

## Plurality System of Election.

Before coming to the topic - i.e. Plurality System, Let's try to understand the meaning of Election and why do we need it.

Actually 'Election' is a must for representative democracy. It is the process by which the members of a community or organisation choose one or more persons to exercise authority on their behalf. The philosophy or logic behind this system is to ensure that the govt. will exercise its powers with the consent of the governed people.

Apart from this secret ballot system is also arranged so that the voter can exercise his or her choice without fear. Also, the voters should have real alternatives before them for exercising their choice, then only the election will be considered as a 'true representative democratic election'. otherwise the election will be considered as a different type of election, that we will study later.

When we speak broadly, there are those types of electoral systems that are widely prevalent

under democratic systems. These are :

- ① Plurality system
- ② Majoritarian system.
- ③ Proportional representation.

Here we are going to discuss Plurality Systems of Election.

In this system an election may be won by a simple majority. The elections held for the Lok Sabha (India), the British House of Commons, American House of Representatives etc. are based on this system of Election.

If there are only two candidates in a given constituency, there will be no any problem in deciding the winner. And where there are three or more candidates in a single-member constituency, and the voter is required to vote for one candidate only, the rule of 'first past the post' is sought to be applied to decide the election winner. In other words any candidate who obtains the largest number of votes is declared winner. It is not necessary for him

or her to secure a clear majority i.e. more than 50% of the total number of valid votes.

Critics of Plurality system say that this system is not fair to the minorities in multicultural societies. Their chance of winning the elections is very high. Also, under the plurality system, the votes scored by different political parties might not correspond to the no. of seats won by them in the legislature.

But those who are favour of this system say that this system promotes two-party system which ultimately results in a balance bet<sup>n</sup> the ruling party and the opposition. According to them, it makes the majority sensitive towards the minorities and they try to accommodate the interests of the minorities. Apart from this, it prevents separatist tendencies among the minorities and motivates them to join the national mainstream.

So, this was the basic structure of Plurality system of Election.

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