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# THIRD CONCEPT

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- ❖ **Economic Resilience in Indo-Bhutan Partnership**
- ❖ **Entrepreneurship Education and Economic Growth**
- ❖ **Role of Artificial Intelligence in Financial Matters**
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Designed by: Pt. Tejpal

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### General Elections 2024

The term of 17th Lok Sabha will expire on June 16, 2024. Election Commission of Indian (ECI) announced the dates for General Elections to 18th Lok Sabha and State Assemblies of select States (Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Sikkim) on March 16, 2024 to complete the entire process on time. The electoral process for 543 seats of Lok Sabha shall begin on March 19, 2024 and would be conducted in seven phases with last one being on June 01, 2024. Finally, votes counting and declaration of results will take place on June 04, 2024. Over 97 crore voters (49.7 crore males and 47.1 crore females) are eligible to cast their votes on 10.5 lakhs polling stations spread across the length and breadth of the country.

Consequently, the poll campaign of all political parties got a kickstart. Erstwhile political leaders, journalists, retired and on-job bureaucrats, academicians, celebrities, and social workers have started thronging at their choice of party offices for ticket to contest. The stories of '*aya raam gaya ram*' i.e., those floating leaders who calculate their electoral fortunes on the basis of prevailing political current have started lobbying with one or the other party. Electronic media has started breaking their heads on prime time to forecast the winning prospects of the leaders of their choice. Elections on electronic media channels are new normal, as this is the latest spices to enhance their TRP. Mudslinging by leaders who are adversaries have began in full earnest on social media platforms (X, Instagram, Facebook etc.). Allegations and counter-allegations along with verbal exchange among leaders have started appearing in newspaper reports from the rallies and campaigns.

ECI has identified four 'Ms' as four major challenges that it envisages during the course of electoral processes: Money, Muscle, Misinformation and MCC. However, there are number of other issues, which electorates are required to take note of while exercising their franchise, to keep the Indian democracy on rails: (i) ever-growing criminalization of politics; (ii) politicization of high profile crimes; (iii) people with massive corruption charges getting elected and entering legislature; (iv) growing nexus between economic and political powers; (v) wealth becoming the qualifications for becoming law-makers, making Indian democracy more of Oligarchic; (vi) growing nexus and consolidating bonds between political power and economic power with mutual benefits and inter-dependent relations; and (vii) utter violations of Model Code of Conduct and ECI advisory to political parties to maintain dignity during electioneering. Supreme Court has abolished the scheme of electoral bonds on the eve of elections with impending issue of transparency in electoral funding. These are some of the most obvious issues which could be highlighted.

The sustainable development in the field of healthcare, agriculture, education, armed forces, foreign policy, economy, jobs, infrastructure and culture will be relegated to the back seat and competitive campaigning to convince 'my corruption is less harmful that your's' shall be on the forefront. Sycophants do not have a character of their own, so they play trick to influence the leaders and destroy them in the process. Thus, a long list and queue of sycophants have started emerging with loads of creativity in the form of slogans, songs, *chalisa*, books, stories, memes, reels and most other mediums of expressions.

Once again the Indian democracy will become the victim of electoral process and the legislature would witness the tainted leaders of all hues. Several thousands of crores shall be spent to facilitate the successful completion of the periodic democratic ritual. True democracy will follow the day there will be law stating that all those who wish to be the part of government and its administration shall have to compulsorily admit their children in government aided educational institutions, avail health facilities in government hospitals alone, else they will have to forego their job.

— BK



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