

GS II

SYLLABUS: GOVERNMENT POLICIES & ISSUES ARISING OUT OF THEIR DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION.

SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

News: "Pie in the sky."

Simultaneous Elections:

- Idea to **synchronise elections** to Lok Sabha, State legislative assembly, Municipalities & Panchayats **on the same day**.
- This practice continued till 1967** or 4th General election.
- Currently, **Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha, Sikkim, Telangana** elections to Lok Sabha and Assemblies held together.

Need: Based on Ram Nath Kovind Committee 2023

- Frequent elections **create an atmosphere of uncertainty**.
- Minimising disruptions & policy paralysis:** by ensuring stability and predictability.
- Helps in **reduction of election costs** and increase in **voter participation**. Eg. In 2019, the **General Election (Lok Sabha)** costed **Rs.4500 crore**. If State elections added to this, expenses further multiply.
- Simultaneous elections lead to** increase in economic growth, a lower inflation, increased investments, and improved quality of government expenditure.
- Political parties behaviour:** keeps **politicians always in campaign mode** due to elections at different times (Local, State, National) rather than their work towards policy making.

Implementation:

- Requirement of Constitutional amendments:**
 - In relation to terms of Parliament and State assemblies and local bodies (**Art. 83, 172**)
 - For adoption of single electoral roll.
- Dissolution of Lok Sabha and all State Assemblies at once**, irrespective of their remaining term as a onetime measure.
- Municipal and Panchayat polls within 100 days of general election.**
- Single electoral roll:** Currently some State laws allow State Election Commission to prepare separate electoral rolls. Committee recommended that **empowering Election Commission of India to prepare single electoral roll** in consultation with SECs.
- Logistics requirement:** ECI & SECs to plan and estimate logistical requirements ahead of the rollout.

Note:

- Constitutional Amendment nature for above:**
 - In case of amending 'term' of Parliament and **State Assemblies, there is no requirement of ratification by States**.
 - However, ratification by States becomes **necessary in case of amending 'local bodies term'**.

Challenges:

- Premature dissolution of some State's Assemblies or Lok Sabha:** can undermine the federal spirit & concerns of delay in conducting new election.
- Case Hung Assembly:** if no party secures majority to form govt., a fresh election to the remaining period of 5 year cycle should be conducted—**Ram Nath Kovind Committee 2023**.

P.T.O

- Case of No-confidence Motion:** if passed, it may curtail the term of Lok Sabha/ State Assembly. **Law commission recommended** replacement of no-confidence motion with 'constructive vote of no-confidence (govt. will only be removed if there is confidence in an alternate govt.).
- Cases of bye-elections:** due to Death, resignation or disqualification of members can be clubbed together and conducted once in a year—**Standing Committee 2015**.
- India is a Multiparty system** where coalition and collapses are common, new system will be a challenge.
- Logistics challenges:** in 2019 general elections about **4 million EVMs and 2 million VVPATs were used**. Simultaneous election can double the demand.
- Local issues may get overshadowed by National needs:** ultimately diminishing democratic representation at grassroot-level—**NITI Aayog report 2017**.

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PYQs

GS II 2017: 'Simultaneous election to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies will limit the amount of time and money spent in electioneering but it will reduce the government's accountability to the people' Discuss.

TECHNOLOGY

PRE-CONTEXT

STARLINK

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 10.

News: "Are Manipur militants using Starlink devices?"

About Starlink:

- Starlink uses an **extensive low Earth orbit (~550km) satellite constellation** to deliver broadband internet that has high speeds and low latency.
- Rather than restricting users to **essential or emergency functions, they can also stream content, play games online, or carry out other high data rate activities**.
- Starlink and India:** Starlink satellite beams are turned off over India.

Issues:

- International borders are not solid and it is not easy to refine satellite internet coverage** to such a precise degree that service is activated or halted exactly inline with a nation's border.

Note:

- Under Section 6 of the Indian Wireless Act and Section 20 of the Indian Telegraph Act, **the use of thuraya/ iridium satellite phones is illegal in the country**.
- These restrictions are in place **to combat militancy and terrorism**.

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GS III & ESSAY

SYLLABUS: ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION AND DEGRADATION.

GLOBAL WARMING

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 8.

News: "Why were the Kerala IAS officers suspended?"

India and Global Warming Issues:

- **Need to ramp up renewable energy generation capacity: to meet net zero emissions (NZE):**
 - This entail growth in demand for electricity based on clean sources, as new sectors such as transport and industry are brought under electrification.
 - Minimum quantum of demand for electricity as 21,000 Terawatt hours (TWh) by 2070—*IEA report*.
- **Land availability for Energy transition:**
 - Renewables approach will require *~4lakh sq.km* (double the total surplus land of available in India).
 - Nuclear energy approach will require *1.8lakh sq.km*.
- **Cost of storage:**
 - *Cost of renewables* (only six hours of storage) ranges from ₹5 per unit to ₹8 a unit— Central Electricity Authority in 2023.
 - *Cost of nuclear power* (storage and transmission) nuclear power at ₹4 a unit.
 - *Further, green hydrogen* will increase the demand for electricity for electrolysis and make land constraints worse.
- **Issues of Finance:**
 - At COP29, developed countries committed a *\$300 billion per year* from diverse sources by 2035 against the demand by developing countries for \$1.3 trillion.

Suggestions:

- **Decoupling growth with energy** i.e India's service economy minimise the need for energy — *The Economist*.
- **Nuclear power** also needs to be given the *status of green energy as it is emission-free*.
- In India the *share of nuclear power in generation* is as low as 3%.
- **Green finance from private sources** will come only if the tariff is raised, and the health of DISCOMs is restored.
- **COP29 finalized carbon trading rules**. If India can't diversify to clean sources by the peak year, India need carbon for growth, not trade-offs.

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SECURITY

PRE-CONTEXT

NEW INTERCEPTION RULES & SAFEGUARDS

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 10.

News: "What are the new interception rules and safeguards?"

Context: Telecommunications (Procedures and Safeguards for Lawful Interception of Messages) Rules, 2024 which empower some enforcement and security agencies to intercept phone messages under certain conditions.

About New Interception rules & Safeguards:

- **Competent authority to order the interception of any message or class of messages:** *Union Home Secretary and the Secretary to the State govt. in-charge* of the Home Department.
- **Ground of order:**
 - *'Unavoidable circumstances'* (without defining such circumstances).
 - Also for reasons specified under Section 20(2) of the Telecommunications Act, 2023.
- **Safeguards:**
 - Such order *must confirmed by the competent authority within seven working days* from the date of issue.
 - *Destruction of records relating to interception every six months* by the authorised agency and review committee (unless required for functional requirements or court directions).

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TECHNOLOGY

PRE-CONTEXT

SPADEX

THE HINDU, PG.NO: 22.

News: "SpaDeX: meeting in space."

About SPADEX:

- **Docking technology** as it is an essential building-block process for country's own space station.
- **Bharatiya Antariksha Station:** India's own Space Station by 2035. First module will be launched in 2028.
- **India will become the fourth country** in the world to have a space programme capable of docking in space.

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Thank you!