Polity & Governance · GS - II

Critically examine the procedures through which the Presidents of India and France are elected.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2022	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

India elects its President indirectly through an electoral college using proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote. France elects its President directly through universal suffrage using a two-round majority system. These procedures reflect differences in constitutional structure, democratic legitimacy and executive responsibility.

Model Answer

Introduction

The election procedures of India and France reflect their distinct constitutional systems. India follows a parliamentary model, whereas France operates under a semi-presidential system.

Body

Election of the President of India

Under Articles 54 and 55, the President is elected indirectly by an electoral college comprising elected members of both Houses of Parliament and elected members of State Legislative Assemblies, including those of Delhi and Puducherry.

The election uses proportional representation through the single transferable vote and secret ballot. The value of votes is weighted to maintain balance between states and the Union.

Advantages: It reflects the federal character of India and maintains compatibility with parliamentary government.

Limitations: Citizens do not vote directly, and the complexity of vote weighting may reduce public understanding of the process.

Election of the President of France

The French President is elected directly by universal suffrage for a five-year term. A candidate must secure an absolute majority in the first round; otherwise, a second round is held between the two leading candidates.

Advantages: Direct election provides a strong popular mandate and encourages nationwide political engagement.

Limitations: The two-round system may encourage strategic voting and polarisation, while the President's substantial executive powers can create tensions with the Prime Minister and Parliament.

Conclusion

India's indirect election reflects parliamentary democracy and federal balance, whereas France's direct election strengthens presidential legitimacy. Each procedure corresponds to its constitutional framework, although both must ensure transparency, fairness and democratic accountability.

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