



## COALITION GOVERNMENT IN INDIA - GS II MAINS

Q. Discuss whether the model of coalition government will suit the developing Indian democracy at present? Elucidate (15 marks, 250 words)

**News:** *How have coalitions in India picked Prime Ministers? | Explained*

### What's in the news?

- The high-voltage poll campaign for the seven-phase Lok Sabha elections has wrapped up with incumbent Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserting that he will be awarded a third consecutive term.

### Coalition Government:

- A coalition government is a form of government where multiple political parties cooperate to form a governing majority in a legislative body, such as a parliament or a legislature.

### Backdrop:

Coalitions can be either

- Pre-poll
- Post-election

Generally, member political parties in a coalition form a political alliance and adopt a common programme.

### Rationale:

- The main aim of a coalition government is to ensure majority control of the parliament or legislative assembly and the implementation of a common minimum programme.

### Features of Coalition Government:

#### Formation:

- Coalition governments are formed when no single political party secures an absolute majority in an election.
- In such cases, parties come together to form a coalition by agreeing to share power and resources.

#### Composition:

- A coalition government comprises multiple political parties, each with its own agenda and ideology.
- These parties negotiate terms of cooperation, including distribution of ministerial portfolios, policy priorities, and power-sharing arrangements.



## Coalition Management:

- Effective management and coordination are crucial for the smooth functioning of coalition governments.
- Leaders of coalition parties must maintain communication, manage conflicts, and uphold the coalition agreement to ensure stability and governability.

**Examples** - Coalition governments are common in parliamentary democracies worldwide. Countries like India, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Israel have experienced coalition governments at various points in their history.

## Significance of Coalition Government:

### 1. Inclusivity:

- Coalition governments bring together multiple parties, representing a wider spectrum of the electorate.
- This inclusivity can lead to more comprehensive and balanced policies that consider diverse interests and regional concerns.

### 2. Power Sharing:

- They promote power-sharing among various political entities, reducing the dominance of a single party.
- This can lead to more democratic decision-making processes and prevent authoritarian tendencies.

### 3. Regional Representation:

- Coalition governments often include regional parties, ensuring that local issues and regional interests are adequately represented at the national level.

### 4. Checks and Balances:

- The presence of multiple parties in government can act as a check on the power of the ruling coalition, promoting transparency and accountability in governance.

### 5. Policy Innovation:

- The need to negotiate and collaborate among coalition partners can lead to innovative and well-rounded policy solutions, as different perspectives are considered.

## Concerns of Coalition Government:

### 1. Instability:

- Coalition governments can be unstable, as disagreements among coalition partners may lead to frequent changes in leadership or even the collapse of the government.



## 2. Policy Paralysis:

- The need for consensus among coalition partners can lead to delays in decision-making and policy implementation, resulting in policy paralysis.

## 3. Compromises:

- Coalition governments often have to make compromises to keep all partners satisfied.
- This can result in diluted policies and a lack of decisive action on critical issues.

## 4. Conflicting Agendas:

- Different parties in a coalition may have conflicting agendas and priorities, leading to internal conflicts and inefficiencies in governance.

## 5. Short-term Focus:

- To maintain coalition unity, governments may focus on short-term gains and populist measures rather than long-term strategic planning.

Coalition governments offer both benefits and challenges. While they promote inclusivity, power-sharing, and regional representation, they can also lead to instability, policy paralysis, and compromises in governance. The effectiveness of a coalition government largely depends on the ability of its partners to work together harmoniously and prioritize the national interest over individual party agendas.