

**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**  
**Karnataka Regional Branch**  
**Bengaluru**

**Report of Prelude Conference on “One Nation One Election”**

The **Karnataka Regional Branch** of the **IIPA**, in association with the **Department of Political Science** of **St. Joseph’s University, Bengaluru** organized its **Prelude Conference** on the theme, “**One Nation One Election**” (**ONOE**) on 28 September 2024.

Introductory Remarks were made by **Mr. S. Ramanathan**, Chairman Emeritus of the Branch. **Rev. Dr. Victor Lobo**, Vice-Chancellor of St. Joseph’s University gave the Inaugural Address. He recalled Mahatma Gandhi’s views in *Hind Swaraj* on Parliamentary Democracy and elections. He also stated that the concept of ONOE should not serve to divide the nation.

The Keynote Address was delivered by **Prof. Sandeep Shastri**, Director of Academics at Nitte Education Trust, Bengaluru. Prof. Shastri presented the contours of the debate on “*One Nation One Election*” and looked at its wider implications. He indicated his preference for “*One Nation Two Elections*” where there would be two cycles of elections, one for the Lok Sabha and another for the Legislative Assemblies and Local Bodies, with a gap of two to two-and-a-half years between each cycle.

This was followed by a **Panel Discussion** where the following Resource Persons gave their respective perspectives on **One Nation One Election**.

1. **Prof. P.E. Somaiah**, Head, Dept. of Political Science, St. Joseph’s University, Bengaluru presented arguments in favour of, as well as against the theme, but ended with the apprehension that it could violate the Basic Structure of the Constitution.
2. **Prof. V. Anil Kumar**, Head, Centre for Pol. Institutions, Governance and Development, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru offered several arguments why he was opposed to the theme. In his view, frequent elections bring out the vibrancy of Indian democracy with its multiplicity of discourses. ONOE smacks of uniformism and conformism and will result in plebiscitary elections.
3. **Dr. Sindhuja Iyengar**, Deputy Director, Centre for National Security Studies, MS Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, Bengaluru focused on the constitutionality of ONOE. In her view, the concept converts a Federal Constitution into a Unitarian one, violates the theory of consent, and adversely affects citizens’ electoral security.
4. **Dr. Aradhana Talwar**, Faculty, Department of Public Policy, School of Social Sciences, Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences, Bengaluru, looked at the concept of ONOE from a Policy perspective, by raising two pertinent questions: Is there a conscious Policy Design in it? Have its Policy Outcomes been thought out carefully?

**Mr. T.M. Vijay Bhaskar**, IAS (Retd.), Chairman of the Branch presided over the Prelude Conference. He complimented all the speakers for sharing their views on the subject

and enlightening the audience with their views and arguments, both for and against. **Dr. Roshni**, Faculty, Department of Political Science, St. Joseph's University welcomed the guests and gathering. **Dr. D. Jeevan Kumar**, Secretary of the Branch proposed a vote of thanks.

***Below:***

Mr. Vijay Bhaskar, IAS (Retd.) Chairman of the Branch is seated in the middle. He is flanked by Rev. Dr. Victor Lobo to his right, and Prof. Sandeep Shastri to his left. At extreme right is Prof. P. E. Somaiah. At extreme left is Dr. D. Jeevan Kumar.



***Below: A section of the audience.***



