for regional voices, and provisions for mid-term elections, where necessary, must be built into any future framework. The purpose of ONOE is not centralisation but synchronisation, not uniform politics, but aligned democratic timing.

India's institutions have shown remarkable capacity for adaptation. The rollout of GST, the implementation of Aadhaar, and the shifts in criminal law demonstrate that large systemic transitions are possible when political consensus and administrative clarity converge. ONOE demands the same maturity and a willingness to think beyond immediate electoral calculus and consider what best serves the republic over the next several decades.

As India aspires to become a developed nation, it must ensure that its democratic engine runs at a steady pace, not in constant spurts. One Nation, One Election is not a magic wand, nor will it solve every governance challenge. But it can provide a cleaner, more rational framework for how our democracy chooses its governments. In a century that will test India's institutional strength, this coherence may well be the foundation the country needs.

Vande Mataram: The Sanatan Mantra

Amit Shah

Home and Cooperation
Minister, Government
of India

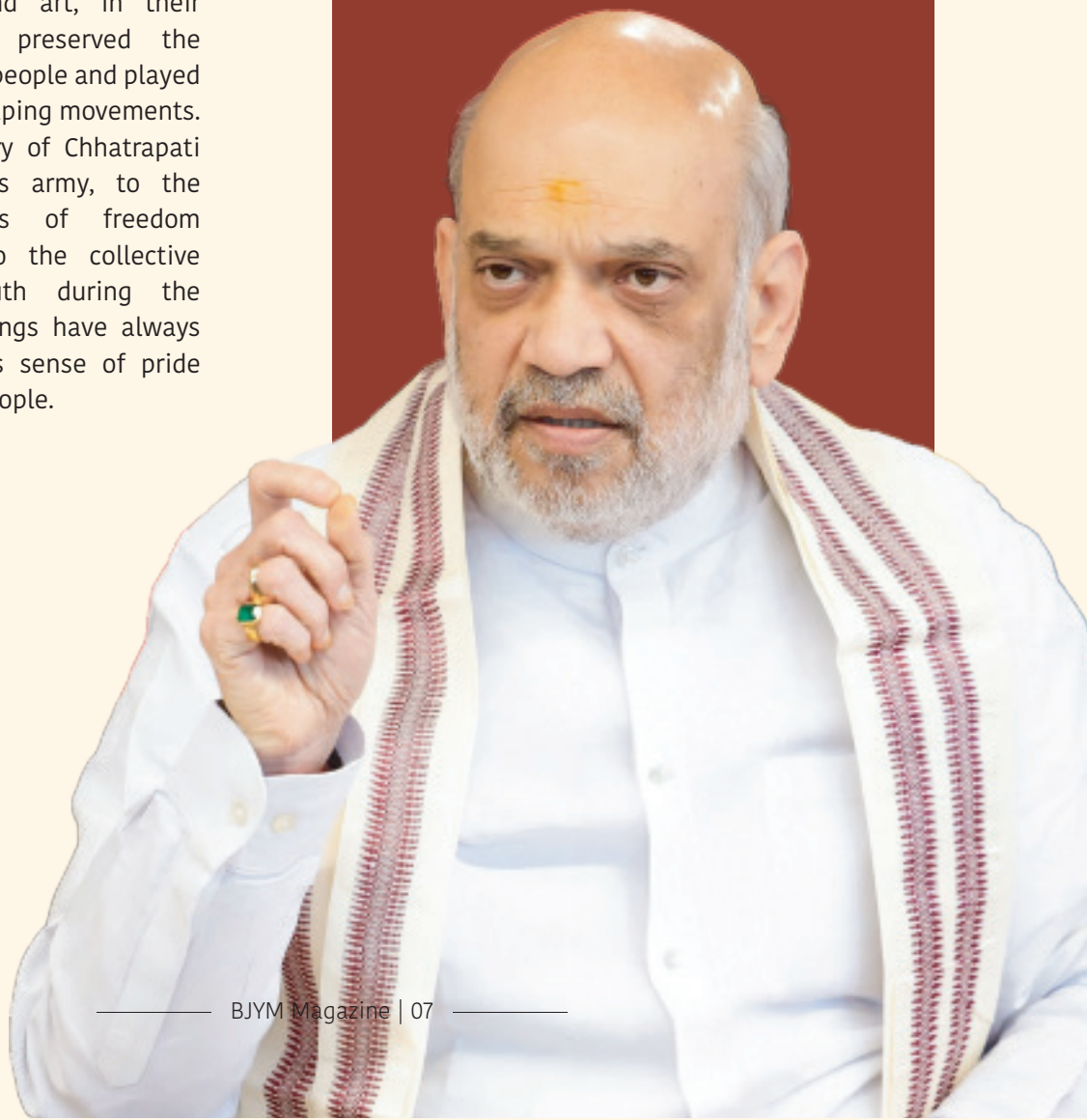
In our nation's history, there have been many defining moments when songs and art, in their diverse forms, preserved the emotions of the people and played a vital role in shaping movements. From the war cry of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's army, to the patriotic hymns of freedom fighters, and to the collective chants of youth during the Emergency — songs have always inspired Bharat's sense of pride and united its people.

SPECIAL ARTICLE

“

Vande Mataram is the song of freedom, the spirit of resilience, and the first mantra of Bharat's awakening. Words born of the nation's soul know no end, they live forever, echoing across generations. This chant shall live on, beyond eras and generations. It is time we understand our history and culture through our own Bharatiya perspective.”

Vande Mataram!



So too, the story of Vande Mataram begins not in a battlefield but in the quiet resolve of a scholar, Shri Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay. In 1875, on the day of Jagaddhatri Puja (Kartik Shukla Navami or Aksaya Navami), he composed the hymn that would become Bharat's eternal song of freedom. As he penned those sacred words, he was drawing from Bharat's deepest civilizational roots, from the Atharvaveda's declaration "Mata bhumi putroham prithivya" to the Devi Mahatmya's invocation of the universal Mother.

Bankim ji's hymn was both prayer and prophecy. 'Vande Mataram' is not merely Bharat's national song, nor just the soul of the freedom movement – it is, in fact, first proclamation of Cultural Nationalism as envisioned by Shri Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay. It reminded us that a nation is not just geography, it is geoculture. It is not merely territory, but tirtha, sacred land bound by memory, sacrifice, and motherhood.

Bankim ji was, as Shri Aurobindo later described, a Rishi of modern Bharat, who revived the soul of the nation through words. His Anandmath was not merely a novel but a mantra in prose, awakening a nation that had forgotten its divine strength. In one of his letters, Bankim ji wrote: "I don't mind if all my works are dumped in the Ganges. This verse (Vande Mataram) alone will remain till eternity. This will be a great song and conquer the hearts of the people." Those words were prophetic. Written in colonial Bharat's darkest hour, Vande Mataram became the dawn-song of awakening, a hymn that united cultural nationalism with civilizational pride. Only one born with devotion in every fibre of his being could have written such lines.

In 1896, Gurudev Rabindranath Thakur set Vande Mataram to tune and sang it at the Kolkata Congress session, giving it voice and immortality. The song spread across provinces, transcending language and region, from Tamil Nadu, where Shri Subramania Bharathi translated it into Tamil, to Punjab, where revolutionaries shouted it in defiance of the Raj.

In 1905, during the Bang Bhang movement, Bengal erupted. The British banned public recitation of

Vande Mataram, yet, on April 14, 1906, at Barisal, thousands defied the order. When police lathicharged the peaceful assembly, men and women bled on the streets crying, "Vande Mataram!"

From there, Vande Mataram travelled with the revolutionaries of the Ghadar Party in California, echoed through the Azad Hind Fauj as Netaji's soldiers marched from Singapore, and thundered in the Royal Indian Navy Mutiny of 1946, when Indian sailors raised both the tricolour and the chant of Vande Mataram atop British warships. From Khudiram Bose to Ashfaqulla Khan, from Rajguru to Tirupur Kumaran, the cry was the same. It was no longer just a song; it was Bharat's collective heartbeat. As Mahatma Gandhi himself admitted, Vande Mataram had "the magic power to stir the most sluggish blood." It had united moderates and revolutionaries, and, scholars and sailors. It was, as Aurobindo called it, "the mantra of Bharat's rebirth." In his Mann Ki Baat address on October 26, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi reminded the nation of the inspiring history of Vande Mataram. Marking the 150th anniversary of the national song, the Government of Bharat has decided to organize year-long programs from November 7 onward. These initiatives will carry the complete rendition of Vande Mataram to every corner of the nation, so that our youth may not only repeat its words, but rise with its spirit.

As we celebrate Bharat Parv and remember Sardar Patel's birth anniversary, we recall how he gave shape to the spirit of Vande Mataram through the vision of Ek Bharat. The song is no longer just a remembrance of the past, it is a rallying call for the future. Vande Mataram today lives in the resolve of the nation, in the idea of Viksit Bharat 2047. It embodies Bharat's civilizational confidence. Now, it is our responsibility to transform this spirit into a Atm Nirbhar and Shreshth Bharat.

विकसित भारत के लिए “एक राष्ट्र एक चुनाव”

श्री सुनील बंसल
राष्ट्रीय महामंत्री, भाजपा



भारत की लोकतांत्रिक यात्रा विश्व इतिहास में सबसे सफल और सशक्त कहानियों में से एक मानी जाती है। 15 अगस्त 1947 को स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के बाद भारत के सामने दो बड़ी चुनौतियाँ थीं—

- (1) एक स्थिर संविधान की रचना
- (2) एक लोकतांत्रिक चुनावी व्यवस्था की स्थापना

भारतीय संविधान 26 नवंबर 1949 को अंगीकृत हुआ और 26 जनवरी 1950 को लागू हुआ। इसके बाद देश को एक निर्वाचित सरकार देने के लिए सार्वभौम वयस्क मताधिकार पर आधारित पहले आम चुनाव (1951-52) चुनाव कराए गए। साथ ही 28 राज्यों में विधानसभा चुनाव भी इसी समय अवधि में संपन्न हुए और इसके साथ ही पहले चुनाव में “एक साथ चुनाव” की व्यवस्था स्थापित हुई। यह प्रक्रिया 1952, 1957, 1962 और 1967 के चुनाव में लगभग पूरी तरह समानांतर रही।

वर्ष 1967 के चुनावों के बाद देश की राजनीति में महत्वपूर्ण बदलाव आए। कई राज्यों में गैर-कांग्रेसी सरकारें बनने लगीं। इन नई सरकारों को अस्थिर करने के उद्देश्य से 1968-69 में केंद्र में सत्तारूढ़ कांग्रेस सरकार ने विभिन्न राज्यों में विपक्षी सरकारों को भंग करने की कार्रवाई की। जिसके परिणामस्वरूप राज्य विधानसभाएँ अलग-अलग समय पर भंग होने लगीं, वर्ष 1970 में लोकसभा भी समय से पहले भंग कर दी गई, आपातकाल (1975-77) के दौरान पाँचवीं लोकसभा का कार्यकाल बढ़ाया गया, और इस प्रकार एक साथ चुनावों की मूल व्यवस्था पूरी तरह टूट गई।

इस टूटन का प्रभाव केवल चुनावी कैलेंडर पर नहीं पड़ा बल्कि इसकी कीमत प्रशासन, संसाधन, विकास, मतदाता और देश की अर्थव्यवस्था को उठानी पड़ी। आज स्थिति यह है कि भारत में हर वर्ष किसी-न-किसी राज्य में चुनाव होते रहते हैं, जिसके कारण देश हमेशा एक “चुनावी मोड” में रहता है।

एक साथ चुनाव न होने से उत्पन्न गंभीर समस्याएँ :

1. विकास और शासन पर सीधा असर :

- हर चुनाव से पहले आचार संहिता लग जाती है, जिससे योजनाएँ, परियोजनाएँ और सरकारी निर्णय रुक जाते हैं।
- प्रधानमंत्री से लेकर राज्यों के मुख्यमंत्री और केन्द्र एवं राज्यों सरकारों के मंत्री और प्रशासनिक अधिकारी लगातार चुनावी झूटी/प्रचार में लगे रहते हैं, जिससे शासन की गति धीमी पड़ती है।
- बार-बार चुनाव से पॉलिसी पेरालिसिस की स्थिति बन जाती है।

2. आर्थिक बोझ में भारी वृद्धि

- बढ़ते मतदाताओं और बढ़ते खर्च ने चुनावों को अत्यधिक महंगा बना दिया है।
- CMS (सेन्टर सेंटर फॉर मीडिया स्टडीज) की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार 2019 में प्रति वोट ₹700 खर्च आता था, जो आज लगभग ₹1400 प्रति वोट हो चुका है।
- बार-बार चुनाव होने से यह आर्थिक बोझ कई गुना बढ़ गया है।

3. प्रशासनिक और सामाजिक दबाव

- सुरक्षा बल, पुलिस, शिक्षक, डॉक्टर, कर्मचारी—सभी पर लगातार झूटी का दबाव।
- समाज में चुनावी धुवीकरण, तनाव, राजनीतिक टकराव बढ़ते हैं।
- मीडिया राष्ट्रीय मुद्दों और विकास से हटकर निरंतर चुनावी विमर्श में उलझ जाता है।

4. मतदाता पर बोझ

- बार-बार मतदान से मतदाता में थकान, उदासीनता और भ्रम की स्थिति बढ़ती है।
- प्रवासियों, श्रमिकों और युवाओं की भागीदारी प्रभावित होती है।

5. पर्यावरण पर बोझ

- प्रत्येक वर्ष चुनावों के आयोजन होने से मतदाता सूची, चुनाव प्रक्रिया और राजनीतिक दलों के प्रचार प्रसार में भारी मात्रा में पेपर और अन्य स्टेशनरी का उपयोग होता है जिसका सीधा सीधा सम्बन्ध पर्यावरण से है।
- सरकारी कर्मचारी एवं सुरक्षा बलों के आवागमन, लोजिस्टिक्स और प्रचार प्रसार वाहनों के उपयोग से भी प्रदूषण जैसी समस्या पर्यावरण को हानि पहुंचाते हैं।
- उग्र राजनीतिक प्रदर्शन एवं हिंसाएँ भी पर्यावरण के नुकसान से जुड़ी हुई हैं।
- इन कारणों से चुनाव सुधार की आवश्यकता समय की पुकार बन चुकी है।

“एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव” की आवश्यकता क्यों ?

भारत दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा लोकतंत्र है। यहाँ हर नागरिक राजनीति और शासन के माध्यम से अपनी आकांक्षाओं को साकार होते देखने की अपेक्षा करता है। किन्तु जब यह लोकतंत्र निरंतर चुनावी चक्रों में फँसकर अपनी ऊर्जा उसी में खर्च करने लगे, तो उस राष्ट्र की प्रगति

अनिवार्य रूप से प्रभावित होती है। आज हमारे सामने सबसे गंभीर प्रश्न यह है कि क्या चुनावों की आवृत्ति ने विकास की गति को धीमा नहीं कर दिया है? क्या यह उचित नहीं कि भारत, अपनी विशालता और विविधता के बावजूद, चुनावों को एक निश्चित समय पर एक साथ आयोजित करे? “एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव” का विचार इसी राजनीतिक सुधार का व्यापक स्वरूप है — और मेरे विचार में यह भारत के भविष्य की एक निर्णायक आवश्यकता है।

प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने स्वतंत्रता दिवस के अवसर पर लाल किले की प्राचीर से देश को संबोधित करते हुए कहा था कि “हम जल्द से जल्द राजनीतिक जीवन में जनप्रतिनिधि के रूप में एक लाख ऐसे नौजवानों को आगे लाना चाहते हैं, ऐसे नौजवानों को आगे लाना चाहते हैं जिनके परिवार में किसी का भी कोई राजनीतिक बैकग्राउंड न हो, जिनके माता-पिता, भाई-बहन, चाचा ताऊ आदि कोई भी राजनीति में न रहे हों, किसी भी पीढ़ी में कोई राजनीति में न रहा हो।” भारत की 65% आबादी 35 वर्ष से कम है। यह देश युवाओं की ऊर्जा से संचालित हो रहा है, और देश की नीतियाँ, विकास प्रक्रिया और आर्थिक संभावनाएँ युवाओं की आकांक्षाओं पर टिकी हैं। हर वर्ष होने वाले चुनाव इस ऊर्जा को बाधित करता है क्योंकि बार-बार चुनाव होने से विकास परियोजनाएँ रुक जाती हैं, रोजगार-उन्मुख निर्णय देर से होते हैं और प्रशासनिक समय चुनावों में खप जाता है। “एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव” सिर्फ चुनाव सुधार नहीं, बल्कि युवा भारत के भविष्य को सुरक्षित और स्थिर करने की राष्ट्रीय रणनीति है।

यह विचार न तो नया है और न ही असम्भव। विश्व की कई प्रगतिशील लोकतांत्रिक व्यवस्थाओं में यह मॉडल पहले से अपनाया जाता रहा है। अमेरिका में राष्ट्रपति और अधिकांश राज्यों के चुनाव एक निश्चित समय पर तय चक्र के अनुसार होते हैं। दक्षिण अफ्रीका और स्वीडन जैसे देशों में भी राष्ट्रीय और स्थानीय चुनाव एक साथ आयोजित किए जाते हैं। जब दुनिया आगे बढ़ रही है, तो भारत क्यों न इस राह में नेतृत्व करे? 140 करोड़ भारतीयों वाला देश यदि इस परिवर्तन को स्वीकार कर लेता है, तो यह विश्व लोकतंत्र के इतिहास में एक अनुकरणीय उदाहरण होगा।

चुनाव आयोग, विधि आयोग, NITI Aayog और उच्चस्तरीय समितियों का समर्थन

दस्तावेज के अनुसार वर्ष 1983 से लेकर 2024 तक चुनाव आयोग, विधि आयोग (1999, 2015), संसदीय स्थायी समिति, नीति आयोग (2017), किसान राजनीतिक दल, पूर्व न्यायाधीश, और वर्ष 2024 की रामनाथ कोविंद समिति सभी ने व्यापक परामर्श और अध्ययन के बाद एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव को व्यवहारिक, आवश्यक और देशहितकारी बताया है।

एक राष्ट्र एक चुनाव का विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में सकारात्मक प्रभाव :

1. सामाजिक प्रभाव (Social Impact) : देश में शांत, स्थिर और सकारात्मक सामाजिक वातावरण बनाने में सहायक होगा।

- a. चुनावी धुवीकरण में कमी : बार-बार चुनावों के कारण समाज में निरंतर राजनीतिक बहस, धुवीकरण और तनाव बढ़ता है। एक साथ चुनाव होने पर प्रचार अवधि कम होगी, भाषा और वाणी की उग्रता कम होगी और समाज में आपसी सद्भाव बढ़ेगा। युवाओं को एक ऐसा सामाजिक वातावरण मिलेगा जहाँ काम, पढ़ाई, रोजगार और नवाचार पर ज्यादा ध्यान दिया जाएगा।
- b. छात्रों और शिक्षकों पर से बोझ कम : शिक्षकों की बार-बार चुनाव ड्यूटी से छात्रों की पढ़ाई प्रभावित होती है। एक साथ चुनाव होने पर शिक्षा प्रणाली में कम व्यवधान होगा, बोर्ड परीक्षाएँ/विश्वविद्यालय परीक्षाएँ बिना बाधा के सम्पन्न हो सकेंगी और छात्र केंद्रित शैक्षणिक वातावरण बनेगा।
- c. युवाओं में मतदान और राजनीतिक जागरूकता में वृद्धि : एकसाथ चुनाव होने पर युवाओं को एक संगठित माहौल मिलेगा जहाँ एक ही बार बड़ा राष्ट्रीय अभियान चलेगा, मतदान प्रक्रिया आसान और रोमांचक बनेगी, युवा पहली बार मतदान को एक “राष्ट्रीय उत्सव” की तरह अनुभव करेंगे, युवा राजनीति में बेहतर भागीदारी दिखाएँगे।

2. आर्थिक प्रभाव (Economic Impact) : युवा उद्यमियों, स्टार्टअप्स और नौकरी चाहने वालों के लिए स्थिर अर्थव्यवस्था विकसित होगी।

- a. विकास परियोजनाएँ तेज़ी से पूर्ण होंगी क्योंकि लगातार चुनावी आचार संहिता से सड़कें, मेट्रो, पुल, रोजगार मिशन, उद्यमिता योजनाएँ सब रुकी रहती हैं। एक साथ चुनाव से हर परियोजना तय समय पर पूरी होगी और यह युवाओं को अधिक रोजगार अवसर देगा।
- b. चुनावी खर्च में कमी और सरकारी संसाधनों का बेहतर उपयोग : बार-बार चुनाव = बार-बार खर्च, एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव = लगभग 30% तक खर्च में कमी और यह पैसा युवाओं के लिए शिक्षा, स्किल डेवलपमेंट, स्टार्टअप और इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर में लगेगा

- c. निवेश व व्यापार का वातावरण मजबूत : चुनावी अस्थिरता से निवेशक इंतज़ार करते हैं। एक सिंगल चुनाव चक्र से - शेयर बाज़ार स्थिर रहेगा, विदेशी निवेश बढ़ेगा, स्टार्टअप्स को बेहतर प्लानिंग का मौका मिलेगा, व्यापारिक नीतियों में स्थिरता रहेगी। यह सीधे युवा उद्यमियों और नौकरी चाहने वाले युवाओं के लिए लाभकारी होगा।

3. राजनीतिक प्रभाव (Political Impact) : स्थिर सरकार—युवाओं के सपनों के लिए और देश के राजनीतिक परिपेक्ष्य में स्थिर नीति बनाने में सहायक होगा।

शासन में निरंतरता और जवाबदेही : जब सरकारें पूरे पाँच साल बिना चुनावी दबाव के काम करेंगी, तब नीतियाँ लंबी अवधि के लिए बनेगी, युवा योजनाओं (स्टार्टअप इंडिया, स्किल इंडिया, डिजिटल इंडिया) का प्रभाव बढ़ेगा और घोषणापत्र में किए वादे समय पर पूरे होंगे। राजनीतिक दलों का ध्यान राजनीति से हटकर शासन पर : लगातार चुनाव पार्टियों को रणनीति में उलझाए रखते हैं। एक साथ चुनाव से नेता चुनाव से ज्यादा जनता के काम पर ध्यान देंगे, युवाओं की समस्याएँ नीति का केंद्र बनेंगी।

युवाओं की राजनीतिक भागीदारी बढ़ेगी : एक बड़ा चुनाव = बड़ा उत्साह, युवाओं का राजनीतिक संवाद से जुड़ना, नए युवा नेताओं का उभरना और युवाओं की आवाज़ राष्ट्रीय एजेंडा तय करेगी।

4. पर्यावरणीय प्रभाव (Environmental Impact) : एक राष्ट्र एक चुनाव ग्रीन इंडिया के लिए इको-फ्रेंडली चुनाव साबित हो सकता है क्योंकि बार-बार चुनावों से करोड़ों पन्ने पोस्टरों/पैम्प्लेट में खर्च होते हैं, वाहनों का लाखों किलोमीटर राजनीतिक आवागमन—प्रदूषण बढ़ता है और प्लास्टिक और बैनर से पर्यावरण को नुकसान पहुँचता है। एक साथ चुनाव से प्रचार पर्यावरण-अनुकूल होगा, कागज़ और प्लास्टिक का उपयोग कई गुना कम, लाखों लीटर ईंधन की बचत, कार्बन फुटप्रिंट में भारी कमी होगी और यह युवा पर्यावरण कार्यकर्ताओं और ग्रीन इकोनॉमी का समर्थन करेगा।

5. मतदाताओं को सुविधा : एक ही बार मतदान की प्रक्रिया से अधिक स्पष्टता, अधिक भागीदारी से मतदान प्रतिशत में वृद्धि सुनिश्चित हो सकेगी और मतदाताओं में कम भ्रम फैलेगा।

भारत जब विकसित राष्ट्र बनने की दिशा में आगे बढ़ रहा है, तो यह आवश्यक है कि देश की ऊर्जा विकास में बाधा डालने वाले लगातार चुनावों के बोझ से मुक्त हों। “एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव”— देश और विशेषकर युवाओं की आकांक्षाओं, रोजगार की जरूरतों, स्टार्टअप संस्कृति, शिक्षा प्रणाली और एक स्थिर व प्रभावी शासन को नई दिशा देने वाला ऐतिहासिक कदम है। यह सुधार केवल चुनाव तंत्र का सुधार नहीं, बल्कि न्यू इंडिया के युवा नेतृत्व में विश्वास का प्रतीक है। आज देश भर में “एक राष्ट्र एक चुनाव” को सभी वर्गों का व्यापक समर्थन मिल रहा है और जनता की बढ़ती सहमति ये सभी संकेत देती है कि भारत जल्द ही चुनावी संरचना में एक बड़ा, ऐतिहासिक बदलाव देखने वाला है।



एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव: आर्थिक अनुशासन और सुशासन की क्रांतिकारी पहल

श्री मोहित नागर

पूर्व अध्यक्ष दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय
छात्र संघ, अधिवक्ता एवं
सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता

एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव — आर्थिक और राजकोषीय दृष्टि से परिवर्तनकारी पहल

भारत विश्व का सबसे बड़ा लोकतंत्र है, जहाँ लगभग हर वर्ष किसी न किसी स्तर पर चुनाव होते रहते हैं। यह निरंतर चुनावी गतिविधि लोकतांत्रिक चेतना का प्रमाण तो है, परंतु इसकी वजह से देश की अर्थव्यवस्था, प्रशासनिक दक्षता और विकास योजनाओं की निरंतरता पर गंभीर प्रभाव पड़ता है।

इन्हीं चुनौतियों के समाधान के रूप में प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेंद्र मोदी जी द्वारा प्रस्तुत 'एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव' का विचार केवल एक राजनीतिक सुधार भर नहीं है, बल्कि वह एक ऐसी आर्थिक रूपांतरणकारी नीति है, जो शासन को अधिक कुशल, पारदर्शी और मितव्ययी बना सकती है।

चुनावी व्यय में भारी कमी — जनता के धन की सुरक्षा

भारत में हर चुनाव किसी बड़े आर्थिक आयोजन की तरह होता है। निर्वाचन आयोग, प्रशासनिक तंत्र, सुरक्षा बलों से लेकर राजनीतिक दलों तक, सभी के लिए यह अत्यंत खर्चीला प्रक्रिया है। केवल लोकसभा चुनाव 2024 पर अनुमानित ₹1.35 लाख करोड़ का व्यय हुआ। यदि इसमें राज्यों के विधानसभा चुनावों पर अलग-अलग होने वाला खर्च जोड़ दिया जाए, तो कुल राशि कई लाख करोड़ रुपये तक पहुँचती है।

'एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव' लागू होने पर यह व्यय एकीकृत रूप से होगा, जिससे विशेषज्ञों के अनुसार भारत की GDP का लगभग 1.5 प्रतिशत (करीब ₹4.5 लाख करोड़) तक बचाया जा सकता है। इतनी बड़ी बचत यदि शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, अवसंरचना और रोजगार सृजन जैसे क्षेत्रों में निवेश हो, तो भारत की विकास दर को निर्णायक गति मिल सकती है।

सुरक्षा, प्रशासन और लॉजिस्टिक्स पर होने वाले भार में कमी

बार-बार चुनाव होने से देश की प्रशासनिक मशीनरी लगातार चुनावी मोड़ में फँसी रहती है। लाखों सरकारी कर्मचारी—शिक्षक, पुलिसकर्मी, प्रशासनिक अधिकारी—बार-बार चुनाव झूटी में लगाए जाते हैं। वर्ष 2024 के चुनावों में ही 10.5 लाख से अधिक मतदान केंद्र स्थापित किए गए, जिनमें से अधिकांश सरकारी विद्यालयों में बनाए गए, परिणामस्वरूप शिक्षण कार्य बाधित हुआ।

इसी तरह, केंद्रीय सुरक्षा बलों और राज्य पुलिस की लगातार तैनाती से कानून-व्यवस्था पर अनावश्यक दबाव पड़ता है। यदि 'एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव' लागू होता है, तो सुरक्षा बलों, मतदान अधिकारियों और प्रशासनिक संसाधनों की तैनाती एक बार में केंद्रित रूप से की जा सकेगी। इसका लाभ यह होगा कि विद्यालयों का नियमित संचालन बाधित नहीं होगा, प्रशासनिक मशीनरी निरंतर जनसेवा पर केंद्रित रह सकेगी, शासन अधिक कुशल, उत्पादक और लागत-प्रभावी बनेगा।

सार्वजनिक धन का विकास में पुनर्निवेश

लोकतंत्र में सार्वजनिक धन जनता की समृद्धि और कल्याण के लिए होता है, इसलिए उसका उपयोग ऐसे क्षेत्रों में होना चाहिए जो राष्ट्र की क्षमता को बढ़ाएँ। बार-बार होने वाले चुनाव इस धन का एक बड़ा भाग अपने भीतर समेट लेते हैं, जबकि यही संसाधन शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, सिंचाई, सड़क और पुल निर्माण, वैज्ञानिक अनुसंधान और रोजगार सृजन जैसे महत्वपूर्ण क्षेत्रों में निवेश करके कहीं अधिक स्थायी लाभ दे सकते हैं। यदि 'एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव' व्यवस्था अपनाई जाती है, तो बचाई गई विशाल राशि को ग्रामीण स्वास्थ्य सुविधाओं के आधुनिकीकरण, डिजिटल शिक्षा के विस्तार, युवाओं के कौशल विकास, किसान कल्याण कार्यक्रमों और महिलाओं की उन्नति को समर्पित पहलों में लगाया जा सकता है। इससे स्पष्ट होगा कि भारत का लोकतंत्र केवल मतदान प्रक्रिया का नाम नहीं, बल्कि निरंतर प्रगति और जनकल्याण का माध्यम है। यही वह विचार है जिसे प्रधानमंत्री मोदी जी 'गवर्नेंस फर्स्ट, पॉलिटिक्स नेक्स्ट' के रूप में प्रतिपादित करते हैं।

राजनीतिक दलों पर वित्तीय बोझ में कमी

लगातार चुनावी चक्र राजनीतिक दलों पर अत्यधिक वित्तीय और मानव संसाधन का दबाव डालते हैं। प्रचार अभियानों, यात्रा, जनसभाओं, विज्ञापनों और डिजिटल सामग्री पर बार-बार भारी खर्च करना पड़ता है, और यह दबाव छोटे तथा क्षेत्रीय दलों के लिए विशेष रूप से चुनौतीपूर्ण होता है। एक साथ चुनाव होने की व्यवस्था राजनीतिक दलों को इस निरंतर आर्थिक बोझ से राहत प्रदान करेगी। संसाधनों का उपयोग अधिक सुव्यवस्थित और नियंत्रित रूप में होगा, जिससे दल विचारधारा निर्माण, नीति-विश्लेषण, संगठन-सुदृढीकरण और समाज में दीर्घकालिक उपस्थिति जैसी मूलभूत लोकतांत्रिक गतिविधियों पर अधिक प्रभावी रूप से ध्यान दे सकेंगे। इससे चुनावी प्रतिस्पर्धा धनसंचय की क्षमता पर आधारित न होकर विचारों, दृष्टि और जनता से जुड़ाव की गुणवत्ता पर आधारित होगी, और लोकतंत्र का चरित्र अधिक स्वस्थ और सार्थक रूप में परिवर्तित होगा।

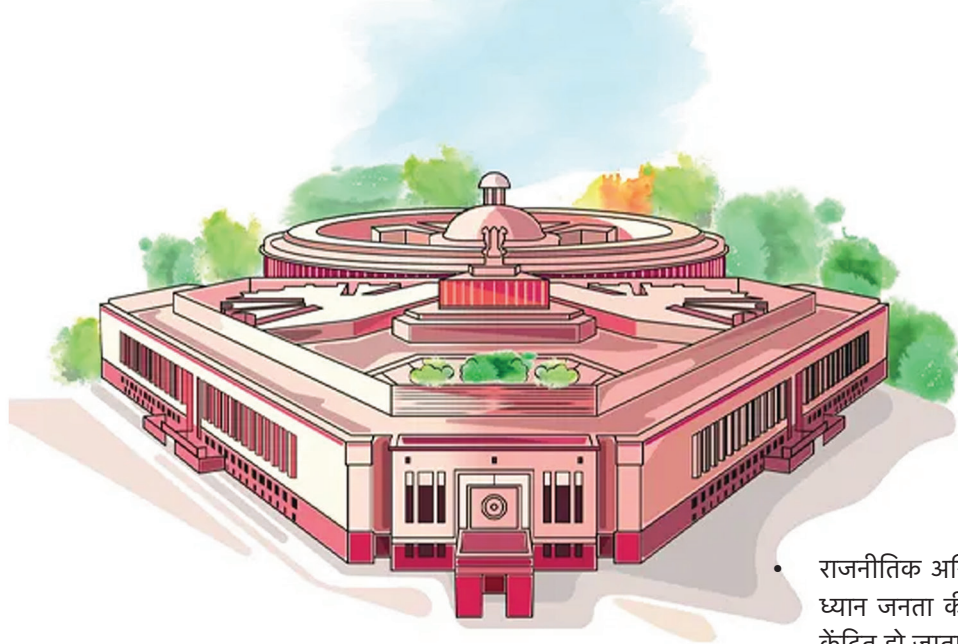
पर्यावरणीय और सामाजिक लाभ

चुनावों के दौरान रैलियों, यात्रा, प्रदर्शनियों, प्रचार सामग्रियों और विद्युत उपकरणों के व्यापक उपयोग से पर्यावरण पर भारी भार पड़ता है। ईंधन की तीव्र खपत, बढ़ता कार्बन उत्सर्जन, और टनों कागज तथा प्लास्टिक का कचरा बार-बार चुनावों को पर्यावरणीय दृष्टि से अत्यंत महंगा बनाता है। 'एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव' व्यवस्था इस भार को स्वाभाविक रूप से कम करेगी, क्योंकि चुनावी गतिविधियाँ एक ही चक्र में केंद्रित होंगी। इससे ऊर्जा की बचत होगी, अपशिष्ट सामग्री घटेगी और पर्यावरण संरक्षण के राष्ट्रीय तथा वैश्विक संकल्प और मजबूत होंगे। सामाजिक दृष्टि से भी यह व्यवस्था अधिक संतुलित वातावरण निर्मित करेगी, क्योंकि लंबे समय तक चले चुनाव अक्सर समाज में तनाव, राजनीतिक ध्रुवीकरण और अनिश्चितता को बढ़ाते हैं। पूरे देश में एक ही समय पर होने वाला चुनाव लोकतंत्र को विभाजन के बजाय उत्सव, एकता और राष्ट्रीय सहभागिता के क्षण के रूप में स्थापित करेगा।

आर्थिक विवेक का प्रतीक — विकसित भारत की दिशा में कदम

भारत आज 'विकसित भारत 2047' के लक्ष्य की ओर निर्णायक गति से बढ़ रहा है। इस यात्रा में नीति-सुधारों जितनी ही आवश्यकता वित्तीय अनुशासन और संसाधनों के विवेकपूर्ण उपयोग की भी है। 'एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव' इसी आर्थिक अनुशासन का प्रतीक बनकर उभरता है, जहाँ प्रत्येक संसाधन का सर्वोत्तम उपयोग सुनिश्चित होता है और प्रत्येक व्यय को सीधे राष्ट्र के विकास के उद्देश्य से जोड़ा जा सकता है। यह पहल सरकार की उस व्यापक दृष्टि के अनुरूप है, जिसमें शासन को 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance' के सिद्धांत पर आधारित कर अधिक कुशल, पारदर्शी और परिणाम-प्रधान बनाया जा रहा है। एकीकृत चुनाव न केवल प्रशासनिक लागत को कम करेगा, बल्कि नीति-निर्माण की गति, योजनाओं के क्रियान्वयन की निरंतरता और शासन-तंत्र की समग्र दक्षता को भी उल्लेखनीय रूप से बढ़ाएगा।

'एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव' की अवधारणा केवल एक राजनीतिक सुधार नहीं, बल्कि एक व्यापक आर्थिक परिवर्तन की शुरुआत है। यह व्यवस्था न केवल करोड़ों रुपये की बचत सुनिश्चित करती है, बल्कि शासन में स्थिरता लाते हुए प्रशासनिक दक्षता के एक नए युग का उद्घाटन भी करती है। इससे सार्वजनिक धन की रक्षा होगी, सरकारों को बिना बाधा अपने विकास-कार्य और नीतिगत कार्यान्वयन पर केंद्रित रहने का अवसर मिलेगा, और लोकतंत्र अधिक उत्पादक, उद्देश्यपूर्ण और परिणामोन्मुख बनेगा। आज जब भारत 'विकसित भारत 2047' के संकल्प के साथ आगे बढ़ रहा है, तब यह पहल उस दिशा में एक निर्णायक कदम है, जहाँ प्रत्येक रुपया राष्ट्र-निर्माण में निवेशित हो, प्रत्येक निर्णय जनहित से प्रेरित हो, और प्रत्येक चुनाव विकास तथा लोकतांत्रिक ऊर्जा का एक उत्सव बन सके।



- राजनीतिक अस्थिरता: बार-बार चुनाव से राजनीतिक दलों का ध्यान जनता की सेवा से हटकर लगातार चुनावी रणनीति पर केंद्रित हो जाता है।

एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव: लोकतांत्रिक स्थिरता की दिशा में ऐतिहासिक कदम

डॉ. वृंदा काल्हेर

प्रदेश प्रमुख, पॉलिसी एंड रिसर्च,
भारतीय जनता युवा मोर्चा, हरियाणा

भारत का लोकतंत्र संसार में सबसे बड़ा है। यहां हर साल कहीं न कहीं चुनावी गहमागहमी रहती है - कभी लोकसभा, कभी विधानसभा, तो कभी निकाय चुनाव। नतीजा यह कि देश का पूरा माहौल बार-बार चुनावी मोड़ में चला जाता है। गाड़ियां रुक जाती हैं, योजनाओं पर फाइलें थम जाती हैं, विकास का पहिया धीमा हो जाता है और सरकारी मशीनरी का बड़ा हिस्सा चुनाव कराने में लग जाता है।

यही वह जगह है जहां 'एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव (One Nation, One Election - ONOE) का विचार एक बदलाव की आंधी लेकर आता है। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी का यह सपना है कि लोकसभा और सभी राज्यों के विधानसभा चुनाव एक ही समय पर हों, एक ही कैलेंडर पर हों। इससे देश को मिलेगी स्थिर राजनीति, लगातार विकास और भारी आर्थिक बचत।

वर्तमान व्यवस्था की चुनौतियाँ

वर्तमान में भारत में लगभग हर छह महीने में किसी न किसी राज्य में चुनाव होते रहते हैं। इस व्यवस्था से तीन प्रमुख समस्याएँ उत्पन्न होती हैं:

- शासन में रुकावट: चुनाव आचार संहिता लागू होने से नई योजनाएँ और निर्णय रुक जाते हैं।
- वित्तीय बोझ: हर चुनाव में अरबों रुपये व्यय होते हैं, जो विकास कार्यों से हटकर राजनीतिक प्रक्रिया पर खर्च हो जाते हैं।

भारतीय चुनाव आयोग के अनुसार, 2019 के लोकसभा चुनाव में लगभग ₹60,000 करोड़ से अधिक खर्च हुआ, जबकि राज्य चुनावों में औसतन ₹10,000-15,000 करोड़ अतिरिक्त खर्च होता है। यदि इन सभी चुनावों को एक साथ किया जाए, तो देश को हर पाँच वर्ष में केवल एक बार इतना बड़ा व्यय वहन करना होगा, जिससे हजारों करोड़ रुपये की बचत संभव है।

'एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव' का तर्क और औचित्य

इस विचार का मूल तर्क यह है कि बार-बार चुनावों से न तो जनता को निरंतर विकास का लाभ मिलता है और न ही शासन-प्रशासन अपनी पूरी क्षमता से काम कर पाता है। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी जी ने कई बार कहा है कि "लगातार चुनावों की यह परंपरा प्रशासनिक ऊर्जा और वित्तीय संसाधनों की बर्बादी है।"

समानांतर चुनाव कराने से —

- राजनीतिक स्थिरता बढ़ेगी,
- शासन का ध्यान विकास पर केंद्रित रहेगा,
- और जनता को बार-बार चुनावी झंझट से मुक्ति मिलेगी।
- संवैधानिक एवं संस्थागत संभावना

संविधान के अनुच्छेद 83 और 172 में लोकसभा और राज्य विधानसभाओं का कार्यकाल पाँच वर्ष निर्धारित है।

1952 से 1967 तक भारत में लोकसभा और विधानसभाओं के चुनाव एक साथ होते थे।

1970 के दशक में कुछ विधानसभाओं के समय से पहले भंग हो जाने से यह तालमेल टूट गया।

कई आयोगों — जैसे कि लॉ कमीशन (1999 व 2018), निधि आयोग (2017) और चुनाव आयोग (2015) — ने इसे व्यवहारिक और संवैधानिक रूप से संभव बताया है। कुछ संशोधन, जैसे अनुच्छेद 85, 172, 356 आदि में आवश्यक होंगे, लेकिन इन्हें संसद की सहमति से किया जा सकता है।

शासन और नीति निरंतरता में सुधार

चुनाव आचार संहिता लागू होते ही शासन-प्रशासन लगभग ठहर जाता है। विकास परियोजनाएँ, बजट घोषणाएँ और नई योजनाएँ स्थगित

हो जाती हैं। यदि एक साथ चुनाव होंगे तो यह समस्या समाप्त हो जाएगी, और सरकारें अपने पूरे कार्यकाल में विकास पर ध्यान दे सकेंगी।

उदाहरण के रूप में, प्रधानमंत्री ग्राम सड़क योजना, उज्ज्वला योजना, आयुष्मान भारत जैसी योजनाएँ एक समान रूप से पूरे देश में तब प्रभावी रूप से लागू हो सकती हैं जब बार-बार चुनावों के कारण प्रशासनिक ठहराव न हो।

आर्थिक एवं वित्तीय लाभ

चुनावों पर भारी खर्च केवल राजनीतिक दलों का ही नहीं बल्कि सरकारों का भी होता है।

- भारत में हर साल औसतन ₹10,000 से ₹15,000 करोड़ सिर्फ चुनावी व्यवस्थाओं पर खर्च होता है।
- लाखों सुरक्षा कर्मियों और प्रशासनिक कर्मचारियों की तैनाती होती है।
- बार-बार चुनाव होने से शिक्षण संस्थान, सरकारी कार्यालय और सामान्य जनजीवन प्रभावित होता है।
- यदि चुनाव एक साथ होंगे, तो इन संसाधनों का उपयोग शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, सड़क और कृषि जैसे क्षेत्रों में किया जा सकेगा।

मतदाता सशक्तिकरण और लोकतंत्र की गहराई

एक साथ चुनाव होने से मतदाताओं के लिए भी यह प्रक्रिया अधिक सुगम होगी। मतदाता को हर वर्ष मतदान के लिए नहीं बुलाया जाएगा, जिससे उसकी भागीदारी और जागरूकता बढ़ेगी।

चुनाव आयोग के आंकड़ों के अनुसार, 2019 में लोकसभा चुनावों में 67% मतदान हुआ, जबकि कुछ राज्य चुनावों में यह 55-60% तक ही रहा।

जब एक ही समय में सभी स्तरों पर मतदान होगा, तो जागरूकता अभियान एक साथ चलेंगे और मतदाता अधिक उत्साह से भाग लेंगे।

प्रशासनिक दक्षता और तकनीकी तैयारी

भारत के चुनाव आयोग ने हाल के वर्षों में ईवीएम, वीवीपैट और डिजिटल मतदाता सूची जैसी तकनीकी प्रगति की है। अब ई-गवर्नेंस और डेटा प्रबंधन के माध्यम से देश भर में एक साथ चुनाव संभव हैं। इसके लिए आवश्यकता होगी —

- पर्याप्त ईवीएम और वीवीपैट मशीनों की,
- सशक्त आईटी ढांचे की,
- और राज्य व केंद्र सरकारों के बीच समन्वय की।

चुनाव आयोग पहले ही यह संकेत दे चुका है कि यदि संसद सहमति देती है, तो तकनीकी रूप से यह व्यवस्था संभव है।

राजनीतिक स्थिरता और सहयोगी संघवाद

एक साथ चुनाव होने से सरकारें अपने पूरे पाँच वर्ष के कार्यकाल तक काम कर पाएँगी।

इससे राजनीतिक स्थिरता बढ़ेगी और सहयोगी संघवाद (Cooperative Federalism) को भी मजबूती मिलेगी।

केंद्र और राज्य सरकारें जब एक ही समय में जनादेश प्राप्त करेंगी, तो नीति निर्माण और योजनाओं के क्रियान्वयन में बेहतर तालमेल बनेगा। यह “टीम इंडिया” की भावना को सशक्त करेगा — जैसा कि प्रधानमंत्री मोदी जी ने बार-बार कहा है।

आलोचनाएँ और समाधान

कुछ लोग इस विचार पर आपत्ति जताते हैं कि इससे क्षेत्रीय दलों की भूमिका कम हो जाएगी, या राज्यों की स्वतंत्रता पर प्रभाव पड़ेगा। लेकिन यह धारणा गलत है। संविधान में आवश्यक संशोधनों के साथ यह सुनिश्चित किया जा सकता है कि —

- सभी राज्यों की स्वायत्तता बनी रहे,
- छोटे दलों का प्रतिनिधित्व सुरक्षित रहे,
- और किसी राज्य की विधानसभा भंग होने पर वहाँ “मध्यावधि चुनाव” कराने के लिए विशेष प्रावधान रखे जाएँ।

लॉ कमीशन (2018) ने यह सुझाव भी दिया था कि संक्रमणकाल में दो चरणों में समानांतर चुनाव कराए जा सकते हैं।

युवाओं की भूमिका और भविष्य की दिशा

भारत की 65% आबादी 35 वर्ष से कम आयु की है।

इस युवा शक्ति को यह समझना होगा कि “एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव” केवल राजनीतिक सुधार नहीं, बल्कि राष्ट्रीय दक्षता और एकता का प्रतीक है।

भारतीय जनता युवा मोर्चा (BJYM) इस अभियान में अग्रणी भूमिका निभा सकता है —

- युवाओं में जनजागरण,
- विश्वविद्यालयों और पंचायत स्तर तक संवाद,
- और नीति निर्माण में भागीदारी के माध्यम से।

यह सुधार न केवल राजनीतिक प्रक्रिया को सशक्त करेगा, बल्कि भारत को विकासशील से विकसित राष्ट्र बनाने की दिशा में एक ठोस कदम होगा।

“एक राष्ट्र, एक चुनाव” कोई नया विचार नहीं, बल्कि हमारे लोकतंत्र की जड़ों से जुड़ा हुआ है। 1952 से 1967 तक यही व्यवस्था हमारे देश में थी, और उस समय शासन अधिक स्थिर, योजनाएँ दीर्घकालिक और प्रशासनिक दक्षता उच्च स्तर की थी। अब समय आ गया है कि भारत इस परंपरा को पुनर्जीवित करे। यह केवल चुनावी सुधार नहीं, बल्कि एक ‘राष्ट्र नीति’ है - जो भारत को राजनीतिक स्थिरता, आर्थिक बचत, प्रशासनिक क्षमता और जनहितकारी शासन की दिशा में आगे ले जाएगी।

ONOE and the Road to Viksit Bharat: A Blueprint for governance and democratic efficiency

Anil K. Antony
National Secretary and
National Spokesperson, BJP

As India moves towards its mission of Viksit Bharat by 2047, the time has come to reimagine how its democracy functions. Among the most significant reforms proposed by the Narendra Modi Government in recent years is the idea of “One Nation, One Election” (ONOE), a transformative initiative that could strengthen governance, streamline expenditure, and deepen democratic participation. By synchronising national and state elections, this reform aims to bring coherence, efficiency, and stability to India’s democratic process, one that currently remains encumbered in an endless cycle of campaigning, expenditure, and administrative disruption.



India conducts elections on a scale unmatched anywhere in the world. Each cycle mobilises millions of officials, security personnel, and vast logistical resources. While every election is a celebration of the democratic spirit, it also comes at an enormous cost. The 2024 general elections alone were estimated to have cost more than ₹1.35 lakh crore, making them the most expensive in history. When combined with recurring state and local elections, the cumulative financial burden runs into multiple lakh crores. A system of simultaneous elections could consolidate this effort, eliminate duplication, and save substantial public funds. Conservative estimates suggest India could save more than ₹4.5 lakh crore over five years, an amount equivalent to nearly half the nation's healthcare budget and a third of its education budget.

The costs, however, are not only financial. Each time an election is announced, the Model Code of Conduct comes into force, restricting governments from launching or announcing new policies or welfare and empowerment schemes. This frequent freeze in administrative activity delays decisions, stalls projects, and interrupts governance. For a country striving to maintain high economic growth and deliver large-scale reforms, these recurrent pauses in policy implementation are both inefficient and damaging. Synchronising elections would reduce the number of such interruptions, allowing governments to function smoothly and deliver more consistent results. It would enable elected representatives to focus on policy outcomes instead of perpetual campaigning.

Frequent elections also impose a heavy burden on national institutions. Security forces and administrative machinery are repeatedly diverted from their core duties, disrupting essential public services. Election officials work continuously across overlapping cycles, stretching resources thin and increasing the risk of fatigue and inefficiency. Simultaneous elections would bring predictability and order to this process. They would allow the Election Commission to plan ahead, allocate resources efficiently, and strengthen electoral infrastructure.

At the same time, fewer elections would lessen the environmental impact of massive campaigns,

rallies, and paper usage. The introduction of electronic voting machines alone saved more than 1.5 million trees each election cycle. Synchronising elections would multiply these benefits, reducing the carbon footprint of large-scale mobilisation and aligning with India's environmental and sustainability goals.

The Modi Government's decision to form a High-Level Committee under former President Shri Ram Nath Kovind to study the feasibility of ONOE was a significant step toward institutional reform. The committee, which included distinguished figures such as Home Minister Amit Shah, former Union Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, and eminent lawyer Harish Salve, conducted extensive consultations with political parties, constitutional experts, and the public. Over 80 per cent of respondents and nearly all major organisations, including CII, FICCI, bar associations, former judges, and election commissioners, expressed strong support for the initiative. The committee recommended phased implementation, beginning by synchronising Lok Sabha elections with state assemblies, with the municipality and panchayat elections conducted a short period later, within a hundred days. It also proposed creating a nationwide electoral roll and a unified voter ID system to eliminate duplication and enhance efficiency. The Election Commission of India would act as the central coordinating body, ensuring uniformity and transparency across the nation.

Critics of ONOE often argue that it threatens India's federal structure or undermines democratic diversity. This argument, however, ignores both history and global experience. India held simultaneous elections for Parliament and state assemblies from 1952 to 1967. The system only broke down when some state governments were dissolved prematurely, mainly during the tenure of Prime Minister Indira, disrupting the alignment of then-existing electoral cycles. The Emergency declared during 1975 and 1977 had paused all elections scheduled during that period. India's Election Commission in 1983 itself had also suggested reverting to the earlier format of synchronised elections. The Bharatiya Janata Party,

as early as 1980, from the days of the party's formation, has supported the concept of One Nation One Election. This was an implementation priority of the party, included in both its 2019 and 2024 manifestos.

Moreover, several federal democracies, such as South Africa and Sweden, successfully conduct synchronised elections without compromising local autonomy. These countries also enjoy among the highest voter turnouts in the world, indicating that synchronised elections enhance civic participation rather than diminishing it. Far from inducing electoral fatigue, simultaneous elections create a focused democratic moment that renews citizen engagement and strengthens voter enthusiasm.

The constitutional framework fully accommodates such a reform. Parliament has the authority under Article 368 to amend provisions, including those relating to legislative terms and dissolution procedures. Aligning election schedules would not disturb the distribution of powers between the Union and the states, which would remain intact. ONOE is therefore entirely consistent with India's constitutional and federal structure and democratic principles. It would ensure that both national and state governments operate within a synchronised and efficient electoral framework without diluting the existing separation of powers and responsibilities. Implementing this reform requires political consensus and a few constitutional adjustments. The phased approach recommended by the Kovind Committee is both practical and inclusive, allowing synchronisation to occur gradually as state assemblies complete their terms. Such an approach would maintain continuity and minimise disruption while building confidence among political parties and state governments.

The criticism that ONOE might weaken democratic participation or hinder governance is equally misplaced. In reality, frequent elections have encouraged short-term political thinking, prioritising populism over long-term reform. Governments are often compelled to focus on immediate electoral gains rather than sustained developmental outcomes. Simultaneous elections would promote political stability and policy

continuity, enabling governments to plan and execute multi-year reforms without constant political interruptions. This would shift India's democratic rhythm from electoral anxiety to developmental assurance. Far from diminishing democracy, ONOE would strengthen it, ensuring that every vote translates into meaningful and sustained governance.

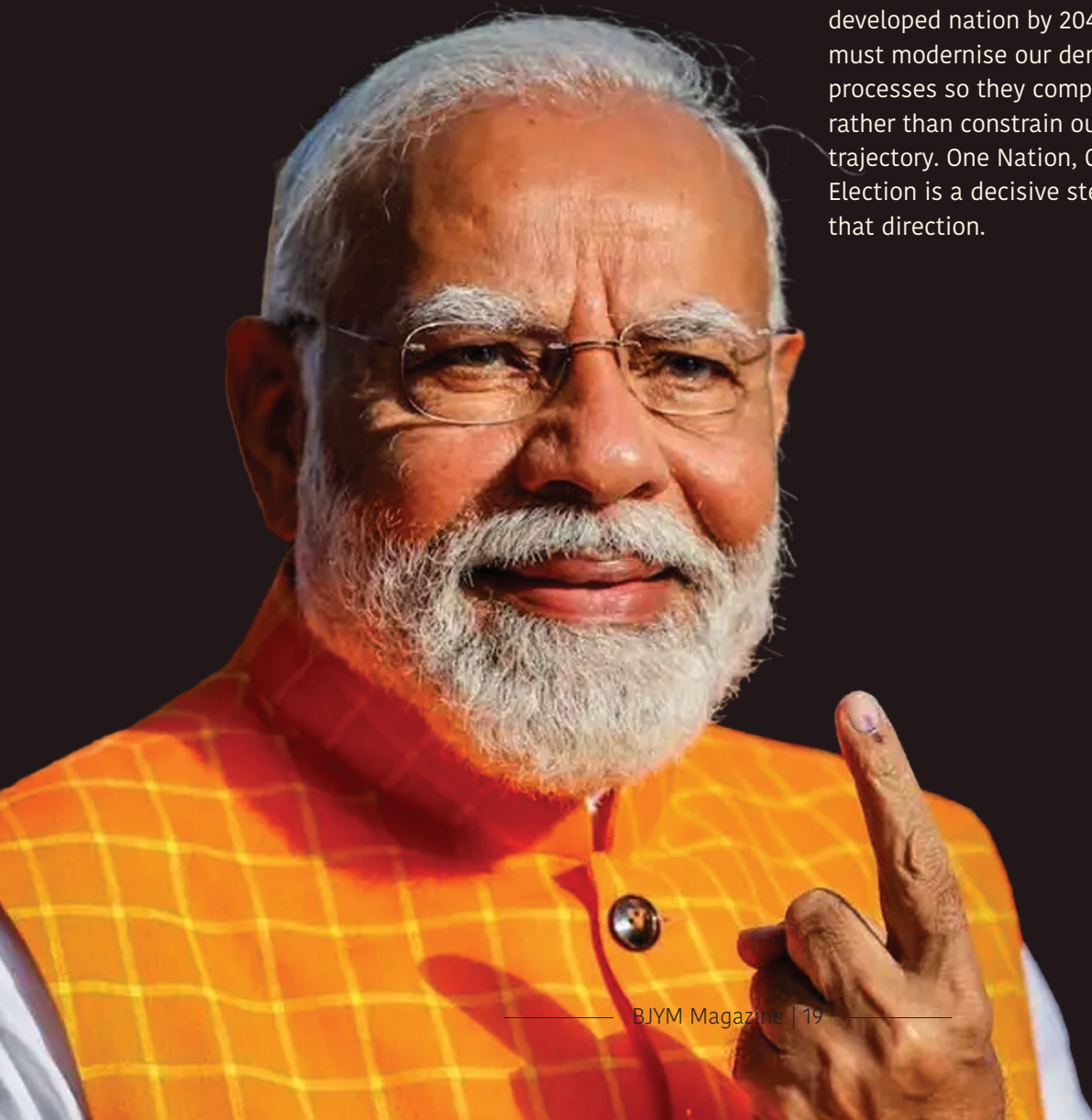
The economic and governance dividends of ONOE would be immense. According to the Kovind committee, reduced election expenditure, uninterrupted policymaking, and greater administrative efficiency could add 1-1.5 per cent to India's GDP. For a nation on track to become the world's third-largest economy and a fully developed upper-middle-income country by the hundredth year of independence, such a gain would be immense. The environmental savings and institutional strengthening that accompany synchronised elections would further enhance India's global image as a modern, efficient, and forward-looking democracy.

Ultimately, "One Nation, One Election" is not about centralisation; it is about synchronisation. With planning and steady execution, ONOE can pave the way for a governance model that is more efficient, transparent, and citizen-centric, strengthening the foundations of India's democratic framework for decades to come.

One Big Election, Not Endless Elections: A Smarter Democracy for Gen-Next

Abhinav Prakash
National Vice-President, BJYM

The Union Cabinet's decision to move ahead with One Nation, One Election marks a historic moment in the democratic journey of the Republic. It is a reform whose time has come. Over the decades, India has transformed from a fragile postcolonial state into a robust, self-confident nation that shapes global conversations. Yet our electoral architecture remains trapped in an outdated, unsustainable cycle in which governance is repeatedly subordinated to an endless sequence of state and national elections. As India prepares for its Amrit Kaal and the ambitious yet achievable goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047, we must modernise our democratic processes so they complement rather than constrain our growth trajectory. One Nation, One Election is a decisive step in that direction.



India is unique in the scale and complexity of its democracy. The sheer magnitude of conducting elections in the world's largest democracy is staggering. Electoral mobilisation requires lakhs of teachers, police personnel, administrative officers and paramilitary forces. Entire districts shift into election mode. Schools become polling booths. Development work slows down. Government decisions are put on hold under the Model Code of Conduct. And before the system even fully returns to normalcy, another state election arrives. Year after year, state after state, the cycle repeats itself. India today is effectively in a permanent election season. This is not an indicator of democratic vitality, but a structural distortion that weakens our governance architecture.

The early years of the Republic were different. Elections to Parliament and State Assemblies were held simultaneously for nearly two decades. Governance was stable, policy continuity was strong, and political competition was anchored in long-term development narratives. It was only after premature dissolutions of governments and the imposition of President's Rule in various states that the electoral cycle broke down. We ended up with a fragmented calendar where different states vote in different years, often twice within five years due to political churn.

Successive governments accepted this distortion as permanent. But a mature democracy corrects systemic inefficiencies instead of being governed by them. The Cabinet's decision to pursue synchronised elections revives the original constitutional imagination of a coherent and disciplined democratic cycle.

The financial burden of repeated elections is well known but rarely internalised. Elections in India cost vast sums of public money. Every major state election demands massive deployment of security forces, logistical networks, transportation, communication systems and human resources. The Lok Sabha election of 2024 alone cost an estimated

amount exceeding one trillion rupees when combining state expenditure, administrative costs and political party spending. To repeat such an exercise every few months is simply uneconomical for a nation that aims to invest in infrastructure, technology, skilling, agriculture, defence modernisation, climate preparedness and welfare programmes. One Nation, One Election is an act of fiscal prudence. It is the responsible use of public money in a nation still fighting poverty, building capacities, and still strengthening its social infrastructure.

But economics is only one dimension. Politics itself will change for the better. Frequent elections narrow political horizons. Governments are forced to operate in short-term cycles, adjusting policy to

electoral pressures rather than national priorities. Welfare becomes synonymous with populism. Difficult reforms are postponed indefinitely because there is always some election around the corner. The competitive escalation of freebies is a classic symptom of this distortion. Such fiscal adventurism has already destabilised several states, shrinking their development budgets and weakening their financial sustainability. A unified electoral cycle will give governments the freedom to

focus on long-term governance rather than on cyclical vote management.

Simultaneous elections also promise to elevate the quality of democratic discourse. Politics in India today is excessively confrontational and polarised, not just because of ideological differences, but because campaigns never truly end. Parties remain in permanent campaign mode, amplifying divisiveness and emotional rhetoric to sustain mobilisation. Development, policy and governance get crowded out by noise. A single national electoral moment every five years will create a healthier political environment, where parties are compelled to present comprehensive, credible platforms for

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One Nation, One Election is more than a procedural reform. It rebalances politics and governance. It conserves national resources. It strengthens federal cooperation. It encourages long-term policymaking. It improves the quality of political discourse. It reduces social polarisation.

governance rather than indulging in episodic narratives tailored to one state election after another. It will reduce the political temperature and usher in a more constructive, idea-driven engagement between political actors.

One Nation, One Election also strengthens the federal structure, contrary to what critics argue. Federalism is defined by constitutional authority, administrative autonomy and fiscal powers, not by staggered polling dates. India conducted simultaneous elections for many years without any erosion of federal powers. In fact, synchronised mandates can encourage deeper cooperative federalism. When the Union and State governments work on aligned timelines, they can coordinate better on national missions such as infrastructure building, health systems, climate adaptation, agricultural reforms, digital governance and law and order. Aligned political cycles can reduce friction and increase collaboration across tiers of government, enabling more coherent implementation of national and regional development goals.

The concern that national debates will overshadow regional issues is similarly misplaced. Indian voters have repeatedly demonstrated remarkable maturity in distinguishing between national, state, and local issues, even when elections are held close together. A voter who supports one party in a Lok Sabha election does not hesitate to prefer another in a Municipal or Assembly election if the issues differ. Simultaneous elections will not diminish this sophistication. Instead, they will deepen democratic accountability because parties will have to articulate both national and regional agendas in an integrated manner, making their platforms more comprehensive and less opportunistic.

The proposal to synchronise local body elections with national and state elections within a defined window has the potential to rejuvenate India's third tier of democracy. Panchayats and municipalities have long suffered from inconsistent political attention and irregular electoral schedules. Aligning them with a unified cycle will bring unprecedented clarity and stability to grassroots institutions. It will strengthen participatory governance and empower

citizens to hold all three tiers accountable through a single, coherent democratic exercise.

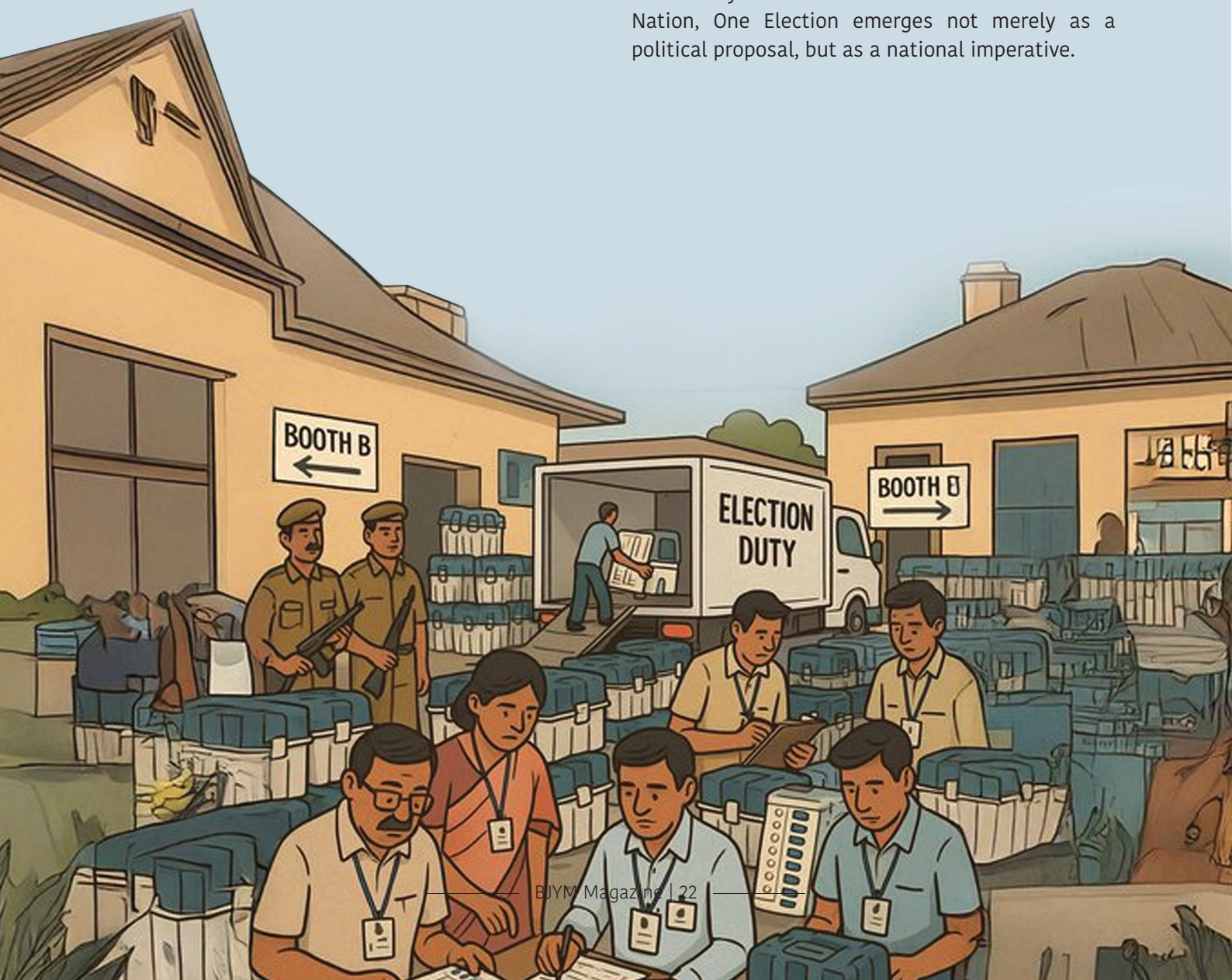
One Nation, One Election is more than a procedural reform. It rebalances politics and governance. It conserves national resources. It strengthens federal cooperation. It encourages long-term policymaking. It improves the quality of political discourse. It reduces social polarisation. And it aligns perfectly with the vision of a confident, organised and development-driven India.

As we move toward 2047, the year India aspires to stand among the world's most advanced nations, synchronised elections embody the very spirit of national efficiency and democratic consolidation. One Nation, One Election is not merely an administrative innovation. It is a visionary reform that strengthens Bharat's democratic foundations for generations to come.

A National Imperative: Rebuilding India's Electoral Rhythm

Rohit Chahal
National General
Secretary, BJYM

India stands at a historic juncture today. As the world's largest democracy, we have always taken pride in the vibrancy of our electoral process. Our people vote in enormous numbers, our institutions conduct elections with unmatched professionalism, and our democratic spirit remains the envy of the world. Yet, as we march toward the goal of building a developed India by 2047, we must also reflect honestly on the structural limitations that hinder our progress. Frequent elections, occurring almost every year across different states and levels of government, have created a cycle of political disruption, administrative diversion and financial burden that no modern democracy can afford indefinitely. It is in this context that the idea of One Nation, One Election emerges not merely as a political proposal, but as a national imperative.



The essence of One Nation, One Election lies in synchronising elections to the Lok Sabha and all State Legislative Assemblies. This is not a new debate, nor is it an untested idea. India conducted simultaneous elections for nearly two decades after independence. Our democratic foundations did not weaken during that period; instead, they strengthened. What weakened them was the growing fragmentation of political cycles that began in the late 1960s, forcing governments and institutions into a perpetual electoral mode.

India needs governance that is continuous, stable and development-driven. Frequent elections interrupt this rhythm. Every election, no matter how small, requires mobilising massive administrative machinery. Teachers are pulled out of schools, police forces are diverted from their regular duties, and district administrations shift their complete focus toward electoral logistics. When this happens once every five years, it is a festival of democracy. But when it happens every few months, it becomes an obstacle to governance. One Nation, One Election restores that balance. It will allow governments at both the Centre and the states to devote their full attention to long-term planning, policy execution and public service without the constant shadow of impending elections.

There is also the undeniable issue of cost. Elections in India have become staggering financial exercises. The 2024 Lok Sabha elections alone were estimated to cost well over a trillion rupees when combined across the Election Commission, government departments and political parties. Add to this the substantial expenditure of multiple state elections, each separated by only a few months, and the drain on public funds becomes enormous. This is money that could have built schools, upgraded hospitals, improved rural roads, funded innovation, or expanded social welfare. Democracies must never become mere luxuries; they must find the most responsible way to use public resources. One Nation, One Election embodies that responsibility.

Even more significant is the possibility of strengthening the country's political culture. Continuous elections create continuous politics. Parties slip into a permanent campaigning posture. Rhetoric takes precedence over reason. Short-term appeasement replaces long-term governance. The result is a political atmosphere that is always charged, always polarised, and often disconnected from development priorities. A synchronised electoral cycle, on the other hand, encourages parties to present coherent national and state-level visions simultaneously, enabling citizens to make



informed choices. It promotes healthier political competition based on ideas rather than tactical advantage or timing.

One Nation, One Election also offers an opportunity to deepen citizen engagement. In today's system, voter fatigue is real. When elections occur frequently, participation fluctuates widely. A national synchronised election becomes a grand democratic moment, a unifying event in which every citizen participates with clarity and enthusiasm. The entire nation speaks together. The electoral mandate becomes stronger, more reflective of collective will and more conducive to political stability.

There is another dimension that often goes unnoticed: the environmental cost of repeated elections. Every election involves thousands of rallies, lakhs of vehicle movements and enormous quantities of printed material. The carbon footprint is massive. Reducing election frequency is not only efficient governance, but also responsible governance. Conducting elections once every five years substantially reduces waste, encourages digital campaigning, and aligns with India's commitments to sustainability.

Critics often claim that One Nation, One Election may dilute federalism. This fear is unfounded. Federalism does not mean scattered elections; it means strong states empowered to govern. Simultaneous elections do not change the constitutional powers of state governments. They align the schedule, not the sovereignty. In fact, state governments would benefit from greater stability and a longer-term focus on development, free from constant electoral pressures. No state loses its autonomy; instead, every state gains uninterrupted governance time.

The practical aspects of implementing this reform will indeed require constitutional adjustments, logistical planning and political consensus. But national reforms of this scale always require collective will. When the goods and services tax

unified India's markets, when the Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile trinity transformed public service delivery, when the new criminal laws modernised our justice system, all these changes demanded bold intent and national resolve. One Nation, One Election belongs to the same league of transformative ideas. It asks us to rise above short-term politics and focus on the larger national interest.

India is on the threshold of unprecedented economic opportunity. We are the world's fastest-growing major economy, the hub of global talent, a leader in digital public infrastructure and a trusted voice of the Global South. To sustain this momentum, we require stability, predictability and administrative efficiency. A country that must spend months every year conducting elections cannot fully realise its development potential. But a country that streamlines its democratic processes without compromising democratic values becomes stronger, faster and more united.

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It will allow governments at both the Centre and the states to devote their full attention to long-term planning, policy execution and public service without the constant shadow of impending elections.
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As we look toward the centenary of independence in 2047, we must ask ourselves one question: what kind of democracy do we want to build? A democracy that spends its energy on recurring political battles, or a democracy that channels its strength toward creating a prosperous, secure and modern India? One Nation, One Election is not merely a reform; it is a commitment to national efficiency, fiscal prudence and democratic maturity. It is the blueprint of a confident nation ready to reclaim time, resources and focus for development.

India has always embraced bold ideas when the moment demanded courage. This is one such moment. One Nation, One Election is not just a proposal on paper; it is a step toward a more capable state, a more empowered citizenry and a more forward-looking democracy.

One Nation, One Election: Restoring Governance Stability in India

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India's democracy is among the most vibrant in the world, and elections are its grandest celebration. Yet the constant rhythm of Lok Sabha, Assembly, and local polls has created a cycle of governance that is often interrupted and distracted. What was once a periodic festival of the people has become a year-round process that absorbs administrative energy and public resources. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's proposal for One Nation, One Election is therefore both a constitutional and a developmental idea. It seeks to synchronise the nation's electoral calendar with its long-term aspirations, so that India can spend more time governing and less time campaigning.



Every election triggers the Model Code of Conduct, a necessary instrument to ensure fairness and neutrality in governance. However, when elections are staggered throughout the year across multiple states, the repeated enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct leads to extended pauses in policymaking. A Parliamentary Committee has noted that frequent polls put normal administration on hold and cause periods of policy paralysis. According to NITI Aayog, in 2014 India spent nearly 7 months under Model Code of Conduct restrictions, and another 3 months in 2015. These recurring pauses are not abstract inconveniences; they have concrete developmental costs. In Delhi, major infrastructure projects, including a nearly complete sewage treatment plant, were delayed. In Telangana, the inauguration of a new Secretariat had to be postponed until after the elections. Each instance represents time lost, productivity halted, and public funds underutilised.

The concept of One Nation, One Election addresses this by allowing the Model Code of Conduct to apply only once in five years. The High-Level Committee, chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind, concluded that such synchronisation would minimise administrative disruptions and promote continuity in governance. President Droupadi Murmu has also emphasised that simultaneous elections would ensure greater policy consistency and help maintain the administration's focus on development rather than on recurring electoral logistics. For the young generation, this translates into something deeply practical: skill programmes, employment schemes, and educational reforms that are implemented on time, without being repeatedly interrupted by the electoral calendar.

Frequent elections also tend to compress political imagination. When a government is always in campaign mode, decisions often serve immediate optics rather than enduring outcomes. One Nation,

One Election provides the stability required for genuine long-term planning. When the Centre and the States operate on the same electoral timeline, their development priorities are more likely to align. This shared horizon encourages cooperative federalism, in which the energies of different levels of government are directed toward common goals rather than political competition. A 2019 analysis by The Indian Express pointed out that staggered elections have often created unnecessary tension between state and central administrations. Before the 2019 general elections, some states even suspended national welfare schemes like Ayushman Bharat and delayed PM Kisan payments to align with their own political strategies, depriving citizens of immediate benefits.

Under ONOE, both levels of government could plan and execute joint five-year agendas for housing, agriculture, energy, and digital infrastructure, with better coordination and shared accountability.

Critics have expressed concern that simultaneous elections might overshadow regional voices, but this apprehension overlooks a key fact. The Kovind Committee made it clear that regional issues would continue to find prominence within

synchronised polls. In fact, simultaneous elections provide citizens with a more comprehensive democratic opportunity: the ability to evaluate the performance of both state and central governments. A unified electoral mandate enhances stability and policy coherence, which in turn strengthens the quality of democracy itself.

Elections not only slow policymaking but also interrupt the delivery of essential services. In 2024, for instance, the Election Commission paused welfare disbursements worth several thousand crore rupees in Andhra Pradesh because they coincided with polling. The decision was correct in principle but delayed pensions and subsidies for lakhs of people. Such interruptions could be minimised under ONOE, as welfare schemes would

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follow predictable timelines unaffected by overlapping elections. Infrastructure projects, too, often slow down when officers are reassigned for election duties or when new tenders are halted due to the Model Code. With simultaneous polls, these disruptions would be rare. President Murmu has observed that One Nation, One Election would prevent diversion of administrative and financial resources, ensuring that governance continues without interruption.

The financial argument for ONOE is compelling. Conducting elections in a country of India's scale is expensive. The Election Commission spent nearly 4,000 crore rupees on the 2014 general elections, triple the expenditure in 2009. In 2019, overall spending by political parties and candidates was estimated at over sixty thousand crore rupees. Repeated elections in various states further multiply these costs. Institutions such as NITI Aayog, CII, and NASSCOM have estimated that holding simultaneous elections could save thousands of crores that could instead be invested in youth entrepreneurship, innovation, and digital infrastructure. These are not abstract savings but potential investments in India's productive future.

For young citizens, One Nation, One Election is not merely an electoral reform but a rethinking of how governance functions. It promises predictability in policy, continuity in execution, and clarity in accountability. A stable electoral cycle allows governments to plan with confidence and deliver without distraction. Entrepreneurs, students, and job seekers all benefit from this steady environment. Moreover, synchronised elections make democratic accountability sharper. Instead of fragmented verdicts at irregular intervals, voters would assess the performance of both the Centre and the States together, rewarding those who deliver consistent results over a full term rather than short-term populism.

The youth wing of the Bharatiya Janata Party, the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha, has a special role in taking this discussion beyond policy circles to the people. Prime Minister Modi has repeatedly stated that frequent elections drain valuable time and resources that should be devoted to

nation-building. It is upon India's youth to articulate why One Nation, One Election is not just an administrative convenience but a democratic reform that enhances efficiency, transparency, and integrity in governance.

One Nation, One Election is therefore not a procedural experiment but a vision for the next phase of India's democratic maturity. It aligns political cycles with developmental cycles, reduces policy paralysis, fosters Centre-State collaboration, and ensures smoother delivery of welfare and infrastructure. It allows governments to focus on people and progress rather than perpetual politics. Implementing it will require constitutional alignment and political consensus, but India's history shows that the most transformative reforms have always begun with conviction and clarity. Public consultations already reveal broad support for the idea and a growing appetite for stability and efficiency in governance. For the youth, it represents the promise of uninterrupted progress and a government that functions with purpose from the first day of its mandate to the last.

As India moves toward the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, One Nation, One Election can help ensure that our democracy operates with discipline, direction, and a single steady rhythm of development.

Why Science Says Synchronise the Vote

Coordination Dynamics and Complexity Theory for ONOE

Dr. Mrityunjay Guha Majumdar

Editorial Board Member
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Every few months, some corner of India enters election mode. Campaign rallies erupt, governance freezes, security forces mobilise, and millions of teachers abandon classrooms to manage polling stations. Before one state finishes counting ballots, another begins campaigning. This perpetual electoral motion machine has become so normalised that few question whether democracy must function this way. But complexity science—the study of systems with countless moving parts—suggests that India's staggered election model represents a spectacular case of systemic inefficiency, and that synchronising all elections into a single national event could transform democratic governance itself. Consider what complexity theorists call entropy: the measure of disorder in a system. India's electoral landscape exists in what scientists would recognise as a remarkably high-entropy state. With 28 states, 8 union territories, and over 4,000 legislative seats across various levels of government, elections cascade through the calendar like a never-ending wave. The Model Code of Conduct which freezes major administrative decisions during campaign periods means governance operates in fragments,



constantly interrupted by electoral imperatives. This isn't just politically inconvenient; it's scientifically inefficient, creating what physicists call excessive "degrees of freedom" in which too many independent variables interact unpredictably, preventing the system from reaching equilibrium.

The concept of One Nation One Election proposes collapsing this chaos into periodicity: synchronising parliamentary, state assembly, and local elections into unified cycles. Political debates around this idea typically focus on constitutional amendments, concerns about the federal structure, and calculations of partisan advantage.

Yet beneath these surface arguments lies a deeper truth revealed by coordination dynamics: a branch of science studying how complex systems achieve temporal organisation. What India currently operates resembles an orchestra where musicians play different compositions simultaneously at different tempos. The resulting cacophony isn't anyone's intention; it's the inevitable outcome of misaligned oscillations. Scott Kelso, the cognitive scientist who pioneered coordination dynamics, discovered something profound: independent systems naturally synchronise when conditions allow, achieving stability impossible through isolated operation. Watch metronomes placed on a movable platform they begin ticking randomly but soon align into perfect rhythm. Fireflies in Southeast Asian mangroves flash individually at first, then suddenly pulse as one luminous wave. Neurons in the brain fire in coordinated patterns that enable consciousness itself. These aren't happy accidents; they're fundamental principles of how complex systems self-organise toward efficiency.

India's electoral system resists this natural synchronisation, maintaining what complexity scientists call multiple unstable attractors. Each election cycle pulls the entire democratic apparatus—election commission bureaucracy, state police forces, central paramilitary units,

administrative staff, media organisations, civil society monitors toward temporary configurations that dissipate before achieving stability. The Election Commission deploys roughly 11 million personnel for national elections; state polls require proportional mobilisation. Teachers spend weeks away from students. Police abandon regular duties. Development projects pause. This isn't coordination; it's coordination fatigue, where the system exhausts itself maintaining perpetual readiness without ever consolidating its efforts.

Financial resources follow similar dynamics.

Political parties operate continuous fundraising machines because staggered elections demand it. Game theorists recognise this as a classic prisoner's dilemma: each party must keep campaigning to stay competitive, even though collective demobilisation would benefit everyone. Campaign spending never truly stops; it merely shifts geographic focus. Corporate donors face relentless solicitation. Synchronised elections would establish clear temporal boundaries, transforming scattered resource haemorrhaging into concentrated, accountable expenditure. Between

electoral events, parties could focus on policy development rather than perpetual fundraising, a shift from reactive survival mode to strategic planning.

The governance implications run deeper than mere administrative convenience. Control theory studying how systems maintain desired states despite disturbances—distinguishes between steady-state operation and constant perturbation. Every time the Model Code of Conduct activates, it introduces what engineers call a forcing function: an external intervention disrupting normal system behaviour. Development schemes pause mid-implementation. Infrastructure projects freeze awaiting clearances. Administrative transfers halt, leaving bureaucratic vacancies unfilled. Civil servants become risk-averse, avoiding decisions

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that might appear politically motivated. This creates regime uncertainty, where businesses and citizens cannot predict when governments can act decisively, chilling investment and dampening development momentum.

Synchronised elections would create what dynamical systems theory calls phase separation: clear boundaries between campaigning and governing. Instead of perpetual low-intensity electoral activity fragmenting administrative attention, the system could alternate between focused electoral competition and sustained policy implementation. This temporal structure enables something crucial: complete feedback loops. Governments implement policies, programs propagate through bureaucratic systems, outcomes become measurable, adjustments get made, and electoral accountability arrives with clear causality between actions and results. Currently, voters struggle to attribute outcomes because governance constantly interrupts itself. Was the delayed highway project the current government's fault, or did repeat election-induced freezes bear responsibility?

Information dynamics reveal another dimension. Network theorists studying how knowledge flows through complex systems recognise that India's staggered elections create temporal fragmentation of political discourse. National issues compete continuously with state-specific concerns. Voters face cognitive overload processing multiple overlapping electoral narratives federal corruption scandals, state water disputes, and local municipal incompetence. Media attention scatters across simultaneous campaigns. Political energy dissipates into countless simultaneous battles rather than focusing on a comprehensive national debate. This isn't democratic richness; its informational noise obscuring the signal. Synchronised elections would impose what information theorists call temporal compression, concentrating political discourse into defined periods and allowing focused deliberation. Between electoral cycles, governance outcomes become visible without campaign messaging constantly reframing narratives.

Citizens can engage in what political scientists term retrospective voting evaluating actual performance rather than reacting to perpetual campaigning. Democracy strengthens when voters hold governments accountable for results, not when they navigate endless electoral stimulation. Critics worry that synchronisation threatens federalism, arguing that state and national issues require separate consideration. Yet complexity theory suggests the opposite: synchronised systems can maintain internal differentiation while coordinating temporal structure. Neurons fire together while processing distinct information. Orchestras play simultaneously while each instrument contributes unique voices. Synchronised elections don't homogenise political issues; they create bandwidth for processing them coherently rather than simultaneously.

The deeper insight from complexity science is that synchronised systems, once established, tend toward stability and efficiency naturally. They resist returning to fragmented states because coordination creates self-reinforcing benefits. The energy required to maintain India's current electoral chaos the constant mobilisation, perpetual campaign mode, fragmented governance represents enormous systemic drag. Synchronisation isn't just more efficient; it's thermodynamically favourable, aligning with how complex systems naturally organise when freed from artificial constraints that maintain disorder. India stands at a crossroads where political will could align with scientific principle. One Nation One Election isn't merely administrative reform or constitutional tinkering it's systems-level optimisation addressing fundamental structural inefficiencies. The question isn't whether synchronisation would improve democratic function; complexity theory answers that affirmatively. The question is whether India's political class possesses sufficient vision to embrace coherence over chaos, strategic rhythm over tactical cacophony, and long-term democratic maturity over short-term electoral advantage. Science has spoken. Democracy should listen.

Synchronised Electoral Cycles, Efficient Governance: Case For One Nation, One Election

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India's electoral system currently operates under a fragmented framework wherein elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies occur at different intervals. This structure, while accommodating democratic participation, generates substantial administrative burden, fiscal expenditure, and governance disruption. The concept of One Nation, One Election (ONOE) represents a systematic restructuring of this framework, synchronising elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, followed by local body elections within 100 days. Rather than a novel experiment, this represents a return to India's original constitutional design: the Constitution envisioned simultaneous elections, a principle departed from only due to premature dissolutions in the 1960s and 1970s.



The Global Precedent: Democracy Thrives on Structure

Democratic governance functions optimally within predictable institutional frameworks. A study by the NFPRC examining 14 established democracies, including Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Indonesia, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States, finds that structured electoral systems correlate strongly with governance stability and administrative effectiveness.

Of the countries examined, 12 have implemented formal mechanisms to ensure structured elections. Eleven countries have constitutionally mandated or conventionally established fixed-term elections at national and state levels, creating predictability that prevents incumbent governments from exploiting electoral timing for partisan advantage. Most significantly, eight democracies conduct multi-level, synchronised elections across two or more governance levels, yielding measurable improvements in voter participation and reductions in electoral expenditure over time.

These nations, spanning continents and representing diverse political cultures, demonstrate that electoral synchronisation is neither a radical experiment nor an assault on federalism. It is, instead, a tested approach to strengthening democratic governance that reflects a sophisticated institutional recognition.

Cost Efficiency: Prudent Use of Public Resources

Elections constitute a significant drain on public resources in democracies worldwide. India's 2024 Lok Sabha elections incurred approximately Rs 8,900 crore in expenditure. When aggregated across multiple electoral cycles at national, state, and local levels, occurring at staggered intervals, cumulative expenditure becomes substantial, representing opportunity costs for critical development priorities.

International comparative analysis demonstrates that synchronised electoral calendars generate substantial fiscal efficiencies. Brazil's 2022 general elections, utilising integrated electronic voting infrastructure and centralised logistics

management, achieved per-voter electoral expenditure of Rs 127, among the lowest globally. Indonesia's 2019 simultaneous elections, covering 810,000 polling stations across 500+ administrative units, demonstrated scalable capacity for large-scale, synchronised polling despite the country's geographic complexity.

Estimates suggest that synchronised elections could save India over ₹ 12,000 crore, and GDP will increase by 1.5%. These efficiencies derive from consolidated infrastructure deployment, elimination of redundant security force mobilisation, centralised voter education campaigns, and prevention of duplicative administrative overhead inherent in fragmented electoral cycles.

Boosting Democratic Participation

One of the most persuasive arguments for electoral synchronisation lies in its impact on voter engagement. Structured electoral calendars demonstrably enhance civic engagement by consolidating electoral moments and creating predictable participation schedules. Sweden provides an instructive example. Since 1970, the country has held synchronised elections for national, county, and municipal levels on a single day every four years. This predictability has contributed to consistently high voter turnout - 84% in 2022.

Indonesia's transition to simultaneous elections offers the most instructive parallel, given its demographic and administrative similarities to India. Before 2016, Indonesia's staggered electoral framework yielded a 75% turnout in 2014. Following Law No. 10 of 2016, which mandated synchronised national and regional elections, turnout increased to 81.6% in 2019 and remained at 80.2% in 2024. This demonstrates that large, administratively complex democracies realise enhanced participation through electoral consolidation.

India's 2024 turnout of 65.79% indicates substantial untapped participation capacity. Synchronised elections, by reducing frequency and creating consolidated electoral moments, can address voter fatigue and strengthen democratic engagement.



Governance Continuity: Ending Perpetual Campaign Mode

Staggered electoral cycles create institutional environments wherein governments operate in near-perpetual campaign mode, diverting administrative capacity, financial resources, and political attention from policy formulation and implementation toward electoral positioning. This structural reality undermines governance quality and erodes long-term strategic planning.

Germany's institutional framework illustrates optimal governance continuity. Federal elections occur every four years, with constructive votes of no-confidence requiring simultaneous election of successor chancellors, creating constitutional safeguards against destabilising power vacuums. This framework enables sustained policy focus; Germany has maintained consistent long-term policies on fiscal discipline, manufacturing competitiveness, and social insurance - achievements facilitated by governance stability.

Brazil's biennial electoral calendar, alternating municipal and general elections every two years, maintains governance predictability through

constitutional provisions ensuring that interim successors (vice presidents or appointed officials) serve only the remainder of existing terms. This prevents electoral calendar fragmentation and allows coherent policy implementation across cycles.

Federalism: Synchronisation Without Centralisation

Critics often argue that synchronised elections threaten India's federal structure by subordinating state politics to national dynamics. However, international experience demonstrates that electoral synchronisation and federal autonomy are entirely compatible.

Argentina's Double Simultaneous Voting System (DSVS) exemplifies this balance. While Argentina's 23 provinces retain full constitutional authority over election timing, eleven voluntarily align with national elections to minimise administrative fragmentation and reduce voter fatigue. Provincial governments do not automatically fall when the national government collapses, and each operates independently unless facing its own political crisis.

Canada similarly maintains federal authority over national elections while preserving provincial discretion over provincial schedules. Although most provinces voluntarily align with federal cycles for administrative efficiency, the legal framework preserves provincial autonomy, reflecting balanced federalism. The United States permits similar flexibility: while most states align with federal elections, five states - Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Virginia - deliberately opt out, demonstrating that structured systems accommodate federal diversity.

The ONOE proposal upholds India's federal structure by enabling a phased implementation and including measures that ensure mid-term government dissolutions lead to elections only for the remaining duration of the term, thereby preserving overall synchronisation while maintaining state-level political independence.

Handling Government Instability: Constitutional Safeguards

A legitimate concern about synchronised elections involves managing government collapses mid-term. How can electoral cycles remain synchronised if coalition governments fall before completing their terms? International democracies have developed robust constitutional mechanisms to address precisely this challenge.

In Belgium, the outgoing Prime Minister serves as a limited-power caretaker while the monarch oversees coalition talks; if talks fail, elections are held but new governments serve only the remaining term to keep cycles aligned. Germany's constructive no-confidence rule lets Parliament withdraw confidence from the Chancellor only by simultaneously electing a new successor with an absolute majority, preventing instability and preserving electoral continuity. In Brazil, a presidential vacancy leads to the Vice President's succession, and if both offices become vacant, elections must be held within 90 days, with the winners serving only the remaining term; corresponding provisions at the state level ensure that mid-term changes do not disrupt the overall synchronised electoral framework.

These international precedents demonstrate that constitutional safeguards effectively preserve electoral synchronisation while accommodating inevitable coalition dynamics and political transitions. The ONOE proposal incorporates similar protective mechanisms.

Conclusion

The evidence from established democracies is unequivocal: structured, synchronised elections deliver measurable benefits in administrative efficiency, fiscal sustainability, voter participation, and governance quality. These benefits are observed consistently across diverse institutional, cultural, and geographic contexts. Far from threatening federalism or democratic principles, electoral synchronisation strengthens them by establishing predictable institutional frameworks enabling effective democratic governance and policy implementation. India's current system represents a departure from constitutional design rather than a departure from it.

The ONOE proposal represents a forward-looking reform grounded firmly in international best practices. Its two-phase implementation, first synchronising Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections, then aligning local bodies within 100 days, reflects the incremental approach that has succeeded elsewhere. As young Indians invested in our nation's democratic future, we must evaluate reforms not through the lens of partisan politics but through evidence-based analysis. The global experience demonstrates that One Nation, One Election is neither radical nor threatening; it is a tested, practical reform that can strengthen Indian democracy for generations to come.

Why Young India Should Care About Simultaneous Elections

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In recent years, the idea of “One Nation, One Election” has emerged as one of the most discussed reforms in Indian democracy. The concept aims to hold elections to the Lok Sabha and all State Legislative Assemblies simultaneously: bringing the entire country under a single electoral calendar. This vision is rooted in the belief that synchronised elections can strengthen governance, reduce expenditure, and ensure a more stable and development-oriented political environment.



Let us understand the rationale behind this proposal and examine its constitutional and institutional feasibility.

1. The Rationale for One Nation, One Election

Challenges Posed by the Current Cycle of Frequent Elections

India, the world's largest democracy, conducts elections almost every few months: for the Lok Sabha, State Assemblies, or local bodies. While frequent elections are a sign of a vibrant democracy, they also bring significant challenges. Every time an election is announced, the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) comes into force. This code temporarily halts the implementation of new government schemes, public projects, and policy decisions. As a result, governance and development activities slow down repeatedly across different states and at the national level.

Moreover, political parties and leaders remain in a perpetual campaign mode. Ministers and bureaucrats get diverted from their regular duties to election-related work. This constant cycle of campaigning, strategising, and mobilisation not only affects governance continuity but also shifts focus from long-term policy goals to short-term populist promises aimed at electoral gains.

Administrative and Financial Costs of Recurring Polls

Conducting free and fair elections in a country of 1.4 billion people is a massive logistical exercise. Each election requires the deployment of lakhs of polling personnel, security forces, and administrative staff. Vast amounts of public money are spent on setting up polling stations, printing ballot papers or EVM arrangements, and ensuring security.

According to estimates from the Election Commission of India (ECI), the 2019 Lok Sabha elections alone cost the public exchequer around ₹60,000 crores, and this does not include the additional expenses incurred by political parties and candidates. When we multiply this cost across frequent state elections, the total burden on taxpayers becomes enormous.

Synchronised elections would significantly reduce these costs. The same polling stations, staff, and security arrangements could be used for both

parliamentary and assembly elections. This would save time, resources, and manpower that can be redirected towards development projects.

Impact on Governance Continuity and Policy Focus

Frequent elections often lead to short-term thinking in governance. Governments tend to announce welfare schemes and populist measures that may not be economically sustainable, merely to win votes in upcoming polls. As a result, long-term policy planning, whether in infrastructure, education, or industry, often takes a backseat.

With "One Nation, One Election," political leaders would have a stable five-year period without the constant pressure of electoral politics. This would enable them to focus more consistently on governance, policymaking, and execution. It would also encourage cooperation between the Centre and the States, as both would be aligned under a single electoral timetable, reducing political friction.

2. Constitutional and Institutional Feasibility

Constitutional Provisions That Enable Simultaneous Elections

Interestingly, simultaneous elections are not a new concept for India. After Independence, both Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections were held together in 1952, 1957, 1962, and 1967. However, this cycle was disrupted by the premature dissolution of some state assemblies and the Lok Sabha in later years.

To restore this system, certain constitutional and legal amendments would be required, especially in the Representation of the People Act, 1951, and relevant provisions of the Constitution, such as Articles 83, 85, 172, and 174, which govern the tenure of legislatures and the power of dissolution.

These changes can be introduced with parliamentary approval and support from at least half of the states, as required for constitutional

amendments affecting federal provisions. The framework is therefore feasible, though it would require careful coordination and political consensus.

Past Recommendations by the Election Commission, Law Commission, and NITI Aayog

Several expert bodies have supported the idea of synchronised elections over the years.

- The Election Commission of India has repeatedly emphasised the benefits of reducing the frequency of polls to save resources and maintain administrative efficiency.
- The Law Commission of India (2018) also endorsed the proposal, suggesting a two-phase election model to make the transition smoother. It argued that simultaneous polls would ensure stability and curb policy paralysis caused by continuous elections.
- NITI Aayog (2017) proposed a detailed roadmap, recommending steps such as aligning elections gradually, first synchronising some states with the Lok Sabha cycle and eventually moving towards complete alignment.

These institutional recommendations show that the proposal is not merely political rhetoric but a well-researched idea backed by administrative logic.

Models from Federal Democracies That Maintain Synchronised Electoral Calendars

Several countries with federal systems manage synchronised or semi-synchronised elections successfully.

For example, South Africa holds its national and provincial elections together every five years, ensuring administrative efficiency and cost savings. Sweden also conducts national and local elections on the same day. Even Germany maintains a broadly synchronised cycle for federal and state elections, ensuring governance stability.

These examples show that federalism and synchronised elections can coexist. India can adapt such models while respecting its unique democratic diversity and constitutional framework.

A Vision for a Stronger Democracy

“One Nation, One Election” is not just an administrative reform; it is a vision for a more stable, efficient, and development-oriented democracy. It seeks to strike a balance between the spirit of federalism and the need for cohesive governance.

While challenges exist, such as constitutional amendments and political consensus, the long-term benefits are clear: reduced expenditure, uninterrupted governance, and a sharper focus on national progress.

India, as the world’s largest democracy, has continuously evolved through reform and innovation. Synchronising elections is the next logical step in that evolution, one that can make our democratic machinery more efficient and our governance more effective.

If implemented with consensus and care, “One Nation, One Election” can truly transform India’s democratic landscape, ensuring that the world’s biggest democracy also becomes the most efficient one.



How Simultaneous Elections Can Boost Growth, Governance and Trust

Deepesh Gulgulia
Policy Consultant and
Lawyer

Ravi, a shopkeeper from Bikaner, often jokes that India has only one never-ending festival: elections. Every few months, there is a campaign, banners appear, officers vanish from government offices for poll duty, political rallies flood the streets, and the Model Code of Conduct freezes development. Yet when Ravi's grandfather voted for the first time in 1952, things looked very different. India began its democratic journey with a unified election cycle. From 1952 to 1967, Lok Sabha and all State Assembly elections were held together. Voters across the country went to the polls once every 5 years. It was orderly, predictable and remarkably efficient for a young democracy. But by the late 1960s, several Congress-ruled state governments collapsed mid-term, and early dissolutions broke this alignment. The Lok Sabha was itself dissolved early in 1970. This political instability under Congress governments permanently disrupted the synchronised model. India slipped into staggered elections, and decades later, we find ourselves voting almost throughout the year.



Today, the idea of returning to a synchronised cycle has re-emerged as One Nation, One Election. It proposes that Lok Sabha and all State Assembly elections be conducted together in a single 5-year cycle. Local body polls would fall within a structured window close to that timeline. Instead of Punjab voting in 1 year, Karnataka in another, Rajasthan 2 years later and West Bengal 3 years after that, the country would gradually shift to a unified electoral timetable. In simple terms, it is a reset that takes India back to the model with which it began.

Supporters of One Nation, One Election argue that the benefits are substantial. The first and most obvious advantage is the massive saving of public money. Elections in India are costly because they require the deployment of lakhs of officers, thousands of companies of paramilitary forces, extensive transportation, EVM logistics and multiple layers of security. The Election Commission spent more than Rs 4,500 crore on the 2019 Lok Sabha election. When political party and candidate expenses are included, the 2024 Lok Sabha election crossed Rs 1,35,000 lakh crore. This is more than the annual budget of several states. Holding one unified election instead of repeated elections every few months would dramatically reduce duplication of costs.

Political leaders often claim that certain schemes or welfare announcements are brought in only because an important state election is approaching. This constant cycle of politically timed schemes creates both fiscal strain and public cynicism. One Nation, One Election can curb this tendency by removing the need for governments to introduce targeted benefits before every separate state poll.

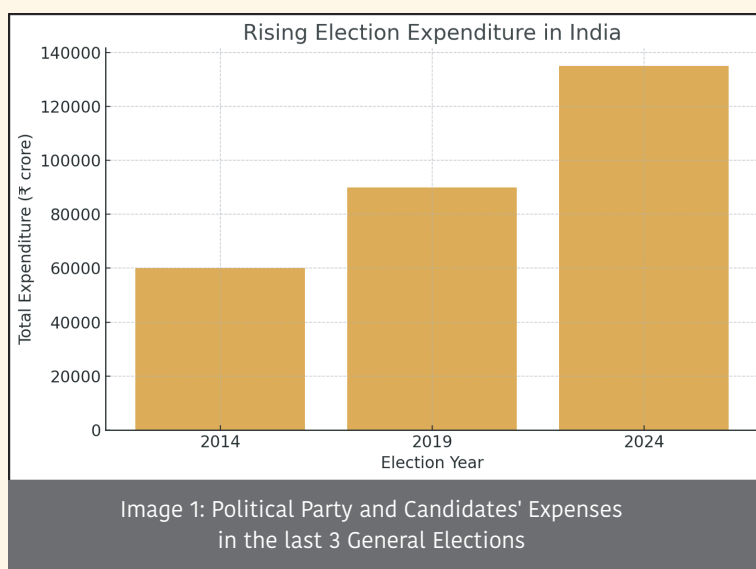
When elections for all states and the Lok Sabha happen together, the pressure to design short-term, poll-focused schemes reduces significantly. Governments can then plan welfare policies based on long-term developmental priorities instead of electoral calendars, which leads to more predictable governance and greater public trust.

Governance is another major reason behind this proposal. Every election triggers the Model Code of Conduct, which freezes new announcements, welfare decisions, infrastructure rollouts and administrative action. Since India votes nearly every year in some state or the other, the Model Code keeps returning and frequently interrupts governance. A synchronised cycle ensures that

development work is paused only once in 5 years instead of multiple times each year. The High-Level Committee, led by former President Ram Nath Kovind, clearly stated in its 18,000-page report that frequent elections contribute to policy paralysis,

delay welfare schemes, and create administrative disruptions. One Nation, One Election, therefore, gives governments and bureaucracies uninterrupted time to implement policies.

There is also a strong economic argument. The High-Level Committee highlighted that in the years following simultaneous elections, India's GDP growth has historically been about 1.5 percentage points higher compared to years with staggered elections. In today's terms, this equals roughly ₹ 4.5 lakh crore in added economic output, which is almost half of India's public health budget. Simultaneous elections are also associated with higher capital expenditure by governments and



lower inflation in the following year.

However, One Nation, One Election comes with challenges. Implementing it requires constitutional amendments, including changes to Articles 83 and 172 and several sections of the Representation of the People Act. At least 18 amendments may be required. This demands broad political consensus and careful legal drafting. But India has amended the Constitution many times in the past to strengthen democratic processes, so the challenge is significant but not insurmountable.

Another concern is the possibility of mid-term collapses. If a government loses its majority, what happens to the synchronised cycle? The proposed solution is straightforward. If a collapse occurs, an interim election is held, but the new government serves only the remainder of the 5-year cycle so that the next nationwide synchronised election year remains intact. This is similar to practices in countries with fixed election cycles.

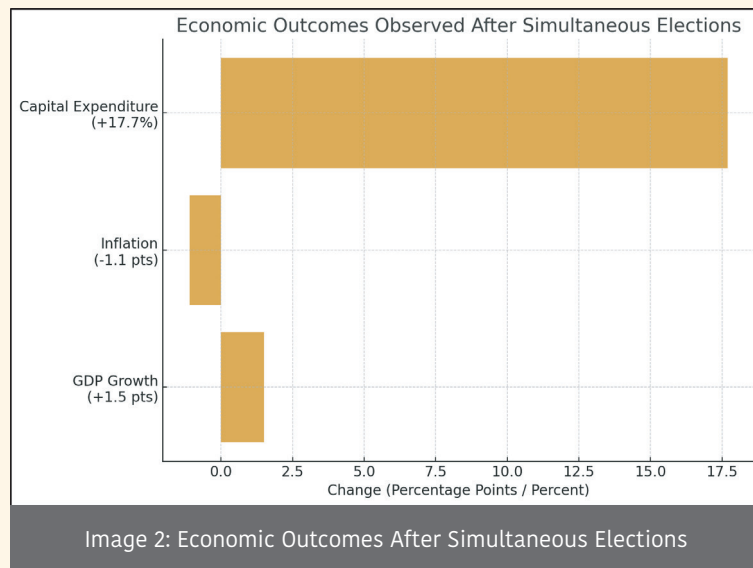
Some critics worry that synchronised elections might blur the distinction between national and local issues. They argue that national leaders could overshadow state issues. But Indian voters have historically shown that they often vote differently for Parliament and State Assemblies even when elections are held together (2024 General Election results in Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, etc. are recent examples of it). Local leadership, performance and issues continue to matter significantly in voting behaviour.

The logistical scale is another consideration. Conducting elections for nearly 96 crore eligible voters across 28 states and 543 Lok Sabha seats at

once requires more EVMs, more polling staff and enhanced administrative coordination. Yet the Election Commission has already demonstrated its capacity by conducting massive general elections across multiple phases with near-perfect efficiency. With proper preparation, technology and planning, synchronised elections are fully within India's administrative capability.

Ultimately, the idea behind One Nation, One Election is simple: should India return to the system that worked well from 1952 to 1967?

Those early years proved that synchronised elections were both practical and effective until political instability of the late 1960s and early 1970s broke the cycle. For citizens like Ravi, the appeal is: a single election every 5 years means fewer disruptions, better governance, lower costs, and greater stability. It also means a more structured democratic rhythm for the world's largest electorate.



From Disruption to Discipline: Restoring India's Simultaneous Elections

Gourav Rathi

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Imagine a single day when the entire nation, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, votes together to elect both national and state leaders. This vision, known as “One Nation, One Election” (ONOE), seeks to transform India's electoral landscape. The idea proposes synchronising elections for the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies across India, though it does not mean that voting must happen on a single day; it can be conducted in a phased manner.

During the first four general elections (1952, 1957, 1962, and 1967), Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections were held simultaneously. However, repeated premature dissolutions of the Lok Sabha and various assemblies disrupted this cycle, leading to elections being held at different times. The idea of restoring simultaneous elections was later proposed by the Election Commission (1982), the Law Commission (1999), and the High-Level Committee headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind in 2023.



According to Election Commission data, political parties declared spending 73,861 crore for the five elections in 2024. Frequent implementation of the Model Code of Conduct disrupts administration, slows down developmental processes, and hampers civic life. Repeated elections entail enormous costs in terms of time, financial and administrative resources, including security forces. They compel politicians to focus on short-term visible goals rather than long-term developmental ones. Simultaneous elections would save public money through cost optimisation and equal sharing of expenditure between the Centre and the States.

The huge expenditure on personnel, security forces, and procurement of electoral materials (EVMs/VVPATs) would be significantly reduced. Governments would be less compelled to resort to populist spending and short-term subsidies, allowing for better long-term fiscal planning. A reduced electoral cycle lowers political uncertainty and prevents disruptions to economic activity, fostering a more stable environment for both domestic and foreign investment.

Simultaneous elections would also give voters more time to evaluate candidates and policies for both

state and national levels, leading to more informed choices rather than being overwhelmed by continuous campaigns. A single election event simplifies the voting process, particularly for migrant workers and marginalised groups. The significant reduction in financial and administrative costs could be redirected toward essential public services such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure, delivering better outcomes to citizens and reinforcing trust in democracy.

By streamlining logistical planning, simultaneous elections would benefit the Election Commission of India (ECI) by enabling better management of India's massive democratic exercise. The proposal also encourages a single electoral roll and one voter ID card for all levels of government, reducing duplication and registration errors. A unified election period would necessitate strong coordination between various government bodies and agencies (ECI, State Election Commissions, etc.). This collaborative approach can strengthen inter-agency operations and institutional capacity.

ONOE could help reduce political manoeuvring and horse-trading, as any mid-term government would serve only the remainder of the original five-year



term. This reduces incentives for parties to engineer defections for short-term power gains. With aligned mandates and synchronised terms, both levels of government can better coordinate policy formulation and implementation in critical areas such as health, education, and national security—leading to more cohesive national development. By minimising political distractions, state governments can focus on their specific developmental goals while ensuring better alignment with national priorities. This shared focus strengthens India's federal structure.

However, critics argue that combining Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections could lead to the “nationalisation of state polls.” Voters influenced by national narratives, dominant political personalities, and large party campaigns may overlook regional issues and state-specific governance. This could result in sweeping victories for dominant national parties, marginalising smaller regional ones. Forcing state assemblies to curtail or extend their terms to align with the Lok Sabha cycle is also seen as an infringement on the fundamental principle of state autonomy.

Frequent elections serve as a vital feedback mechanism, allowing voters to express dissatisfaction with governments midway through a term. Eliminating this opportunity could reduce public scrutiny for five years. Moreover, asking voters to cast two distinct ballots (for Centre and State) on the same day may lead to voter fatigue or, more likely, a “coattail effect”, where they vote for the same party at both levels, undermining independent decision-making.

There are, however, ways to address these concerns. A new Model Code of Conduct structure could mandate separate campaign periods and equal media coverage for national and state-level issues, preventing the overshadowing of local matters and enabling voters to make informed choices. To counter the coattail effect, sustained voter education and awareness campaigns by the ECI would be essential to highlight the distinction between the two ballots. Additionally, real-time performance monitoring and public disclosure of government schemes and budgets at both the

Centre and State levels throughout the five-year term could ensure continuous accountability, even without frequent elections.

Constitutional amendments could further safeguard stability by adopting a “Constructive Vote of No Confidence” model, requiring legislatures to elect a successor government simultaneously while removing the incumbent. This would prevent premature dissolutions and maintain a fixed five-year cycle. Amendments to the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RPA) would also be needed to ensure that any mid-cycle election is held only for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Ultimately, youth stand to gain the most from simultaneous elections, as governments would focus on long-term policy implementation. A more stable, efficient, and growth-oriented governance system resulting from ONOE aligns with the youth's vision of a developed and modern India. Holding major national and state elections together can truly make elections a “festival of democracy”, encouraging greater participation among the electorate. As former President Ram Nath Kovind aptly remarked, “Simultaneous elections were the vision of our constitutional forefathers, and this practice was the norm during the early years of the Republic.”

ONOE as a Civilizational Reform: Harmony, Efficiency and Democratic Rhythm

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In the long civilisation journey of India, democracy has not been a sudden gift of modernity-it has evolved from the deep wells of our ancient tradition. The concept of samiti and sabha in the Vedic literature reflected collective deliberation; the Lichchhavi Sangha of Vaishali practised consensus-based governance long before modern republics emerged. It is in this continuum-from ancient sabhas to the Parliament of India-that the vision of “One Nation, One Election” (ONOE) must be understood: not as a mere administrative measure, but as a generational reform rooted in India’s own ethos of order, efficiency, and unity.

The ONOE proposal envisions simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and all State Legislative Assemblies, held once every five years. This is not an untested idea. India practised concurrent elections from 1952 to 1967. However, due to premature dissolutions of some state assemblies and the Fourth Lok Sabha in 1970, the synchrony was lost. Since then, India has entered an almost perpetual election cycle, in which an election is always underway somewhere in the country. The Election Commission of India’s data show that between 2018 and 2023, at least one major election occurred every six months. This has created what many scholars describe as “governance fatigue”, where administrative focus and policy continuity are repeatedly interrupted by the election process.



The Rhythm of Governance and the Pulse of Reform

The purpose of ONOE is not to diminish democracy, but to harmonise it. Each election brings with it the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), a necessary safeguard to ensure fair play. Yet, its repeated imposition halts policy decisions, tenders, and developmental announcements. Ministries shift into “wait mode.” This stop-and-start rhythm in administration impairs the long-term execution of welfare and infrastructure projects. Synchronising elections could liberate governance from this cycle, allowing policymakers to concentrate on sustained growth and implementation.

According to a 2018 NITI Aayog discussion paper, simultaneous elections could save the exchequer nearly ₹5,000–6,000 crore per five-year cycle, not counting the hidden costs of manpower deployment, logistics, and security. The Election Commission itself has expressed readiness to hold ONOE with sufficient preparation. Around 18 lakh Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and matching Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) units would be required, a logistical challenge, but not beyond India’s capacity. The Law Commission, in its 170th Report, had also underlined that “the cycle of elections every year within different States must come to an end.”

These are not small efficiencies—they represent a significant opportunity to redirect human and financial resources from frequent electoral management to developmental priorities like healthcare, education, and rural infrastructure. As Chanakya observed in the Arthashastra, “Karyasya kālāḥ pramāṇaḥ” - the timing of action determines its success. A polity constantly engaged in elections risks losing the rhythm necessary for sustained statecraft.

Unity in Diversity: A Shared Democratic Moment,

India’s greatest strength lies in its diversity, yet its greatest aspiration remains unity. The vision of ONOE emerges from this principle. The phrase “Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat” finds a democratic manifestation in a synchronised electoral calendar, where the entire nation, from Arunachal to Gujarat,

from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, participates in one collective democratic moment. It is an expression of *rāṣṭrīya samvāda* - national conversation - in which every Indian voice is heard in unison.

In ancient Indian literature thought, unity does not imply uniformity; it reflects harmony. The Upaniṣadic ideal “Ekam sat viprā bahudhā vadanti” - “Truth is one, but the wise express it in many ways” - resonates deeply with the philosophy behind ONOE. It does not seek to dilute regional issues but to embed them within a larger national dialogue. Elections held together can strengthen national coherence, making the citizens feel part of a shared political destiny.

Furthermore, synchronised elections can curb divisive populism and the short-term polarisation that often accompanies staggered polls. When political discourse is spread across years, the national narrative risks fragmenting into regional debates. A unified electoral schedule can help restore the spirit of *samagra nīti* - integrated policy - where governance and politics operate in a standard temporal frame.

Stability and Policy Continuity:

Political stability has been a key driver of India’s economic and diplomatic rise over the past decade. Yet, frequent elections create an environment of perpetual campaign. Parties, bound by electoral timetables, sometimes prioritise immediate gains over long-term vision. ONOE would allow governments, both central and state, to pursue sustained reform without the constant fear that mid-term elections will derail their agenda.

From the perspective of investors, both domestic and international, synchronised elections would signal predictability—a steady environment for business and policy continuity. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and several policy institutes have recognised that reduced electoral uncertainty contributes to better economic planning and capital inflow. This would strengthen India’s growth trajectory as envisioned in the Amrit Kaal roadmap toward 2047.

In ancient political theory, Kautilya’s Arthashastra

emphasised the stability of governance as the highest form of rajadharma. Frequent leadership disruptions were seen as detrimental to praja sukha, the happiness of the people. In that philosophical sense, ONOE is not merely a procedural innovation; it is a reaffirmation of the dharmic principle that governance must be continuous, steady, and people-oriented.

Addressing Concerns with Balance and Consensus:

Critics of ONOE raise valid questions: Will national issues overshadow regional ones? Can constitutional and logistical challenges be overcome? Will smaller parties lose visibility in a simultaneous election? These are legitimate concerns, and any major reform must emerge from dialogue, not decree.

The government has therefore constituted a high-level committee under former President Shri Ram Nath Kovind to study the feasibility of ONOE, seeking input from political parties, the Election Commission, and legal experts. The committee has noted that a phased approach—first aligning Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, later extending to local bodies—may ensure smoother transition. The spirit of consultation aligns with the very democratic ethos ONOE seeks to strengthen.

Constitutional amendments would indeed be necessary, particularly to Articles 83, 85, 172, and 356, which define the tenures and dissolution powers of legislatures. Yet, as the framers of our Constitution envisioned flexibility within federalism, these can be achieved through consensus-building rather than confrontation. As the Veda reminds us, “Sam gacchadhvam sam vadadhvam sam vo manā si jānatām” - “Move together, speak together, let your minds be of one accord.” The ONOE debate calls for precisely such unity of purpose.

A Civilizational Step Forward:

Viewed through a civilizational lens, ONOE is not merely an electoral arrangement but a reaffirmation of the Indian genius for synthesis, where modern governance meets timeless wisdom. It reflects yoga karmasu kauśalam - excellence in action through coordination. In bringing efficiency, unity, and stability into alignment, the reform seeks to synchronise the machinery of democracy with the rhythm of development.

For a country aspiring to become a developed nation by 2047, efficient governance cannot afford to be perpetually distracted by elections. ONOE thus represents a pragmatic and philosophical step forward—an effort to bring coherence, not control; to amplify unity, not uniformity. It symbolises a mature democracy evolving to meet the demands of scale and complexity while remaining anchored in its ancient spirit of lokasa graha - the welfare of all.

In the final analysis, One Nation, One Election is not merely a political proposition. It is a generational idea that carries the fragrance of India’s civilizational continuity and the promise of modern administrative precision. When India aligns its democratic cycles, it aligns its destiny - not under compulsion, but through conviction. It is the return of rāṣṭra dharma in its modern form: a harmony between the ancient and the contemporary, between the people’s mandate and the state’s mission, between the timeless ideal of unity and the timely need for efficiency.

As the Bhagavad Gītā counsels, “Yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ” - “Whatever the great do, others follow.” If ONOE becomes a reality, it will mark not only an administrative milestone but a moral one, setting a global example of democratic efficiency inspired by Indian wisdom. It would show that India, the cradle of deliberative thought, can once again lead the world by balancing tradition with transformation.

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simultaneous elections could save the exchequer nearly ₹5,000–6,000 crore per five-year cycle, not counting the hidden costs of manpower deployment, logistics, and security. The Election Commission itself has expressed readiness to hold ONOE with sufficient preparation.

One Nation, One Election: A Blueprint For Stronger Governance and Public Welfare

Dr Abhishek Krishna
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The concept of “One Nation, One Election” has emerged as one of the most significant governance reforms being discussed in contemporary India. It proposes that elections to the Lok Sabha and all State Legislative Assemblies be held simultaneously every five years. While India initially followed this system in the early decades after independence, political developments over time led to staggered election cycles across states. Today, the idea of returning to a synchronised election schedule is being viewed not merely as an electoral reform but as a step towards strengthening stability, economic efficiency, administrative clarity, and development momentum across the nation.

One of the strongest advantages of this system is the substantial reduction in election-related expenditure. Elections in India are massive logistical exercises that involve the large-scale deployment of personnel, security forces, polling material, and extensive travel and campaigning. Conducting these multiple times a year places considerable financial strain on both the government and political parties. A unified election cycle would lead to significant savings in public funds, allowing these resources to be redirected to welfare initiatives, national development programs, and the capacity-building of critical sectors such as healthcare, education, and rural employment. Another key benefit lies in the continuity of governance. Presently, with elections occurring frequently, the Model Code of Conduct comes into force repeatedly, pausing new policy announcements and delaying development projects. This often affects infrastructure progress, long-term planning, and public service delivery.



With a typical election cycle, elected governments would have a largely uninterrupted five-year period to design, implement, and assess development policies. Such continuity enables a focus on long-term development goals rather than short-term populist measures.

The reform would also ease the administrative and security burden currently associated with frequent elections. A large number of government personnel, including teachers, engineers, healthcare workers, and district officials, are diverted from their regular duties for election work. Security forces are redeployed multiple times across states. A synchronised election would allow these essential services to operate more consistently and effectively, improving public service delivery and internal security stability.

Additionally, One Nation, One Election may contribute to greater political stability. With governments at the Centre and in States serving fixed, aligned terms, political attention shifts from continuous campaigning to governance, accountability, and performance-driven outcomes. This has the potential to nurture a healthier political culture in which developmental achievements take precedence over election-season promises. It could also encourage greater civic awareness, as the electorate would have a clear, concentrated period of political evaluation every five years.

From the perspective of a healthcare professional, this reform is of notable significance. Public health programs and efforts to expand medical infrastructure often slow down during election periods due to administrative restrictions. Large-scale initiatives such as vaccination campaigns, cancer screening outreach, maternal and child health missions, and health awareness programs benefit most from consistency and uninterrupted execution. A stable electoral cycle ensures that such programs continue without recurrent pauses. Moreover, financial savings from reduced election expenditure could be strategically invested in strengthening hospitals, procuring modern medical technology, supporting cancer care facilities, funding rural health services, improving

medical staffing, and making treatment more affordable for patients. For healthcare workers, fewer administrative duties related to election staffing also mean more time dedicated to patient care. In essence, streamlined elections can directly translate into stronger healthcare outcomes and better public welfare delivery.

Any structural reform of this scale must acknowledge specific challenges. India's diversity means that states have unique concerns, and it is essential that regional voices remain equally represented. Logistical arrangements for a nationwide simultaneous election would require planning, phased implementation, and consensus-building across political stakeholders. Situations in which governments lose a majority mid-term must be addressed with constitutional clarity and safeguards. However, these challenges are not insurmountable; they are matters of design, planning, and dialogue, not reasons to reject the reform altogether.

The essence of One Nation, One Election lies in its vision of a more focused, efficient, and development-oriented democracy. It aims to reduce repetitive administrative disruption, safeguard public funds, encourage long-term policy planning, and create an environment where governance is continuous and citizen-centred. The reform carries the promise of strengthening the institutional fabric of Indian democracy by balancing efficiency with representation. As India continues to progress socially and economically, discussions about improving governance must be welcomed thoughtfully. One Nation, One Election is not merely about voting schedules; it is about creating conditions where governments can deliver more effectively, professionals like doctors, teachers, and administrators can serve without frequent disruption, and public welfare initiatives receive sustained attention and investment. With careful calibration, constitutional adherence, and cooperative federalism, this reform can become a defining step toward a governance framework that is efficient, stable, and truly development-driven.

Stop the Election Cycle, Start the Development Cycle: A Youth Perspective

Dr. Aayush Garg
Columnist

India, that is Bharat, the world's largest democracy, is home to over a billion people and more than a thousand registered political parties. With 28 states, over 2 lakh local bodies and municipalities, and a vast geographical expanse of 3.28 million square kilometres, India's democratic framework is both diverse and complex. The nation, with more than 900 million registered voters, regularly conducts elections at multiple levels—national, state, and local—making it one of the most extensive electoral exercises in the world. Recognising the challenges posed by this fragmented electoral calendar, the Government of India, under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has proposed a major reform in the country's electoral architecture — the concept of “One Nation, One Election (ONOE)”.

Strengthening governance and policy continuity

Frequent elections in India consume enormous resources, including administrative staff, police, paramilitary forces (adding to up to 10 million) and public funds. Each election also enforces the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), which restricts governments from launching new schemes or major reforms, leading to administrative slowdowns. Studies suggest that nearly 8–9 months of effective



governance in a five-year term are lost due to these recurring electoral activities. For a developing nation aspiring to become developed by 2047, such repeated disruptions hinder policymaking, delay developmental projects, and strain national productivity—highlighting the urgent need for synchronized elections to ensure continuous governance.

For example, One concrete impact was on the Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP): its momentum slowed down significantly during the MCC period of the 2024 general elections. Because new approvals, meetings, and related decisions were deferred. In the Nashik district, during the MLC elections, the MCC caused a significant slowdown in the approval and tendering of development works under the district planning committee. Though the plan-outlay for 2022-23 was about ₹600 crore, the administrative approvals stood at only ₹213 crore by early January due to the MCC restrictions.

Delay of a large, multi-state waterlinking initiative impacting irrigation/drinking water schedule. Impact on the Ken-Betwa River Linking Project. Aligning political cycles would enhance Centre-State coordination, as seen between 1950 and the 1970s. It would ensure that government staff, including teachers and police, remain focused on their duties, thereby improving overall productivity.

Governments would have full terms to implement developmental programs without the fear of frequent elections. This would allow them to focus on long-term planning, fiscal discipline, and welfare activities, rather than short-term populist measures.

Some concerns about reduced accountability can be addressed by introducing a cluster-based election system. Additionally, state and local body elections can be conducted separately but in a coordinated manner during Phase 2, ensuring both efficiency and continued democratic oversight.

Economic and fiscal benefits

Frequent elections can lead to fragmented fiscal planning with governments focusing more on populist budgets/ schemes, further deteriorating fiscal deficit and hampering money allocation to

various subjects like health, education and capex building.

Conducting simultaneous elections would save enormous manpower and reduce expenditure on awareness campaigns, salaries, and transportation for thousands of security personnel. The funds saved could be redirected to capital investments, boosting GDP up to 1% according to experts, which can create additional employment opportunities.

Political stability and consistent policies would encourage foreign investors (FIIs) to invest in India, without concerns over frequent regime or policy changes.

For example - In Maharashtra, the assembly election cost was reported to have reached about ₹432 crore. Now compare this with a water & sewerage infrastructure project in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) approved at ₹1,187 crore. ONOE can enable predictable fiscal management, improving the credibility of India's fiscal targets under the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) framework.

In conclusion let's quote a Sanskrit saying from the Arthashastra by Kautilya (Chanakya):

“राज्यः कल्याणं प्रजासु, प्रजा कल्याणं राज्यं “

"The welfare of the state lies in the welfare of its people; the welfare of the people ensures the welfare of the state."

India stands at a historic juncture where One Nation, One Election can transform its democratic framework. We are looking towards a loop where a reform can create immense simplification of a complex system, yielding not only financial advantages but also freeing governments from the perpetual election cycle. This would enable focus on long-term planning, developmental projects, and fiscal prudence, rather than being 24x7 in an election mode. As the ancient wisdom reminds us, "The welfare of the state lies in the welfare of its people; the welfare of the people ensures the welfare of the state." ONOE paves the way for a stronger, prosperous India.

ONOE for a New India: A Reform the Young Generation Can Believe In

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“Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas”: these words of our Hon’ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, are not just a slogan; they are the spirit of a new India. To truly live this vision, India must move towards greater unity, efficiency, and focus, and the idea of One Nation, One Election takes us one step closer to that goal.

Every time India votes, the atmosphere changes, posters rise, flags flutter, hopes soar, and democracy celebrates itself. Yet, for a nation as dynamic as ours, frequent elections often pause governance, slow down projects, and stretch our administrative machinery. I have witnessed this myself. During election time, development work often took a back seat. The Model Code of Conduct led to delayed decisions, stalled initiatives, and divided public energy. That’s when I began to believe that if Bharat has to become a developed nation by 2047, One Nation, One Election is not just desirable, it’s essential.

If India can vote together, India can progress together. Imagine five years of uninterrupted governance in which leaders can devote their full time and attention to development, innovation, and nation-building. Think of the savings of thousands of crores that can be redirected towards youth empowerment, rural connectivity, healthcare, and digital transformation. But the true saving is in focusing on the ability to plan long-term without political interruptions.

Some worry that simultaneous elections may dilute local issues. In truth, it will bring them into sharper focus. Voters will assess performance at every level in one unified moment: national, state, and local. That’s how accountability deepens, not weakens. Moreover, our Election Commission will function more efficiently, reducing logistical pressure and allowing better use of technology and resources. It’s a step towards a cleaner, more transparent democracy. As Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji once said, “The ballot is stronger than the bullet.” And today, I say let’s make that ballot more efficient, more meaningful, and more powerful.

When we speak of One Nation, One Election, many assume it to be a new reform, something borrowed or experimental. But the truth is, this idea was born here, in Bharat. We had this very system once. From 1952 to 1967, India held elections to the Lok Sabha and all State Assemblies simultaneously. It was an era when governance was continuous, development was uninterrupted, and democracy functioned with remarkable balance.

Those were the years when our institutions were still young, yet the coordination between the Centre and the States was seamless. The same spirit of unity and purpose guided every corner of the country. It was a time when political leaders across parties could focus their full attention on nation-building rather than year-round campaigning. The cycle broke only when a few state governments were dissolved ahead of their term in the mid-1960s, creating uneven electoral calendars. What began as an exception soon became a pattern of frequent, staggered elections that stretched administrative resources and divided the country's focus. Now, after more than seven decades of democratic maturity, we have the capacity, technology, and institutional strength to restore that harmony — not as nostalgia, but as a forward-looking reform suited to the India of today.

“A nation that remembers its roots is the one that grows tallest.”

Restoring One Nation, One Election is not about revisiting the past; it is about drawing wisdom from it. It is about ensuring that the world's largest democracy also becomes the most efficient and coherent democracy.

Around the world, several democracies have shown that fixed-term elections can enhance stability and focus. Nations like the United States, South Africa, and Sweden follow predictable, harmonised electoral calendars. Their experiences highlight how consistent governance cycles can improve policy continuity and administrative efficiency. But the Indian story is different and stronger. Bharat is not merely adopting what others do; it is refining and leading the concept on a scale the world has never seen. No other democracy has our diversity,

population, or federal structure, and yet, we are capable of designing a model that balances national unity with state autonomy. When India takes a step, it sets a precedent

As Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has said, **“Reform, Perform, Transform — that is the spirit of New India.”**

One Nation, One Election embodies that spirit, reforming the system, improving governance performance, and transforming how democracy serves every citizen. This is not just a political adjustment; it is a democratic evolution, one that places Bharat at the forefront of global governance innovation. And when India succeeds in making this vision a reality, it will not only strengthen our democracy but also inspire the world.

The youth of Bharat have always been the driving force of change. This generation does not want politics that pauses progress; it wants governance that delivers. And let's not forget what Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam said, “Dream is not what you see when you sleep, dream is something which doesn't let you sleep.”

If our dream is to be Viksit Bharat by 2047, then this reform is a step toward that restless dream, a dream that drives us every day. If we can power start-ups, build digital India, and lead the world in innovation, we can certainly modernise how our democracy functions. Our goal should not just be to win elections but to win the future. And that future demands stability, focus, and commitment.

Let us imagine an India where every vote counts once, but every action counts daily. Let us strive for a system where governments don't pause for elections; they accelerate progress. Because One Nation, One Election is not merely an electoral reform, it is the foundation of a stronger, united, and efficient Bharat.

“India will progress when every hand joins, and every heart beats for one vision — Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat.”

When Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi articulates the vision of One Nation, One Election (ONOE), he is not proposing a mere administrative adjustment; he is laying out a transformative blueprint for a more stable, efficient, and development-oriented democracy. For every ordinary Indian citizen and for thousands of BJP karyakartas working on the ground, ONOE represents a bold reform that aligns with the spirit of “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas.”

One Nation, One Election: Advancing Governance Continuity and Developmental Stability

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The Burden of Perpetual Elections

India, the world's largest democracy, witnesses some form of election almost every few months, Lok Sabha, State Assemblies, Panchayats, or Municipal bodies. While this reflects democratic vibrancy, it also fuels a cycle of administrative disruptions, fiscal strain, and policy paralysis.

Each election triggers the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), temporarily suspending new policy announcements, budget allocations, and welfare disbursements. For a development-focused government, this recurring administrative pause acts as a serious impediment to governance. Frequent elections also mean repetitive mobilisation of security forces, teaching staff, and bureaucrats, pulling them away from their primary duties. The cumulative economic and human resource costs are enormous.

From a citizen's perspective, continuous elections create fatigue and divert attention from governance outcomes to political contests. For the government machinery, it means endless preparation, code enforcement, and resource deployment, at the expense of administrative focus and service delivery.

Governance Continuity: The Core Strength of ONOE

Synchronising elections for the Lok Sabha and all State Assemblies can usher in a seamless governance cycle, one that empowers governments to execute their agendas without interruption for a full five-year term.

This continuity directly translates to faster implementation of flagship missions such as Digital India, Smart Cities, Jal Jeevan Mission, and PM Awas Yojana. With ONOE, there will be fewer administrative standstills, more stable planning horizons, and a predictable policy environment.

For BJP karyakartas and public administrators alike, ONOE ensures that promises made to citizens, whether a pucca house, a road, or a digital classroom, do not remain delayed casualties of electoral codes. It transforms policy intent into delivery certainty. In essence, ONOE shifts the focus from "election management" to "governance management."

Fiscal Prudence and Efficient Resource Utilisation

Conducting frequent elections demands colossal expenditure from both the Government and political parties. According to various studies, cumulative election costs run into tens of thousands of crores, covering logistics, security, polling staff, and infrastructure setup.

Implementing ONOE would yield substantial fiscal savings that could be redirected toward development priorities such as education, healthcare, and rural infrastructure. Public resources, whether financial, human, or logistical, would be redeployed for nation-building rather than repetitive polling.

This reform aligns perfectly with the BJP's governance philosophy of efficiency, transparency, and fiscal discipline. It ensures that every rupee saved strengthens welfare, not electioneering.

Strengthening Federal Coordination and Policy Synchronisation

India's current staggered electoral cycle often results in misaligned policy timelines between the Centre and the States. When some States are in election mode, others are in policy mode, leading to fragmented execution of national programs.

ONOE would synchronise these cycles, fostering policy harmony and cooperative federalism. Aligned electoral calendars would encourage states to work in tandem with the Centre, enabling the smooth rollout of initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, Skill India, and PM Kisan Samman Nidhi. Governments could plan, budget, and execute programs in synchronisation, ensuring citizens experience governance as a continuous process, not as a campaign promise.

This structural stability would further strengthen India's federal compact, replacing political friction with administrative synergy.

Empowering Institutions and Administrative Efficiency

Frequent elections also lead to bureaucratic hesitancy. Officers avoid long-term decisions during MCC periods, delaying key approvals and

developmental works. ONOE eliminates this uncertainty, enabling bureaucracies to operate with confidence, accountability, and a long-term orientation.

The Election Commission of India (ECI), one of the world's most respected democratic institutions, would benefit immensely from ONOE. Conducting simultaneous elections enables the ECI to focus its entire capacity and expertise on a single, meticulously planned national exercise. This also opens space for greater use of digital technologies, e-rolls, and advanced voter data management systems, ensuring transparency, efficiency, and credibility.

Historical Context and Global Precedents

Simultaneous elections are not a novelty in India. Between 1952 and 1967, India successfully conducted concurrent elections for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. The practice was disrupted only after premature dissolutions of certain state governments.

Globally, countries such as South Africa, Sweden, and Indonesia maintain synchronised national and regional elections, demonstrating that such systems strengthen governance while preserving democratic vibrancy. ONOE is thus not a radical departure — it is a restoration of a proven, efficient democratic rhythm that India once followed with great success.

Addressing Concerns and Building Consensus

Critics often express apprehension regarding constitutional amendments and federal representation. However, ONOE, as envisioned by Prime Minister Modi, is not about centralisation but about synchronisation. Every State retains its autonomy; every voter retains their democratic choice. The reform merely aligns electoral schedules, reducing friction without altering representation.

A phased approach, as suggested by the Law Commission and NITI Aayog, can ensure smooth implementation, beginning with synchronising a set of States and progressively expanding nationwide.

Youth, Reform, and the Future of Indian Democracy

For India's youth, ONOE represents a generational leap in democratic modernisation. It creates a stable governance ecosystem where policy focus replaces political volatility, and where long-term developmental goals, infrastructure, innovation, and employment are pursued without interruption.

Young citizens and BJYM karyakartas have a crucial role in leading this intellectual and grassroots movement. ONOE embodies the "New India" ethos of efficiency in governance, stability in politics, and unity in purpose.

It is a reform that will not only redefine our electoral process but also deepen our democratic maturity, making India's democracy more predictable, participatory, and performance-oriented.

A Reform Whose Time Has Come

One Nation, One Election is more than an administrative idea; it is a governance revolution that promises to strengthen democratic efficiency, enhance policy continuity, and deliver fiscal prudence. It aligns perfectly with the larger national vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, in which India stands as a model of political stability, administrative coherence, and developmental integrity.

By synchronising elections, we synchronise our collective national effort. ONOE is a reform rooted not in convenience, but in conviction, a conviction that governance must never be hostage to electoral cycles.

As a proud BJP karyakarta and as an ordinary citizen of this extraordinary nation, I see One Nation, One Election as a vital step toward realising the Prime Minister's dream of a prosperous, stable, and united Bharat, a Bharat that leads not only in democracy, but in democratic efficiency.

Governance Without Breaks: How ONOE Restores Continuity and Efficiency

Nandan Mallya

District President, BJYM
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India, the world's largest democracy, is a land where elections are celebrated as festivals of public participation. Yet, frequent elections across different states and levels of governance have also created certain structural challenges. The idea of "One Nation, One Election" (ONOE), envisioned by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, offers a forward-looking solution that can transform India's governance model, ensuring stability, policy continuity, and development without disruption.

The Challenge of Frequent Elections

India witnesses an election almost every few months, Lok Sabha, State Assemblies, Panchayats, and Urban Local Bodies, each bringing the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) into effect. While the MCC upholds the sanctity of free and fair elections, it temporarily halts new policy announcements, project inaugurations, and disbursements of funds. In a country as vast and diverse as ours, this recurring cycle often leads to policy paralysis, delaying welfare schemes and infrastructure projects. The cumulative effect is a slowdown in governance momentum and a strain on both human and financial resources.



Governance without Interruption

Synchronising elections under ONOE would drastically reduce the number of MCC-imposed governance breaks. A unified election schedule ensures that governments at both the Centre and the States have an undisturbed tenure to focus on performance, not on perpetual electioneering. Ministers, bureaucrats, and local administrators can dedicate their time and energy toward executing developmental programs, rather than diverting attention to repeated election preparations.

Continuity in governance would also enable better planning and execution of flagship schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Ayushman Bharat, Jal Jeevan Mission, and PM Gati Shakti. Currently, projects often face stoppages during election periods in one state or another, leading to delays, cost overruns, and logistical complications. ONOE would ensure a seamless pace of execution.

Policy Continuity and Long-Term Vision

Elections held at staggered intervals encourage short-term populism, in which governments focus on immediate gains rather than sustained reform. ONOE, by providing five years of uninterrupted governance, can restore focus on long-term policy vision. For instance, major national initiatives such as Digital India and Atmanirbhar Bharat require sustained collaboration between the Centre and States. With synchronised elections, governments at all levels would start and conclude their terms together, fostering policy alignment and cooperative federalism.

This means states and the Centre can jointly plan and implement multi-year strategies in agriculture, education, renewable energy, and urban development without the constant pressure of upcoming polls. The resulting synergy would strengthen India's federal fabric while enhancing policy predictability and investor confidence.

Cooperative Federalism in Action

When all governments are elected around the same time, political cycles will align, reducing friction and improving cooperation between the Union and State Governments. It also creates an opportunity for

collective accountability, where both levels of government can be evaluated simultaneously by the people. This synchronisation would encourage political consensus, reduce policy reversals, and promote “Team India” governance, a concept repeatedly emphasised by Prime Minister Modi.

Moreover, financial prudence is another dimension. Conducting multiple elections consumes enormous public funds and administrative effort. The Election Commission, security forces, and government machinery repeatedly mobilised, diverting attention from day-to-day governance. ONOE would consolidate these efforts to ensure optimal resource utilisation.

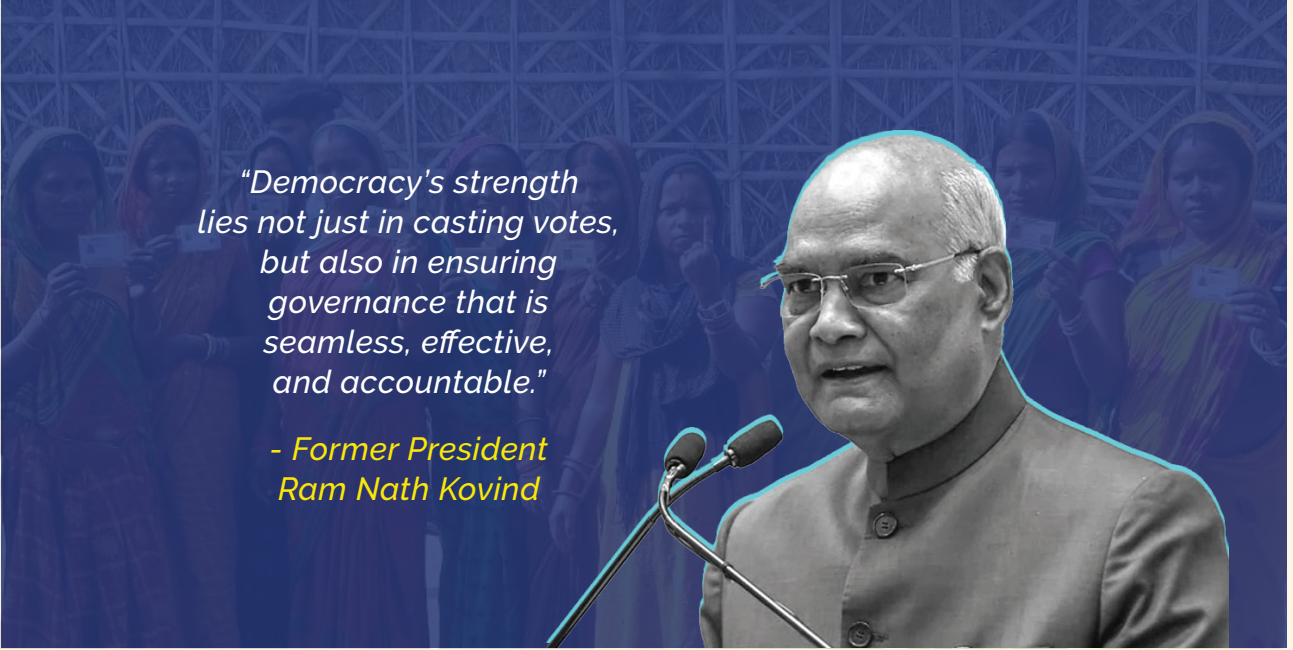
Uninterrupted Delivery of Welfare and Development

Welfare programs are the backbone of India's inclusive growth model. Schemes like PM Kisan Samman Nidhi or Ujjwala Yojana depend on timely implementation and coordination. Repeated MCC restrictions often delay benefits to lakhs of beneficiaries. Under ONOE, citizens would enjoy consistent and uninterrupted delivery of welfare benefits, ensuring that no deserving family is left waiting due to an administrative pause.

Similarly, infrastructure projects, such as highways, railways, ports, airports, and digital networks, require continuous execution over several years. Unified elections will ensure that India's developmental engine runs smoothly, free from periodic halts.

“One Nation, One Election” is not merely an administrative reform it is a revolution in democratic efficiency. It empowers governments to govern effectively, citizens to experience the full impact of welfare schemes, and institutions to operate with clarity and continuity.

As India marches toward Viksit Bharat@2047, policy continuity and governance stability will be the twin pillars of progress. ONOE promises to make governance more efficient, more accountable, and more development-oriented, truly embodying the spirit of “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas.”



"Democracy's strength lies not just in casting votes, but also in ensuring governance that is seamless, effective, and accountable."

*- Former President
Ram Nath Kovind*

A Stronger Federal India Through Stability and Simultaneous Elections

Ruchir Kamboj
Columnist

India's democracy, the largest and most diverse in the world, faces a unique challenge: frequent, staggered elections scattered throughout the year. While elections are essential to democratic vitality, this cycle disrupts governance repeatedly and strains public resources. The government's One Nation, One Election (ONOE) initiative aims to synchronise elections for the Lok Sabha and all state assemblies, reducing these disruptions and allowing governments to focus fully on development.

Between 1951 and 1967, India successfully held synchronised elections. However, political instability in the late 1960s caused elections to become staggered, spreading them across the calendar. This fragmentation repeatedly invokes the Model Code of Conduct, pausing government projects and delaying critical infrastructure, leading to policy paralysis. A study by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) found that about 25% of infrastructure projects face election-related delays. Building on this finding, ONOE seeks to confine these interruptions to a single electoral period every five years, enabling consistent delivery of services in health, education, and welfare during the rest of the term.

The Kovind Committee estimated that synchronising elections could boost India's GDP growth by as much as 1.5 percentage points beyond what we see today. In concrete terms, that could mean savings of ₹4.5 lakh crore over a parliamentary cycle. This isn't just money, it's an opportunity to reinvest in schools, roads, hospitals, and rural development. Imagine the difference this could make to everyday lives across the country.

Looking globally to reinforce these benefits, many federal democracies use synchronised elections to enhance efficiency. Mexico's six-year combined elections have cut costs by nearly 30%. South Africa's concurrent national and provincial polls maintain a steady voter turnout of about 65% while saving logistics costs. In the US, states aligning local elections with federal ones see turnout gains of 10-15 percentage points and roughly 20% lower administrative expenses. These examples vividly illustrate the real advantages ONOE could bring to India, both in governance efficacy and democratic participation.

Some critics worry that ONOE might weaken India's federal structure. However, constitutional experts note that the reform carefully balances synchronization with preserving state autonomy. Amendments under ONOE retain legislative independence, allowing states to robustly address local issues. International experience, such as in Germany, confirms that synchronised elections can strengthen, rather than diminish, federal democracy by enhancing political stability and voter clarity without compromising the autonomy of regional governments.

Supporting this smooth electoral process, technological advances further support ONOE's potential success. The One Nation, One Identity scheme links biometric voter IDs to digital databases, reducing errors and fraud. Combined with India's Digital India initiatives, this technology ensures fair and transparent elections for over 900 million voters. As held by the Supreme Court in *Union of India vs Association for Democratic Reforms* (2002), "The purity of elections is the lifeblood of democratic governance." This underscores the essential need for election reforms

that ensure credible and trustworthy electoral processes, objectives central to the ONOE initiative.

Beyond domestic governance, ONOE also bolsters India's global standing. Political stability reassures international investors and diplomatic partners. For instance, Germany's synchronised elections coincided with attracting over €1.5 trillion in foreign direct investment in 2024, signalling institutional maturity. Likewise, India's synchronised polls would project stable governance, enhancing confidence for trade, defence cooperation, and climate commitments.

Another critical dimension is national security. Consolidating elections allows a consistent deployment of paramilitary forces along India's 15,000-kilometre land borders rather than cyclic redeployments for frequent elections. This continuous focus is crucial in managing external threats and safeguarding the nation.

Recognising India's vast socio-political diversity, the government's phased, consultative approach to ONOE encourages dialogue, consensus-building, and constitutional safeguards to ensure smooth, inclusive implementation.

ONOE is more than an administrative reform; it is a democratic evolution. By reducing voter fatigue, strengthening federalism, and ensuring uninterrupted governance, it brings India closer to the ideal where choice and stability coexist. The initiative honours India's democratic traditions while modernising its governance for the challenges of a rapidly changing world. It promises streamlined elections, stronger federalism, enhanced voter engagement, and a stable political environment that propels India's progress on the global stage.

Why India's Young Voters Must Lead the ONOE Movement

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India is one of the largest democracies in the world, and for such a large democracy, a vibrant and robust electoral system is mandatory. While in several democracies, electoral laws are regularly updated to meet societal needs, in India, there has been a severe lack of electoral reform, which has dramatically affected the efficiency of democratic governance.

Earlier, in post-independent India, elections were conducted simultaneously for both the Central and State legislatures. The elections began during the period 1951-52, and since then until the year 1967, the same continued. However, after 1967, there were several dissolutions of the State assemblies and thereafter the Lok Sabha. Since then, elections have been held separately for the State and Central legislatures every five years, and this has continued.

India, with its vast and vibrant youth population, stands at a critical juncture in its democratic journey. The country's future is full of possibilities, and it is imperative that its young citizens play an active role in shaping its governance. One potential innovation that could revolutionise India's governance is the concept of "One Nation, One Election" (ONOE). This system, which involves holding simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and state assemblies, has been gaining traction in recent years. In this essay, we will explore why India's youth should champion ONOE as a governance innovation, how it can promote efficiency, unity, and stability, and the role the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) can play in leading intellectual and grassroots advocacy for ONOE.

Why India's Youth Should Champion ONOE?

India's youth, comprising over 65% of the population, is the country's most valuable resource. They are energetic, idealistic, and eager to bring about change. However, they had long been disillusioned with the prevailing state of politics often marked by corruption, inefficiency and divisiveness. Since 2014, the BJP's emergence has shifted the political landscape, aiming to restore public trust and deliver effective governance. ONOE offers a unique opportunity for young Indians to reshape the country's governance and politics.

By holding simultaneous elections, ONOE can help reduce the massive costs of frequent elections, freeing up funds for more productive sectors like education, healthcare, and infrastructure. This can benefit youth by providing better opportunities for education, employment, and personal growth. Moreover, ONOE can help reduce the impact of money, power and muscle power in elections, creating a more level playing field for young candidates and parties that represent their interests.

ONOE as a Generational Reform for Efficiency, Unity, and Stability

ONOE has the potential to bring about significant improvements in governance by promoting efficiency, unity, and stability. By holding simultaneous elections, the government can ensure that its policies and programs are implemented without interruptions, leading to more effective governance. This can help address pressing issues like unemployment, poverty, and corruption, which are critical concerns for young Indians.

Moreover, ONOE can help promote national unity by reducing the emphasis on regional and parochial issues that often dominate election campaigns. By voting on a single day, citizens can focus on national issues and priorities, rather than getting bogged down in local considerations. This can help foster a sense of national identity and citizenship, which is essential for India's growth and development.

The Role of BJYM in Leading Intellectual and

Grassroots Advocacy for ONOE

The BJYM, as the youth wing of the Bharatiya Janata Party, plays a critical role in promoting ONOE and mobilising support for this reform. With its vast network of young activists across the country, the BJYM can engage in intellectual and grassroots advocacy to raise awareness about the benefits of ONOE.

Some potential strategies that the BJYM can adopt include:

- **Organising Seminars and Workshops:** The BJYM can organise seminars, workshops, and conferences to discuss the benefits and challenges of ONOE, bringing together experts, policymakers, and young people to share their perspectives.
- **Social Media Campaigns:** The BJYM can leverage social media platforms to raise awareness about ONOE, using hashtags, infographics, and short videos to reach a wider audience.
- **Grassroots Mobilization:** The BJYM can mobilize young people at the grassroots level, organizing rallies, protests, and signature campaigns to build public support for ONOE.
- **Research and Policy Analysis:** The BJYM can conduct research and analysis on the impact of ONOE, providing policymakers with data-driven insights to inform their decisions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, ONOE has the potential to revolutionise India's governance and politics, promoting efficiency, unity, and stability. India's youth, with their energy, idealism, and desire for change, are perfectly positioned to champion this reform. The BJYM, with its vast network of young activists, can play a critical role in promoting ONOE and mobilising support for this reform. By working together, we can create a brighter future for India, one that is characterised by good governance, national unity, and prosperity for all.

As Swami Vivekananda once said, "We are the makers of our own destiny, and the responsibility lies with us." Let us seize this opportunity to shape India's future and create a better tomorrow for ourselves and future generations.

ONOE Made Simple: What Today's Youth Should Know

Varshini Venkatesh

Chartered Accountant with Specialisation in Forensic Accounting

As the youth of today's Bharat, we may find the concept of One Nation, One Election (ONOE) unfamiliar. However, this is not the case. Following the adoption of the Constitution, elections for both the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies were held simultaneously from 1951 to 1967. The first general elections took place in 1951-52, followed by synchronised elections in 1957, 1962, and 1967. This system of concurrent elections was disrupted in 1968 and 1969 when several State Legislative Assemblies were dissolved prematurely.

Fast forward to the present, and we see the fragmented election system that has evolved over time. The High-Level Committee on Simultaneous Elections, chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind, conducted extensive deliberations, gathered responses from the public, political parties, and experts, and assessed public sentiment, economic impact, and the legal and constitutional feasibility of ONOE. The committee proposed a single electoral roll and voter ID card (EPIC), recommending a phased implementation of simultaneous elections in two stages.

Critics argue that ONOE threatens federalism, democracy, and the unity in diversity of India, claiming it could lead to a standstill on regional issues and amounts to "penny-wise, pound-foolish." However, I question whether these concerns are genuine or merely reflect insecurity. The criticisms seem baseless and unfounded. Let's examine them one by one.

1. Frequent Elections Lead to Massive Expenditures by Government and Other Stakeholders

Critics claim there will be no significant savings for the exchequer from implementing ONOE, suggesting it will yield only minor savings.

Reality: According to a report by NITI Aayog, the cost of conducting the 2014 Lok Sabha elections was approximately INR 3,870 crores. Reports indicate that the government spent around INR 300 crores on the 2015 Bihar Assembly elections and INR 240 crores on the 2017 Gujarat Assembly elections. In contrast, the Election Commission of India estimates that conducting simultaneous elections for both the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies would cost around INR 4,500 crores. These figures suggest that simultaneous elections could significantly reduce election expenditures.



Regarding government expenditure, the following framework applies for cost-sharing between the Union Government and the States:

- a) The Government of India bears the entire cost of conducting Lok Sabha elections, while State Governments bear the costs for State Legislative Assembly elections when held independently.
- b) If Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assembly elections are conducted concurrently, the expenditure is shared between the Government of India and the respective State Governments. The State Governments cover the initial costs, and upon submission of an audited report, the Government of India reimburses its share.
- c) Expenditures related to common concerns for both the Union and State Governments, such as election establishment and electoral roll preparation, are shared equally, regardless of whether they pertain to Lok Sabha or State Legislative elections. Even for Lok Sabha elections, costs related to law-and-order maintenance are the responsibility of the respective State Governments.

This efficiency in election expenditures could enhance fiscal space for both the State and Union Governments, enabling greater investment in national development priorities without compromising the country's democratic structure.

2. Impact on Governance Due to the Model Code of Conduct

Critics claim that governance suffers not because of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), which only restricts the announcement of policy decisions during elections, but due to poor political management and excessive spending on political rallies by the ruling party.

Reality: The MCC is a set of guidelines that political parties and candidates must adhere to during elections. It applies nationwide during Lok Sabha elections and statewide during Legislative Assembly elections. As a result, except for routine administrative activities, most new development programs, welfare schemes, and capital projects are suspended during the MCC. The Parliamentary

Standing Committee's 79th report articulates the problems caused by the MCC, stating that it halts development programs and activities of both the Union and State Governments in poll-bound areas, leading to policy paralysis and governance deficits.

Assuming the average duration of the MCC is 2 months during State Assembly elections, NITI Aayog's analysis suggests it could be applicable for about 4 months or more each year. This means that development projects and programs from both State and Union Governments may be adversely affected for about one-third of the available implementation time. Such a situation is undesirable and warrants serious consideration and corrective measures.

3. Operational Feasibility of Implementing ONOE

Critics argue that the practical challenges of implementing ONOE are significant, citing logistical difficulties.

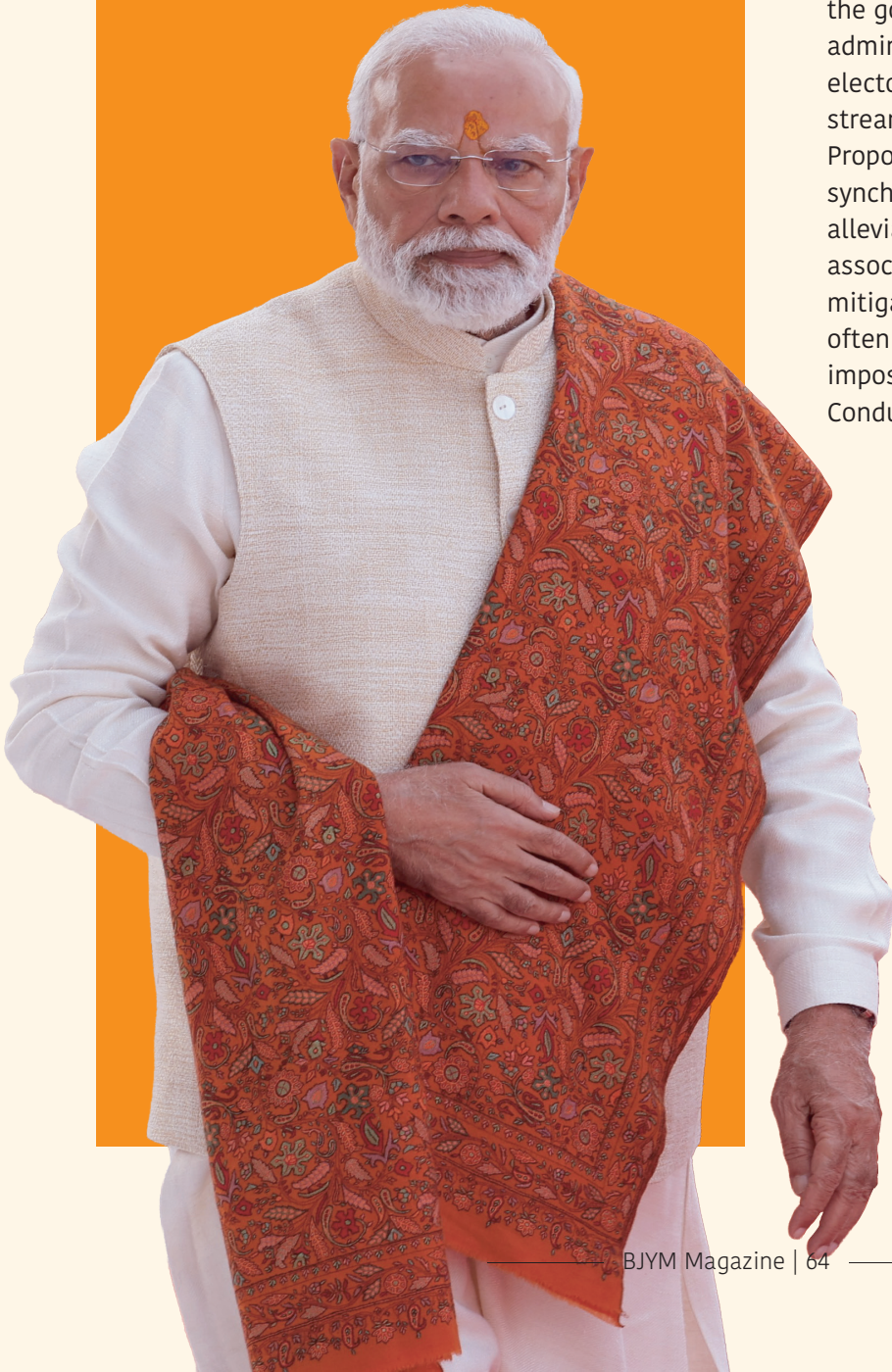
Reality: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has confirmed that simultaneous elections are operationally feasible. In an interview, Chief Election Commissioner Nasim Zaidi stated, "As a Commission, this is our recommendation to the Law Ministry: elections in the country can be held together for both State Assemblies and the Lok Sabha. To conduct these elections simultaneously, we would need logistical arrangements, such as procuring additional electronic voting machines, hiring temporary workers, and staggering the election dates. We support the proposal for simultaneous elections, provided there is consensus among political parties and necessary constitutional amendments."

The arguments presented indicate that while there may be increased pressure on resources to implement simultaneous elections, it is indeed feasible from an operational standpoint.

One Nation, One Election is undoubtedly a boon for Bharat. It will eliminate several bottlenecks and cumbersome processes. As always, our Prime Minister's vision for implementing ONOE will resonate with the youth and prove successful, much as the transition before and after the implementation of GST did.

One Nation, One Election: A Step Towards Better Governance

Shubham Yaduvanshi
Advocate, Delhi High Court



The idea of "One Nation, One Election" (ONOE) is a prominent concept in India's electoral reform discourse, proposing a transformative shift to hold simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. This proposition seeks to synchronise all major electoral cycles at the national, state, and, potentially, local government levels by aligning election dates, ideally within the same five-year cycle. The concept's resurgence is driven by the goal of enhancing administrative efficiency, reducing electoral expenditure, and ensuring streamlined governance. Proponents argue that synchronised elections would alleviate the financial burden associated with recurring polls and mitigate the policy stagnation often caused by the frequent imposition of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

The History of Simultaneous Elections in India

The notion of simultaneous elections is not something that has emerged out of the blue but instead is rooted in the early practices of the nation's democratic structure post-independence. India successfully conducted simultaneous elections during its first four General Elections: 1951–1952, 1957, 1962, and 1967. This system was the prevailing norm until it was disrupted in the mid-1960s. Key events that dismantled the uniform electoral calendar included the frequent dissolution of legislative bodies and the arbitrary imposition of emergencies in states by the Union Government, which misused Articles 356 and 352, further leading to an inconsistent electoral framework. For example, the term of the Fifth Lok Sabha was extended until 1977 due to the declaration of emergency under Article 352. These disruptions resulted in staggered electoral timelines across the country.

Resurgence of the Idea

The concept resurfaced in policy discussions in recent decades. The Election Commission of India (ECI) first recommended a return to concurrent voting in its Annual Report published in April 1984. The idea was later proposed by Shri L.K. Advani in 1995 and formally proposed by the Law Commission of India (LCI) in its 170th Report in 1999. The current Modi-led NDA government has shown keen interest in conducting simultaneous polls, listing them in the 2014 Lok Sabha election manifesto. This interest was reaffirmed by the NITI Aayog's 2017 discussion paper and the subsequent establishment of a High-Level Committee. Most recently, the Union Cabinet accepted the recommendations of the High-Level Committee on Simultaneous Elections, chaired by former President Shri Ram Nath Kovind, on September 18, 2024. This committee functioned for 191 days and submitted its extensive report on March 14, 2024. The Committee recommended implementing simultaneous elections in two phases: the first phase covering the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies, and the second phase extending synchronisation to local bodies (Panchayats and Municipalities) within 100 days of the general elections.

The Current Need for One Nation, One Election

The advocacy for reviving ONOE stems from the critical challenges posed by the fragmented, staggered electoral system currently prevalent in India, where at least one part of the country is electorally active almost every six months. Frequent elections place a substantial strain on the government's exchequer. Proponents argue that consolidating election schedules would significantly reduce costs for logistics, the deployment of security forces, and polling personnel, allowing funds to be reallocated to crucial developmental sectors. Frequent elections, particularly in a multi-tiered democracy, divert governmental focus from long-term policymaking to short-term electoral gains. The imposition of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) during election periods restricts policy announcements and development projects, exacerbating governance delays. Data indicates that the MCC was in force for a cumulative 676 days between 2019 and 2024, meaning the nation spends roughly 113 days annually under these restrictions, which can hinder infrastructure development and welfare schemes. Synchronising polls would reduce the frequency of MCC enforcement, ensuring greater policy continuity and stability.

Crucial manpower, including teachers from state-run schools, is often drawn away for prolonged periods, compromising their primary duties. A synchronised election would optimise the mobilisation of manpower and security forces, reducing the repetitive strain on government resources. The continuous cycle of elections induces "voters' fatigue". Advocates suggest that reducing the number of electoral cycles would encourage citizens to focus on the broader implications of governance, potentially leading to increased voter turnout and more informed decision-making, thereby enhancing democratic legitimacy. The current push for ONOE is also aligned with the vision of national integration and modernisation.

Will not Affect the Federal Structure

Proponents and experts in the electoral reform debate argue that ONOE is not anti-federalist and can be implemented through mechanisms and



safeguards designed to preserve the federal ethos, democratic diversity, and state autonomy. Under this model, state elections would be grouped into clusters based on geographical or thematic similarities and synchronised regionally over the course of a year, rather than mandating a nationwide single-day election. This clustering approach maintains the distinctiveness of regional issues and identities. By having intervals between clustered elections, this phased approach provides adequate time to address local priorities and logistical challenges, aligning with India's federal structure.

The adoption of a constructive vote of no confidence is recommended, drawing on international practices such as the German model. This mechanism ensures that an incumbent government can only be overthrown if the opposition simultaneously names an alternative leader who secures the confidence of the house. This measure ensures the continuity of government without disruption and prevents the frequent collapse of legislative bodies, which would otherwise necessitate central intervention or unscheduled polls. Achieving ONOE demands political and public consensus. Engaging regional parties, state governments, constitutional experts, and civil society organisations in structured

consultations is deemed essential to mitigate apprehensions about centralisation and ensure inclusiveness. This consultative process seeks to preserve India's democratic ethos by acknowledging its complex socio-political architecture.

In essence, the argument that ONOE is not against federalism rests on the idea that India can maintain its decentralised structure and political diversity by implementing the reform in a phased, gradual manner, backed by strong institutional safeguards such as the CVNC and existing judicial oversight. That actively prevents the central government from arbitrarily manipulating state terms or undermining regional autonomy. Thus, ONOE should not be viewed as a binary contest between centralisation and federalism but rather as an opportunity to modernise India's electoral processes in a manner that balances efficiency with inclusivity. The success of this reform ultimately rests on achieving a broad-based political consensus, respecting constitutional federalism, and instituting safeguards that protect regional voices. If implemented with caution, transparency, and collaboration, ONOE has the potential to strengthen India's democracy by enhancing governance stability while honouring the pluralistic spirit of the federal system.



Reforming Bharat's Electoral Rhythm: The ONOE Imperative

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An independent Bharat born at midnight on 14-15 August 1947 amid various challenges of national unity, partition trauma, communalism, regionalism, poverty and many more. One of the biggest challenges in the nation-building process is to establish democracy. Until then, democracy only existed in prosperous and elite countries, mainly in Europe and North America, with limited voting rights excluding women. Bharat's experiment with the Universal Adult Franchise is bold and risky. In 1951-52, Bharat held its first general elections, in which every adult citizen had the right to vote regardless of caste, religion, gender, or education. This was the first test of democracy with massive challenges like widespread poverty, illiteracy and poor infrastructure. Organiser, a magazine critic that Jawaharlal Nehru would live to confess the failure of Universal Adult Franchise in India. The Bharat experiment had proved the critics wrong. The Times (London) and The New York Times called the election "a miracle of organisation" and "a bold experiment that succeeded against all odds".

Since independence, over 400 Lok Sabha elections and state Legislative Assembly elections have showcased our commitment to Bharat's democratic framework. But the question is: should conducting elections be the only criterion for testing democracy in the 21st century? In this context, the procedure should be as fair as the outcome. The cause and effect of election procedures and outcomes must be transparent and accountable, maintaining an equilibrium essential to the quality of democracy that Bharat can uphold. However, the fragmented and frequent nature of elections has highlighted the need for a more efficient electoral system. One Nation One Election is not a new idea. Bharat followed it simultaneously from 1951 to 1967. After that, due to political disruptions such as the declaration of emergency (Article 352), imposition of President's rule (Article 356) in certain states, premature dissolution, and term extension, these challenges have become recurring and disrupted the cycle of simultaneous elections.

Resurgence of One Nation One Election

The resurgence of “One Nation, One Election” is another phase of experimentation with the Bharat democracy. The High-level committee on Simultaneous election, chaired by Shri Ramnath Kovind, recommends synchronising Lok Sabha, State Assembly, and local body elections in India to minimise the frequency of elections and their associated costs, streamline governance, and reduce disruption caused by election-related activities. They propose 15 constitutional amendments through 2 bills:

- 1st bill establishes the transition process, empowering parliament to legislate on Simultaneous elections. The amendment addresses the premature dissolution of the Houses and includes Union territories.
- 2nd Bill focuses on local body elections, requiring state ratification.

Advantages and Challenges

Advantages include cost savings, consistent voting turnout, efficient use of resources by reducing the burden on manpower, reduced electoral and logistical pressure, stable governance by focusing on the long-term implementation of welfare schemes and policies, and avoiding frequent disruptions to governance due to the Model Code of Conduct. This makes the governance model more organised, efficient, and better optimised in terms of resources and decision-making.

But One Nation One Election has its own lacunas. The biggest challenge is achieving political consensus. Some suggest that, under one-nation, one-election systems, the top party is more likely to win. Another challenge is that national issues might overshadow local ones, and eventually the national parties will benefit, while the regional parties might struggle. Federal concern, delays, administrative complexities and potential errors could arise due to the sheer scale of the simultaneous election. All these concerns should be addressed to rally the public behind the idea and build wider political consensus.

Global context and way forward

Countries like Belgium, Sweden, Brazil, the USA (to some extent), and South Africa hold simultaneous elections. It is a bit difficult to say that the Western model of simultaneous elections would work in Bharat. In our country, conducting elections is a mammoth exercise due to its population and size, and because it uses a first-past-the-post system, unlike smaller countries like Belgium, which use Proportional Representation. Bharat must have its own indigenous model of simultaneous elections, suitable to the country's size and population, that addresses structural inefficiencies and reflects people's aspirations and trust in the democratic process.

The government should adopt a bottom-up approach to better implement ONOE, alongside political deliberation with primary think tanks.

BJYM, as the world's largest youth political organisation, can play an essential role in turning the ONOE vision into a mass movement for democratic modernisation, by educating Bharat youth, the architects of the 21st-century governance model. This can be done by organising policy dialogues, campus debates, conducting local workshops, and running digital campaigns. BJYM acts as a bridge between policymakers and the youth, ensuring the reform remains both inclusive and pragmatic.

Thus, the 21st Century of Bharat's experiment with One Nation and One Election is rooted in electoral reforms that make the process and outcomes fairer and more inclusive through a technocrat-youth-centric model.

BHARATIYA JANATA YUVA MORCHA

