

## Chapter 3: Electoral Politics

### Intext Questions:

**Question 1:** Do most leaders fulfil their election promises?

**Answer:**

During elections most of the leaders make many big promises to the people (voters) to win their support and vote. However, after the elections, the political leaders forget their promises and most of them do not fulfil their election promises.

**Question 2:** Jagdeep and Navpreet read this story and drew the following conclusions. Can you say which of these are right or wrong (or if the information given in the story is inadequate to call them right or wrong):

The time is after midnight. An expectant crowd sitting for the past five hours in a chowk of the town is waiting for its leader to come. The organisers assure and reassure the crowd that he would be here any moment. The crowd stands up whenever a passing vehicle comes that way. It arouses hopes that he has come.

The leader is Mr. Devi Lal, chief of the Haryana Sangharsh Samiti, who was to address a meeting in Karnal on Thursday night. The 76-year-old leader, is a very busy man these days. His day starts at 8 a.m. and ends after 11 p.m. ... he had already addressed nine election meetings since morning... been constantly addressing public meetings for the past 23 months and preparing for this election.

This newspaper report is about the State assembly election in Haryana in 1987. The State had been ruled by a Congress party led government since 1982. Chaudhary Devi Lal, then an opposition leader, led a movement called 'Nyaya Yudh' (Struggle for Justice) and formed a new party, Lok Dal. His party joined other opposition parties to form a front against the Congress in the elections. In the election campaign, Devi Lal said that if his party won the elections, his

government would waive the loans of farmers and small businessmen. He promised that this would be the first action of his government.

The people were unhappy with the existing government. They were also attracted by Devi Lal's promise. So, when elections were held, they voted overwhelmingly in favour of Lok Dal and its allies. Lok Dal and its partners won 76 out of 90 seats in the State Assembly. Lok Dal alone won 60 seats and thus had a clear majority in the Assembly. The Congress could win only 5 seats.

Once the election results were announced, the sitting Chief Minister resigned. The newly elected Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) of Lok Dal chose Devi Lal as their leader. The Governor invited Devi Lal to be the new Chief Minister. Three days after the election results were declared, he became the Chief Minister. As soon as he became the Chief Minister, his Government issued a Government Order waiving the outstanding loans of small farmers, agricultural labourers and small businessmen. His party ruled the State for four years. The next elections were held in 1991. But this time his party did not win popular support. The Congress won the election and formed the government.

- Elections can lead to changes in the policy of the government
- The Governor invited Devi Lal to become the Chief Minister because he was impressed with his speeches.
- People are unhappy with every ruling party and vote against it in the next election.
- The party that wins the election forms the government.
- This election led to a lot of economic development in Haryana.
- The Congress Chief Minister need not have resigned after his party lost elections.

**Answer:**

- (i) Right
- (ii) Wrong
- (iii) Wrong
- (iv) Right
- (v) Inadequate information
- (vi) wrong

**Question 3:** Do you know when the last Assembly election was held in your state? Which other elections have taken place in your locality in the last five years? Write down the level of elections (National, Assembly, Panchayat, etc.), when were they held and the name and designation (MP, MLA, etc.) of the persons who got elected from your area.

**Answer:**

My state is Andhra Pradesh. Recent assembly elections were held in April 2019, where the YSR Congress Party chief Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy, the incumbent Telugu Desam Party's Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Jana Sena Party chief Pawan Kalyan with his alliance between Communist Party of India, Communist Party of India (Marxist), Bahujan Samaj Party were the main contenders. Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy's YSR Congress Party won the polls by winning 151 seats out of 175 seats, securing almost 86% of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly.

General Elections were held in Andhra Pradesh on 11 April 2019 to elect representatives for 17th Lok Sabha. Andhra Pradesh has 25 Lok Sabha constituencies all of which voted in the first phase on the General election 2019 on April 11. The state witnessed an intense battle between the N Chandrababu Naidu led-Telugu Desam Party (TDP), YSR Congress Party of YS Jaganmohan Reddy, actor Pawan Kalyan's Jana Sena Party, Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). YSRCP had won 22 seats, and TDP 3.

Elections to local bodies in Andhra Pradesh took place in four phases in rural areas (panchayats) in February 2021 viz. 9 February 2021, 13 February 2021, 17 February 2021 and 21 February 2021 covering 13 districts. In the first phase, 29,732 polling stations were set up.

Urban local body elections to 12 municipal corporations and 75 municipal and town councils held in April.

Persons elected from my area.

M.P. - Pocha Brahmananda Reddy from Nandyal Constituency.

M.L.A.- Gangula Brijendra Reddy from Allagadda.

Mayor- B.Y. Ramaiah.

Z.P.T.C. Chairman - Rajasekhar

M.P.T.C. Chairman - Y. Raju

Sarpanch - M. Gopala Krishna.

**Question 4:** We have seen why democracies need to have elections. But why do rulers in non-democratic countries need to hold elections?

**Answer:**

Rulers in non-democratic countries need to hold elections because they want to show the world that they are not unpopular and they have the support of the people of the country, and so that their image improves in the eyes of the world. Secondly, they want to show that their government and position has been achieved legally and according to the constitutional provisions.

**Question 5:** Ah! So, elections are like exams where politicians and parties know if they have passed or failed. But who are the examiners?

**Answer:**

The examiners in this case are the voters, who give them marks in the form of votes.

**Question 6:** Read these two cartoons carefully. Write the message of each of them in your own words. Have a discussion in class on which of the two is closer to the reality in your own locality. Draw a cartoon to depict what elections do to the relationship between voters and political leaders?



**Answer:**

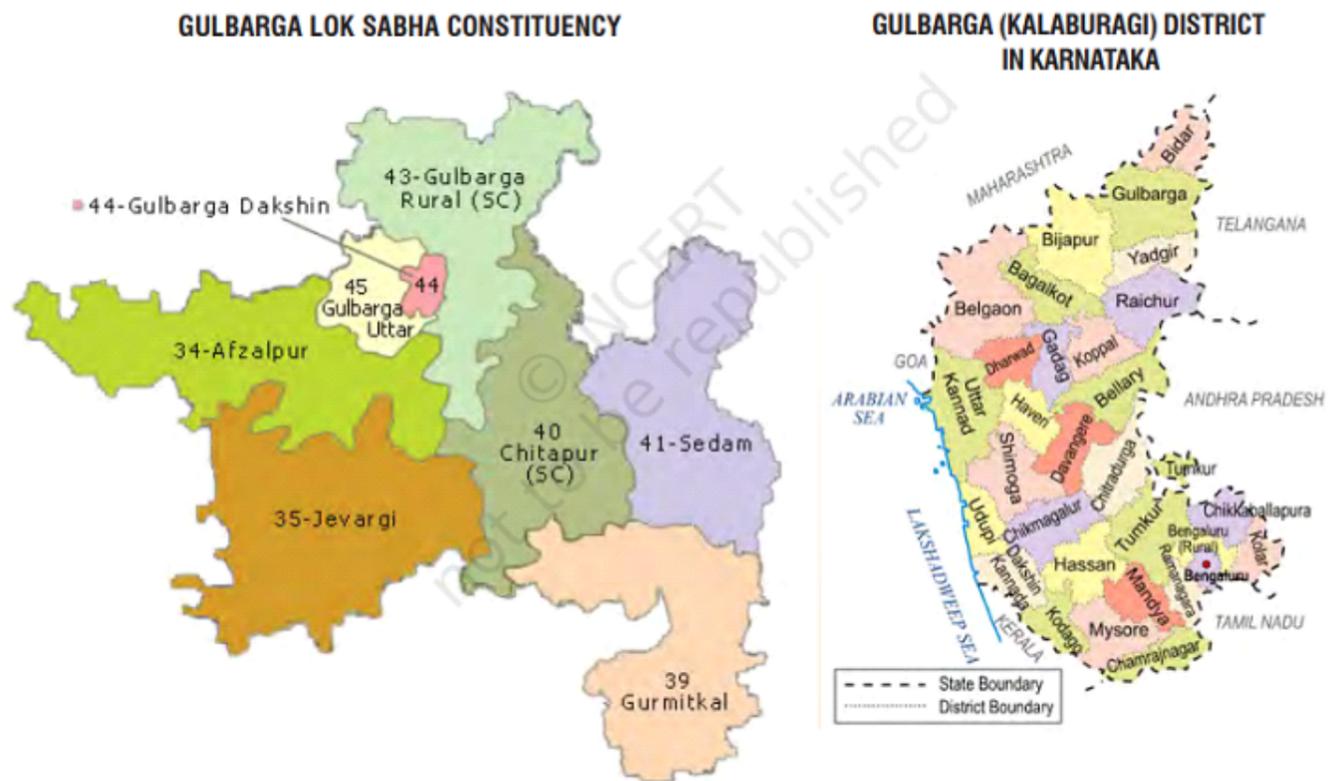
(a) The cartoon shown on the left given the message

1. That the knowledge, ideas, planning and promises of a candidate are useless if he/she does not have enough votes to win. Voting power is only with the common man, who is the decisive factor for an election.

2. The cartoon shown on the right gives the message that during an election campaign a candidate makes plenty of promises but he is unable to fulfil all of them. As a result electorates chase him to fulfil his promises.

Second one is closer to the scenario in our locality.

**Question 7:** Why is the boundary of the Gulbarga Lok Sabha constituency not the same as the district boundary of Gulbarga (Kalaburagi)? Draw a similar map for your own Lok Sabha constituency?



**Answer:**

The boundary of the Gulbarga Lok Sabha Constituency is not the same as the district boundary of Gulbarga because

- A. The entire state of Karnataka is divided into equal Lok Sabha constituencies on the basis of population.
  - B. The total area of Gulbarga district is 16,224 sq km and it is the largest district in Karnataka. The population of Gulbarga district is 25,64,892 (census 2011). The whole Gulbarga district's population is more than that allotted for each Lok Sabha constituency in the state. That is why both the boundaries are not the same.
- I am from Gulbarga lok sabha constituency so the above shown map is illustrates the question.

**Question 8:** How many Assembly constituencies are there in the Gulbarga Lok Sabha constituency? Is it the same in your own Lok Sabha constituency?

**Answer:**

There are 8 Assembly constituencies in the Gulbarga Lok Sabha Constituency.

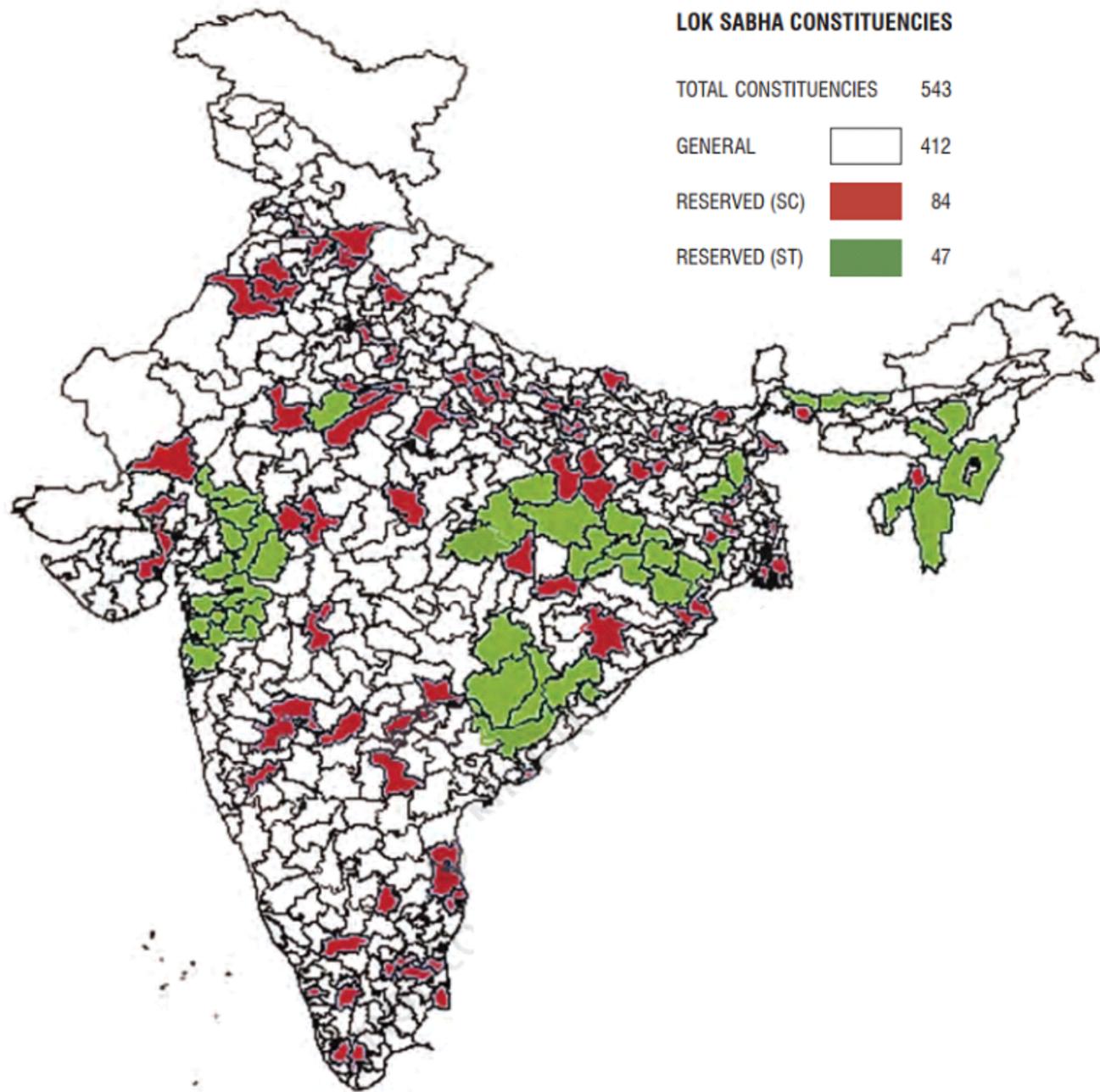
**Question 9:** Like in Panchayats, should we not have at least one-third seats in the parliament and assemblies reserved for women?

**Answer:**

One-third of the seats are reserved for women in the Panchayats, but unfortunately even today representation of women in the State Assemblies and Parliament is very low. The women constitute 50 per cent of our society, so, we need to reserve at least one-third seats in the Assemblies and the Parliament for women. This helps them to uplift their status in society.

**Question 10:** See the map below and answer the following questions.

- What is the number of Lok Sabha constituencies in your state and the neighbouring two states?
- Which states have more than 30 Lok Sabha constituencies?
- Why do some states have such a large number of constituencies?
- Why are some constituencies small in area while others are very big?
- Are the constituencies reserved for the SCs and STs evenly spread all over the entire country or are there more in some areas?



**Answer:**

- (i) My state is Andhra Pradesh. Number of lok sabha constituencies are 25 my neighbouring states are Tamilnadu: 39 and Telangana: 17
- (ii) The states which have more than 30 Lok Sabha constituencies are Bihar, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal.
- (iii) Some states have large number of constituencies because of their population. Here, voters are in large numbers.
- (iv) The coverage of each constituency is fixed of the basis of number of the voters. The area does not matter. If a smaller area has equal number of voters as a big area, both will be treated as constituencies.
- (v)The constituencies are reserved for the SCs and STs on the basis of the distribution of their population. So, the constituencies reserved, for the SCs and STs are not evenly spread all over the entire country, but are more in some areas.

**Question 11: Why are the candidates required to give a detailed statement of their property?**

**Answer:**

Candidates are required to give a detailed statement of their property at the time of election because the Election Commission is trying to control the misuse of money power in elections. The candidate has to give information about his assets movable and immovable, debts to financial institutions, tax status, income and wealth. Secondly with this information the voters will be able to know more about the candidates and make their own choices.

**Question 12: Match the following features of our electoral system with the principles they reflect.**

Principles	Features of election system
Universal adult franchise	Each constituency has roughly the same population
Representation of weaker sections	Everyone who is 18 years of age or older has a right to vote
Open political competition	Anyone can form a party or contest elections
One vote one value	Reservation of seats for the SCs and the STs

**Answer:**

Principles	Features of Election System
(i) Universal adult Franchise right to vote	Everyone who is 18 years of age or older has right to vote.
(ii) Representation of weaker	Reservation of seats for the SCs and STs sections
(iii) Open political competition	Anyone can form a party or contest elections
(iv) One vote one value	Each constituency has roughly the same Population

**Question 13:** How was the election campaign in your constituency in the last Lok Sabha elections? Prepare a list of what the candidates and parties said and did.

**Answer:**

Just like any other election that is conducted over the years, contestants compete for political positions. They have to put their ideals on the table, they have to tell people what they will do once they are elected into the positions they want to. Most politicians promise the public that they will provide the social amenities without any biasness. They claim that they will provide clean water to the people, clean environment, increase in worker wages etc

In my constituency, 4 major political parties campaigned for winning elections. They formed huge rallies and gathered many people and promised many things to do. Let's see what have promised.

### 1. Y.S.R.C.P.

Jagan Mohan Reddy lead the party and he visited many times to my place and spoke very closely to all people.

#### Promises:

Giving cheap loans to farmers  
Encouragement to women Self Help Groups  
Educational encouragement to all poor people  
New jobs for the unemployed people  
Pension hike to elders  
Liquor ban

### 2. T.D.P.

Shri Nara Chandra Babu Naidu lead this party and he's very experienced person and he was our C.M. for twice earlier.

**Promises:** Giving free power to farmers in cultivation

Ending water disputes with neighbouring states  
Improving I.T. sector in our state  
New Roads in remote areas  
Repairing the old bridges in our locality

### 3. Jana Sena Party

It was lead by cinema actor Pawan Kalyan and He recently formed the party and campaigned a lot to win the elections

**Promises:** Youth should be focused  
Old people should be healthy  
Fight the corruption  
Children are given the value education

#### 4. B.J.P.

Hari Narayan lead this party in our constituency and he was very old man. He roamed to all places and spoke with many people.

**Promises:** Rejuvenation of old public buildings in our locality

Free Education to all eligible people

Rented farmers are given importance too

Ending the corruption in public domain

Finally Y.S.R.C.P. won the election with clear cut majority and it is fulfilling all its promises very enthusiastically.

**Question 14:** Draw a cartoon here about the Model Code of Conduct for the guidance of political parties and candidates during elections.

**Answer:**



**Question 15:**

A large amount of money is spent in conducting elections in India. For instance, the government spent about ₹3,500 crores in conducting Lok Sabha elections in 2014. That works out to about ₹40 per person on the voters' list. The amount spent by parties and candidates was more than what the government spent. Roughly speaking, the expenditure made by government, parties and candidates was around ₹30,000 crores or ₹500 per voter.

Some people say that elections are a burden on our people, that our poor country cannot afford to hold elections once every five years. Let us compare this expenditure with some other figures:

- In 2005, our government decided to buy six nuclear submarines from France. Each submarine cost about ₹3,000 crores.
- Delhi hosted the Commonwealth Games in 2010. The estimate for its cost is around ₹20,000 crores.

**Answer:**

Yes, Elections have become very expensive and year by year their cost has been increasing. For a developing country like India it's huge burden. With so much poverty and many dying out of hunger it's really a problem-some. But elections are very important for democracy to check on the corruptive leaders and for all good. So we must go with a reasonable cost of elections and its responsibility lies not only on Election Commission but also on all people of India.

**Question 16:**

**Answer:**

Let us go back to our example of Gulbarga. In 2014, a total of 8 candidates contested elections in that constituency. The total eligible voters were 17.21 lakhs. Of these 9.98 lakh voters had cast their votes. The candidate of the Congress party, Mallikarjun Kharge secured about 5.07 lakh votes. This was 50.82 percent of the total votes polled. But since he had secured more votes than anyone else, he was declared elected a Member of Parliament from Gulbarga Lok Sabha constituency.

**Election Result of Gulbarga constituency, GENERAL ELECTION TO LOK SABHA, 2014**

CANDIDATE	PARTY	VOTES POLLED	% OF VOTES
D.G. Sagar	JD(S)	15690	1.57
Mallikarjun Kharge	INC	507193	50.82
Danni Mahadev B.	BSP	11428	1.14
Revunaik Belamagi	BJP	432460	43.33
B.T. Lalitha Naik	AAAP	9074	0.91
S.M. Sharma	SUCI	4943	0.50
Shankar Jadhav	BHPP	2877	0.29
Ramu	IND	4085	0.41
None of the Above	NOTA	9888	0.99

A) What is the percentage of voters who had actually cast their votes?

**Answer:**

50.82 per cent of total voters cast their own votes.

B) To win an election is it necessary for a person to secure more than half the votes polled?

**Answer:**

To win an election, it is not necessary for a person to secure more than half the votes polled, because the candidate who secures the highest number of votes from a constituency is declared elected.

**Question 17:** Why are party agents present in the polling booth and the counting centre?

**Answer:**

Party agents are present in the polling booth to ensure that the voting takes place in a fair way and the rival candidates are not able to adopt any unfair practices. They are also present in the counting centres to ensure that the counting is done properly without any unfair means.

**Question 18:**

**Identify the fair and the unfair electoral practices among the following:**

- A minister flags off a new train in his constituency a week before polling day.
- A candidate promises that she will get a new train for her constituency if she is elected.
- Supporters of a candidate take the voters to a temple and make them take an oath that they will vote for him.
- The supporters of a candidate distribute blankets in slums in return for a promise for votes.

**Answer:**

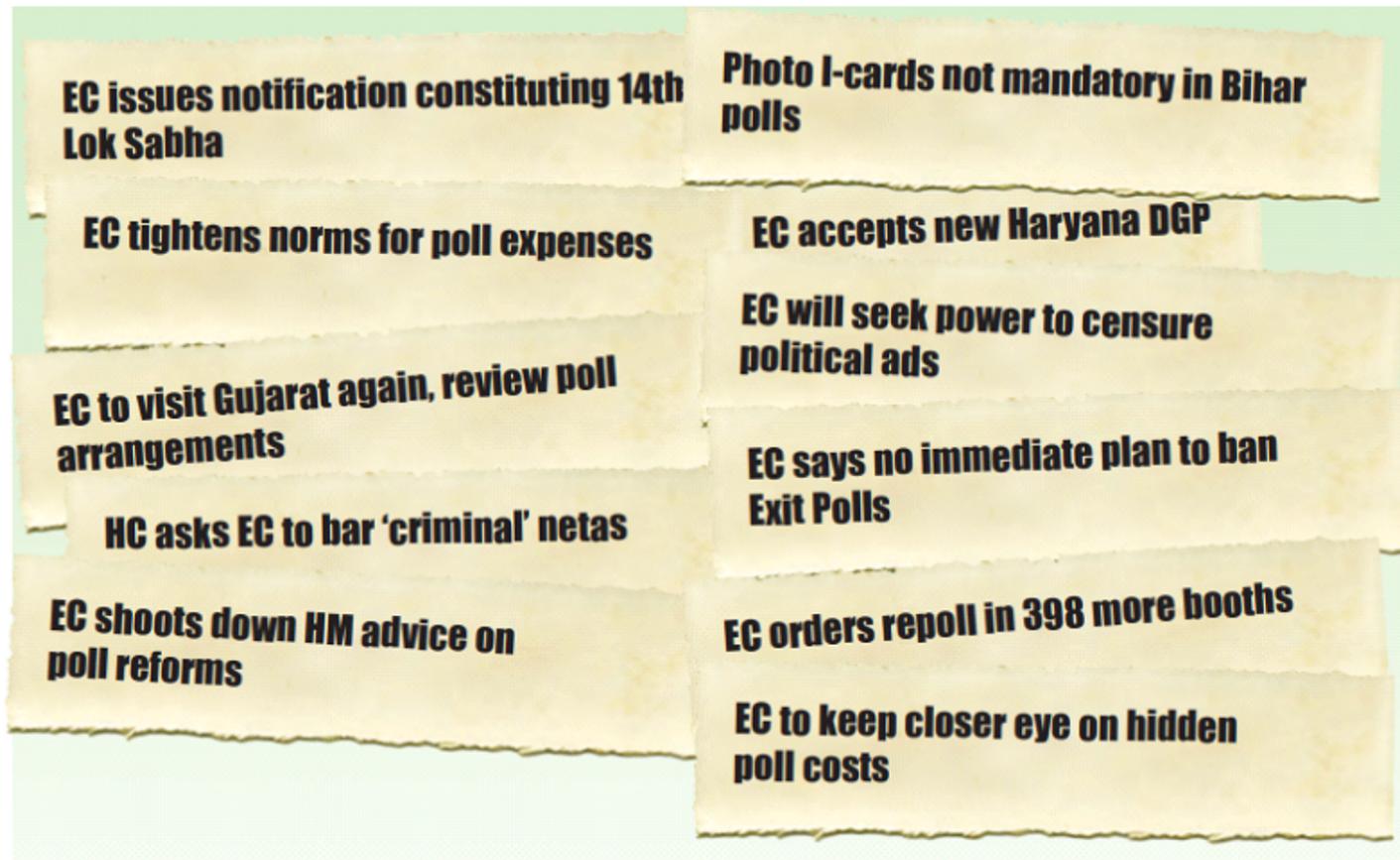
- (i) Unfair electoral practice
- (ii) Fair electoral practice
- (iii) Unfair electoral practice
- (iv) Unfair electoral practice.

**Question 19:** Why does the Election Commission have so much power? Is this good for democracy?

### Answer:

The Election Commission in India is very powerful so that it is able to perform its functions in a proper manner and efficiently. Yes, this is good for democracy. Because only a powerful and independent Election Commission can ensure free and fair elections by preventing malpractices and unfair means in the elections.

**Question 20:** Read these headlines carefully and identify which powers are used by the Election Commission in each instance to ensure free and fair elections.



### Answer:

- (i) Election Commission takes decisions on every aspect of conduct and control of elections, from the announcement of elections to the declaration of results.
- (ii) Election Commission regulates campaigns to ensure that every political party or candidate gets a fair and equal chance to complete. It also ensures that no party or candidate can spend more than Rs. 25 lakhs for election in a Lok Sabha constituency and Rs 10 lakhs for election in an Assembly constituency.
- (iii) During the election period, the Election Commission can order the government to follow some guide lines, to prevent use and misuse of governmental power to enhance its chances to win elections, or to transfer some government officials.
- (iv) Election Commission takes decisions on every aspect of conduct and control of elections.
- (v) Election Commission enjoys the same kind of independence that the judiciary enjoys. It is not supposed to work on the advice of the Home Minister. During the election period, the Election commission can order the government to follow some guidelines, to prevent use and misuse of the governmental power to enhance its chances to win elections, or to transfer some government officials.
- (vi) Election Commission takes decisions on every aspect of elections and control of elections from the announcement of elections to the declaration of results. It also includes the powers relating to the identification of the voters.
- (vii) During the election period, the Election Commission can order the government to follow some guidelines, to prevent use and misuse of governmental power to enhance its chances to win elections, or to transfer some government officials.
- (viii) Election Commission implements the code of conduct and punishes any candidate or party that violates it.
- (ix) Election Commission takes decisions on every aspect of conduct and control of elections from the announcement of elections to the declaration of results. It also includes power regarding the control of the Exit Polls.
- (x) Election Commission takes decisions on every aspect of conduct and control of elections from the

announcement of elections and order to repoll to the declaration of results.

(xi) It implements election laws and the code of conduct and punishes any candidate or party that violates it. Thus, every party or candidate can get a fair and equal chance to compete.

**Question 21:** Ask the eligible voters in your family whether they voted in the last election to the Lok Sabha or to the state assembly. If they did not, ask them why did they not vote. If they did, ask them which party and candidate they voted for and why. Also ask them whether they had participated in any other election-related activity like attending an election meeting or rally etc.

**Answer:**

Elders in our family voted for Y.S.R.C.P. in both Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. The reason they said is it's a party of farmers and it has promised many things related to farming like cheap loans for next crops, pension hike, Encouragement to women S.H.G'S . And it has also promised for construction of the bridge to our village. My Uncle participated in election campaigning of the parties. He said that Leaders speak voraciously and attract with their Charismatic ability and spend money like water during Elections. They made many promises to lure the voters. They abused the other parties.

**Question 22:** The leader is coming out of a press conference: "What was the need to say that we have distributed tickets only amongst suitable and winnable family relations?" Do you think that family politics is confined to only a few states or parties?



**Answer:**

Family politics or Dynastic politics is not a new phenomenon in Indian politics, but it has become an increasingly wide reaching one in recent times. It is more or less found in each and every state and party in India. Almost every political party in India has leaders whose sons and daughters have entered politics, most of them without much political experience.

**Question 23:** Titled 'Electoral Campaigns', this cartoon was drawn in the Latin American context. Does this apply to India and to other democracies in the world?

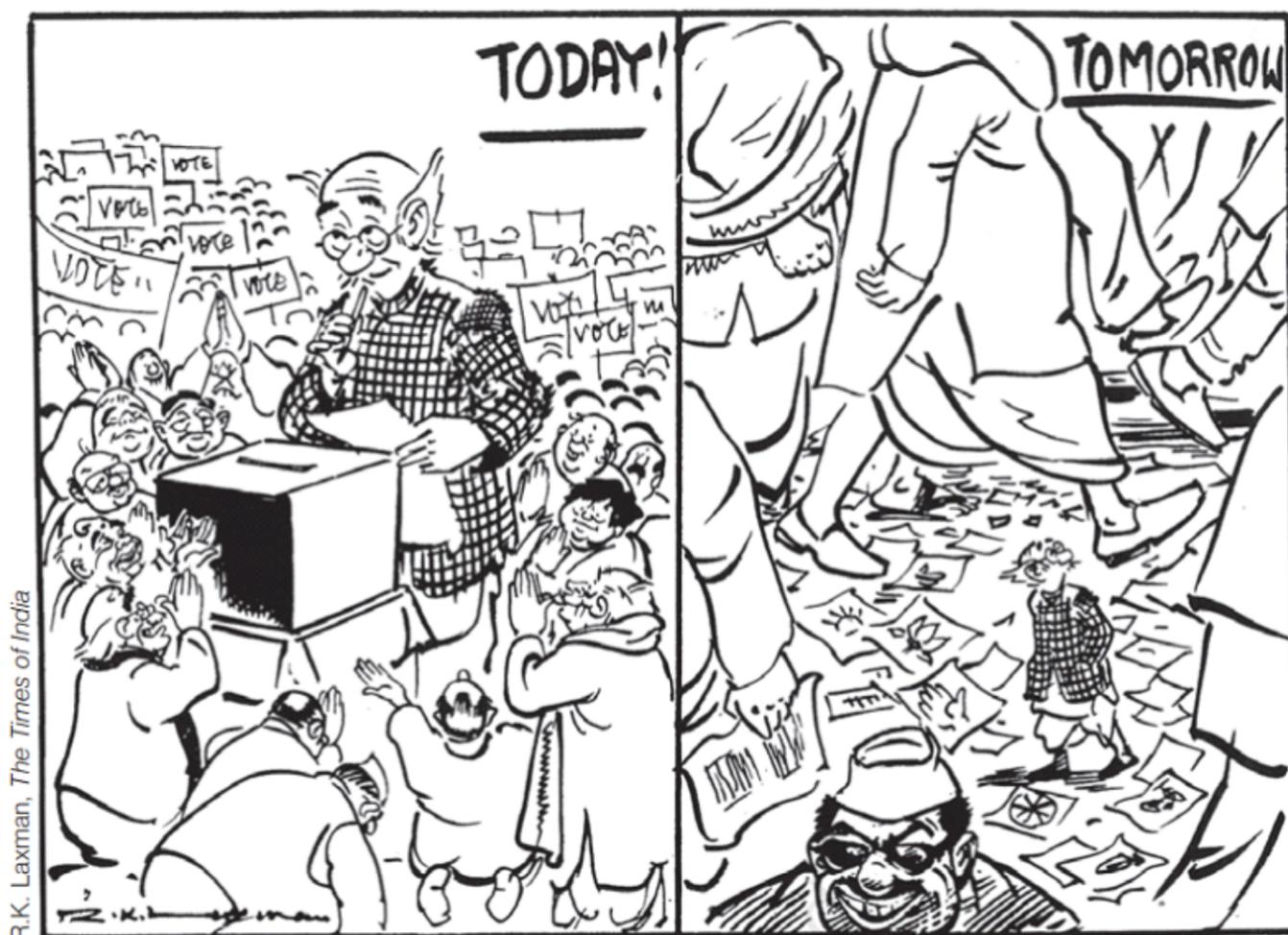


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**Answer:**

Yes, this cartoon can be applicable to India and other democracies of the world. Now-a-days, candidates who spend a lot of money on 'buying votes' often win the election. Although the Election Commission has specified the amount of money to be spent for both Parliamentary and Assembly elections, but there is always excessive use of money by the rich candidates and big parties. This cartoon suggests the misuse of money power in Parliamentary democracy.

**Question 24:** Is this an accurate picture of what happens to the voter before and after elections? Must this always happen in a democracy? Can you think of examples when this did not happen?



R.K. Laxman, The Times of India

**Answer:**

- (i) Yes, this is an accurate picture of what happens to the voter before and after election.
- (ii) No, not always, but most of the time it happens in a democracy. Before election, the candidate tries to appease the voters by false promises. After the election, the elected leader forgets the demands of the common man.
- (iii) No, I cannot think of examples when this did not happen.

**Question 25:** Here are some facts on Indian elections. Comment on each of these to say whether they reflect the strength or the weakness of our electoral system:

- The 16th Lok Sabha has 12 per cent women members.
- The Election Commission often refuses to accept the government’s advice about when the elections should be held.
- The 16th Lok Sabha has more than 440 members whose assets are more than Rs.1 crore.
- After losing an election the Chief Minister said: “I respect the people’s verdict”.

**Answer:**

- (i) It is the weakness of our electoral system which sends only 12 per cent women members to the Lok Sabha while the population of women is nearly 50 per cent of the total population.
- (ii) It is the strength of our electoral system which has given the power to the Election Commission to refuse or to accept the advice of the ruling party about the election dates.
- (iii) This is the weakness of our electoral system which does not give equal chance to both poor and rich. Those candidates, who are rich, have a better chance of winning than the poor in our country
- (iv) This is the strength of our electoral system which enjoys the faith of both the defeated and winning candidates. Barring very few disputed elections, the electoral outcomes are usually accepted as 'people's verdict' by the defeated party

**Exercises**

**Question 1:** Which of the following sentiments about the reason for conducting elections are false?

- a. Elections enable people to judge the performance of the government.
- b. People select the representative of their choice in an election.
- c. Elections enable people to evaluate the performance of the judiciary
- d. People can indicate which policies they prefer.

**Answer:**

c) Elections enable people to evaluate the performance of the judiciary

**Question 2:** Which of these is not a good reason to say that Indian elections are democratic? a. India has the largest numbers of voters in the world. b. India’s election commission is very powerful. c. In India, everyone above the age of 18 has a right to vote. d. In India, the losing parties accept the electoral verdict.

**Answer:**

a) India has the largest numbers of voters in the world.

**Question 3:** Match the following:

a) It is necessary to keep the voters list up to date	i) there is a fair representation of all section of our society
b) Some constituencies are reserved for SCs and STs so that	ii )everyone has equal opportunity to elect their representative
c) Everyone has one and only vote so that	iii) all candidates must have a fair chance of competing in elections

a) It is necessary to keep the voters list up to date	i) there is a fair representation of all section of our society
d) Party in power is not allowed to use government vehicles because	iv) some people may have moved away from the area where they voted last

**Answer:**

a) iv b) i c) ii d) iii

**Question 4:** List all the different election related activities mentioned in the chapter and arrange them in a time sequence, beginning with the first activity and ending with the last. Some of these activities are given below:

Releasing election manifestos, Counting of votes, Making of voters' list, Election campaign, Declaration of election results, Casting of votes, Ordering of re-poll, Announcing election schedule, Filing nomination.

**Answer:**

**Different election related activities:**

- a) Making of voters' list
- b) Announcing election schedule
- c) Filing nomination
- d) Election campaign
- e) Releasing election manifestos
- f) Casting of votes
- g) Counting of votes
- h) Declaration of election results
- i) Ordering of re-poll

**Question 5:** Surekha is an officer-in-charge of ensuring free and fair elections in an assembly constituency in a state. Describe what she should focus on for each of the following stages of election:

- a. Election campaign
- b. Polling day
- c. Counting day.

**Answer:**

**a. Election campaign :** During election campaign, the different political parties hold their meetings, take out their rallies, distribute their manifestos, display their posters and do door-to-door canvassing. Surekha as an officer-in-charge should see that the meetings are held within the stipulated time, there are no clashes during the rallies, no party is violating code of conducts for elections such as, wall-postering, character assassination of the opponents etc.

**b. Polling day :** On the polling day, the voters go to their nearest polling booths to cast their votes. On this day she has to see that:

- The polling is done in a peaceful atmosphere
- No bogus voter casts the vote.
- There is police arrangement in every booth
- No unsocial element enters any booth
- There is no booth capturing or rigging.
- The ballot boxes or electronic machines reach counting centre safely.

**c. Counting day :** On the counting day the agents of almost every candidate take their seats inside the counting centre. Surekha as an officer-in-charge has to take care of the following:

- There is a proper seating arrangement for the agents of different candidates.
- Proper police arrangement is there to ward off any undue incident.

- Counting of votes is carried peacefully without any outside interference and to the full satisfaction of all the candidates.
- Rejoicing should be peaceful and un-provocative.

**Question 6:** The table below gives the proportion of different communities among the candidates who won elections to the US Congress. Compare these to the proportion of these communities in the population of the US. Based on this, would you suggest a system of reservations in the US Congress? If yes, why and for which communities? If no, why not?

	Proportion of the community (in per cent) in the	
	House of representatives	Population of US
Blacks	8	13
Hispanics	5	13
Whites	86	70

**Answer:**

- A). The Blacks have lesser number of seats i.e. 8, in the House of Representatives as compared to their population (13%) so a system of reservation should be there for them in US Congress.
- B). In case of Hispanics, the need of reservation is somewhat more as the number of their members in the House of Representatives is far less (5) as compared to their population (13%).
- C). There is no need of reservation for the Whites as they have already more seats (86) in the House of Representatives as compared to their population (70%).

**Question 7:** Can we draw the following conclusions from the information given in this chapter? Give two facts to support your position for each of these.

- Election Commission of India does not have enough powers to conduct free and fair elections in the country.
- There is a high level of popular participation in the elections in our country.
- It is very easy for the party in power to win an election.
- Many reforms are needed to make our elections completely free and fair.

**Answer:**

(a) It is wrong to say that election commission of India does not have enough powers to conduct free and fair elections. Because Election Commission of India have enough powers to conduct free and fair elections in the country. The Election Commission of India is an independent and powerful body.

- Firstly, the Election Commissioner of India is appointed by the President or Government of India. He cannot be removed.
- Secondly, the can order Election Commissioner can order the Government to follow certain guidelines.
- Thirdly, if he feels that the elections have not been conducted fairly, he can order repoll in certain booths or even in the entire constituency.
- Fourthly, during election duty, other Government servants work under the control of Election Commissioner.

(b) It is a fact that there is a high level of popular participation in the elections in our country. During the last 50 years or so, the turnout of voters in the North America and Europe has declined while in India it has either remained stable or increased. It has been found that in our country the poor, the illiterate and the unprivileged people vote in larger proportion as compared to the rich and the privileged classes.

(c) It is quite a wrong notion that party in power can win an election quite easily in India. If such a thing would have been true, the Congress stalwart like Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, would not have been defeated by Raj Narain, an ordinary politician. There are many occasions when the ruling party has lost elections in India.

(d) There is no system as such where there cannot be a reform and improvement. Reforms are required to prevent use of money, muscle power, and unfair practices from bearing fruit.

**Question 8:** Chinappa was convicted for torturing his wife for dowry. Satbir was held guilty of practicing untouchability. The court did not allow either of them to contest elections. Does this decision go against the principles of democratic elections?

**Answer:**

In both the cases, Chinappa and Satbir, the court has done the right thing by not allowing either of them to contest elections. This decision does not go against the principle of democratic elections. The convicted and the guilty persons should not be allowed to contest elections otherwise they would criminalize the whole election process and that jeopardize the high principles of democracy.

**Question 9:** Here are some reports of electoral malpractices from different parts of the world. Is there anything that these countries can learn from India to improve their elections? What would you suggest in each case? (a) During an election in Nigeria, the officer-in-charge of counting votes deliberately increased the votes of one candidate and declared him elected. The court later found out that more than 5 lakh votes cast for one candidate were counted in favour of another.

(b) Just before the elections in Fiji, a pamphlet was distributed warning voters that a vote for former Prime Minister, Mahendra Chaudhry will lead to bloodshed. This was a threat to voters of Indian origin.

(c) In the US, each state has its own method of voting, its own procedure of counting and its own authority for conducting elections. Authorities in the state of Florida took many controversial decisions that favoured Mr. Bush in the Presidential elections in 2000. But no one could change those decisions.

**Answer:**

(a) The officer-in-charge during elections (counting) should have been impartial and should have ordered repoll. For voting there should be electronic machines so that no fraud could be done in counting. In the event of non-availability of electronic machines, the votes should be counted in presence of representatives of different candidates or political parties. Nigeria can learn this lesson from India.

(b) Such a thing is quite wrong against the spirit of a free and fair election. Firstly, the voters should never be threatened to cast their vote against their conscience. Secondly, if at all, any pamphlet was to be distributed then it should have been done at least 48 hours before the date of election as done in India. So Fiji can learn these lessons from India – not to intimidate the voters and even if such a thing happens, then the election can be postponed or cancelled.

(c) In India, one and uniform rules are followed in all states as far as the method of voting, procedure of counting are concerned. Different rules, different authorities, and different procedures of counting lead to the ambiguity and vagueness and take away the sense of justice, which is one of the main principles of democracy. US can take some good points and lessons from India how to follow same rules, procedures etc. in all states and across the country.

**Question 10:** Here are some reports of malpractices in Indian elections. Identify what the problem in each case is. What should be done to correct the situation? (a) Following the announcement of elections the minister promised to provide financial aid to reopen the closed sugar mill.

(b) Opposition parties alleged that their statements and campaign was not given the due attention in Doordarshan and All India Radio.

(c) An inquiry by the Election Commission showed that electoral rolls of a state contain names of 20 lakh fake voters.

(d) The hoodlums of a political party were moving with guns, physically preventing supporters of other political parties to meet the voters and attacking meetings of other parties.

**Answer:**

(a) By doing so, the minister has erred on two counts. Firstly, he should not have made this promise when the announcement of elections has already been made. Secondly, by promising financial aid he is trying to bribe the voters by using financial tricks. He is trying to take advantage of his party being in power. This mill should

not be opened and it should be left to the winning party to decide after the elections.

(b) In order to remove this allegation of the opposition parties, the best solution is that Doordarshan and All India Radio must be made autonomous bodies so that government could not influence them in its favour.

Equal time should be given to all parties and candidates to present their views in front of the voters.

(c) The Election Commission has the power to remaking of the electoral rolls and to see that the names of 20 lakh fake voters are removed from the new electoral rolls.

(d) The Election Commission has the power to check this malpractice of moving with guns, physically preventing supporters of other political parties to meet the voters and attacking meetings of other parties. It can withdraw the recognition of any party or disqualify such a candidate from contesting elections if its supporters are found to be moving with weapons.

**Question 11: Ramesh was not in class when this chapter was being taught. He came the next day and reported what he had heard from his father. Can you tell Ramesh what is wrong with these statements?**

**(a) Women always vote the way men tell them. So what is the point of giving them the right to vote?**

**(b) Party politics creates tension in society. Elections should be decided by consensus not by competition.**

**(c) Only graduates should be allowed to stand as candidates for elections.**

**Answer:**

(a)

Women always vote the way men tell them to do is a wrong statement. It would be totally undemocratic if we debar women who are about 50 per cent of the population, of their right to vote on the basis of gender distinction. It will also take away the quality of true representation of a democracy. Often we see husband contesting election from one party while his wife contesting from another party.

(b)

A healthy competition provides option to the people to choose the better. A consensus can make the people deaf and dumb which against the spirit of democracy. Electoral competition is necessary because it provides incentives to political parties and leaders and forces them to serve the people better.

(c)

Educational qualifications are not necessary to all kinds of jobs. It is also a wrong notion that only graduates should be allowed to contest elections. A majority of people who fought for the independence of the country were almost illiterate. They have equal right with those of the educated to enjoy the fruit of the hard won independence. It is also agreed that if a graduate degree is made an eligibility criteria, then more than 90% of the voters would become ineligible for contesting an election. Would that be a democracy, certainly not. India follows the rule – ‘One person one vote’. This is in true spirit of democracy.

**Question 12: How did your school celebrate the National Voters’ Day on 25th January? Did you take the NVD Pledge?**

**Answer:**

National Voters’ Day was celebrated across schools and college in the district.

My School Hans Raj Maha Vidyalaya held a district-level event on its premises in which Deputy Commissioner Kamal Kishore Yadav was invited as a chief guest. Along with him, Additional Deputy Commissioner Girishi Dayalan, ADCP (Traffic) Amneet Kondal, Election Tehsildar Raj Kumar Tangari, Surjit Lal, District Language Officer Amarjit Kaur and Gurjit Singh were present.

DC Kamal Kishore Yadav said, ‘This National Voters’ Day is being celebrated for the young voters, who are going to vote for the first time. The young voters should vote n the ethical values and choose government accordingly. The procedure for making voter cards had been done and second revision will be done in September.’

Principal Dr Rekha Kalia Bhardwaj also explained that the importance of voting. Students of music department presented Saraswati Vandana. They also presented ‘Kagaz Ke Phul’ skit and giddha. Various competitions were also organised on the occasion. Inter-school essay writing competition and inter-college poster making competition were held. In the former, Nargis got first position, Kamaljit Kaur second and Satwinder Kaur third while in the latter Prabhjot earned first, Sakshi second and Devika and Diksha Mahajan third position. Slogan

writing competition was also held in which Priya Luthra got first, Davinder Kaur second, Rupinder Kaur third. In the debate competition, Amrit Kaur, Ananaya and Tricha, Ramanpreet and Chitwan got first, second and third positions, respectively. In essay writing competition, Tricha got first, Monali and Davinder Kaur got second, Shumya and Neha Tuli third position.

On the occasion, IRO Nodal Officers VBLO was honoured. In this, Sanjeev Sharma, Vinay Kumar, Kulwant Singh, Surjit Lal and Harpal Singh were present. The stage was conducted by Dr Jasbir Rishi and Dr Rajiv Kumar. Nita Malik and Alka of political science department were also present.