

## **System of elections in India**

In India Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections are held regularly after every 5 years. After 5 years the term of all the elected representatives comes to an end. Elections are held in all constituencies at the same time either on the same day or within a few days. This is known as general election. Sometimes election is held only for one constituency to fill the vacancy caused by death or resignation of a member. This is called by-election.

## **Electoral constituencies**

An area based system of Representation is followed where the country is divided into different areas for the purpose of elections in India. These are called electoral constituencies. Every voter who live in that area votes for one representative.

For Lok Sabha election India is divided into 543 constituencies. The representative elected from each constituency is called member of parliament or an MP. For Vidhan Sabha election each state is divided into specific number of assembly constituencies and the elected representative of each assembly constituency is called the member of legislative assembly or an MLA. Each parliamentary constituency has several assembly constituencies within it. The same principle applies for Panchayat and Municipal elections. Each village or town is divided into different wards that are like constituencies

## Reserved constituencies

To ensure representation of every section of society our constitution makers made provision of reserved constituencies.

## Reservation for SC and ST

Some constituencies are reserved for people who belong to the the schedule castes and schedule tribes. In a Schedule Caste reserved constituencies only someone who belongs to the the Schedule Castes can stand for election. Similarly only those belonging to the scheduled tribes can contest an election from a constituency reserved for ST.

## Reservation in Lok Sabha, district ar local level

A few seats in Lok Sabha are reserved for Schedule Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This number is in proportion to their share in the total population. In the year 2012, 84 seats were reserved for SCs and 47 seats are reserved for STs in the Lok Sabha. This the reserved seats for SC and ST do not take away the legitimate share of any other social group. This system of reservation was extended leter to other weaker section at the district and local level. In many states seats in rural and urban local bodies are now reserved for other backward classes OBC as well. However, the proportion of seats reserved varies from state to state. Similarly, one-third of the seats are reserved in rural and urban local bodies for women candidates.