



The Indian Elections in 30 Seconds: The Process

In what has been dubbed the Ultimate Election Year, with elections scheduled in 64 countries around the world, how does India do things and what do you need to know?

India uses the First Past the Post system and 272 seats of the 543 available are required to secure a majority and form a government. General elections in India will be held in 7 phases over 44 days from 19th April to the counting of votes on June 4th. The vote is completed electronically but still takes a number of weeks due to the volume of votes.

There are 970m eligible voters, equating to a 10th of the world's population. Manpower and geography are a restraint on pace - electoral rules state that there must be a voting booth within 2km of all voters. In practice, this means there will be approximately 1.05million polling stations and 5.5million electronic voting machines in operation that move between the 28 states and 8 federal territories to accept votes. It's a giant operation, 15million polling officials and security officers are deployed in election logistics, to ensure the veracity of the vote. The vote counting occurs 2-3 days after the last phase and the results are released the same day.

The results of exit polls are embargoed until the last day of polling and following the official release of the election dates the model code is actioned, preventing the incumbent government from announcing any policy decision or projects that may influence the election outcome. There is a wide belief that current Prime Minister Narendra Modi and ruling party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will win with an overwhelming majority, of more than 400 seats following the party's success in local elections.

