

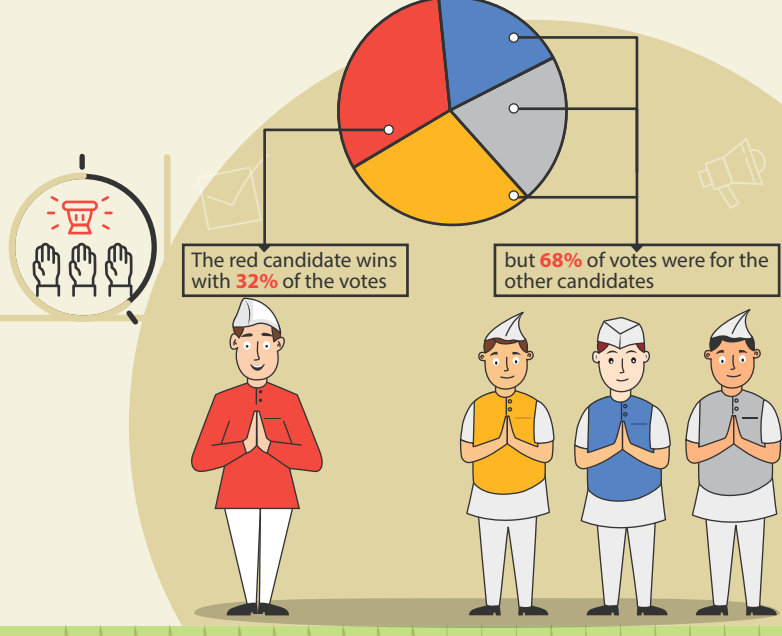
INTRODUCTION

First Past the Post and Proportional Representation System are the two electoral systems to elect the member of legislature in general.

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FIRST PAST THE POST SYSTEM (FPPS)

First Past the Post System or otherwise known as **Simple Majority System** is an electoral system in which the candidate with the highest number of votes in a constituency is declared elected. Ex - **UK, India.**



PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION (PR)

2



Proportional Representation or commonly known as **Single Transferable Vote System** implies an electoral system where the parties are awarded a number of seats in proportion to the percentage of votes each received. Ex - **Israel, Netherlands.**

3

FPTP vs. PR

FPTP

- The country is divided into **small geographical units** called constituencies or districts. India has **543 constituencies**.
- Each constituency elects **one representative**.
- Voter **votes for a candidate**
- The winning candidate may not get majority (50%+1) votes, he secures the **highest number of votes** in that constituency.
- A party may get **more seats than votes** in the legislature.
- FPTP is relatively **simple** as the candidate could win despite securing less than half the votes in a contest. In 2014, the National Democratic Alliance won 336 seats with only 38.5% of the popular vote.
- Ex. **Direct Elections** to the Lok Sabha & State Legislative Assemblies in India.

PR

- The entire country may be a **single constituency**. Large geographical areas are demarcated as constituencies.
- **More than one representative** may be elected from one constituency
- Voter **votes for the political party**
- Candidate who **gets majority of votes** wins the elections.
- Every party gets seats in the legislature **in proportion to the percentage of votes** that it gets.
- Sometimes, it leads to the multi-party coalition government.
- Ex. **Indirect Elections** to the Rajya Sabha and Legislative Council, President & Vice President in India.



WHY DID INDIA ADOPT THE FPTP SYSTEM?

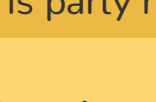
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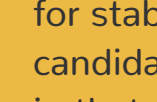
FPTP system is **relatively simple** to understand even for common voters unlike PR system which may work in a small country, but not in a sub-continental country like India.



FPTP ensures **accountability** as voter elects a specific candidate who is available and accessible to fulfil his promises, to address his grievances, while in PR system it is party not a specific person.



India being a **parliamentary democracy** requires that the executive has majority in the legislature for stable government. Through FPTP the winning candidate secures the highest number of votes in that constituency.



FPTP system represents **diversity of India** with candidates appearing from different background irrespective of gender, caste, community or status.

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CRITICAL ANALYSES



It is believed that First past the post caused the **Brexit disaster** therefore it's the time for India to learn & move towards at least **partial proportional representation**.



FPTP has raised various concerns with respect to voter's preferences.

- Perhaps most damagingly, the distribution of votes is very poorly reflected in the distribution of seats.
- In the Lok Sabha Elections 1984, the Congress party won **four-fifths of the Lok Sabha seats** – more than 80% of the seats (415 of the 543). But it doesn't mean that **four out of five Indian voters voted for the Congress party**, it got 48% of the votes i.e. only 48% of those who voted.
- How can such electorate claim to represent the constituency, or even those voters who voted?



Another issue as noticed by the **170th Report of the Law Commission of India** chaired by Justice B.P. Jeevan Reddy that majority of the votes approx 70% (votes cast in favour of the defeated candidates including independents) are not counted once the outcome has been declared and are going without representation.



"Looking at the current scenario, it is clear that the FPTP is found wanting to represent the democratic nature of Indian Democracy".

