

POLITICAL PARTIES

Political Science Class-10

Why do we need Political Parties?

Political Party- A group of people who come up together to contest elections and hold power in the Govt.

Features-

1. Adopt programmes and policies to promote collective good of the people
2. Try to persuade people to consider their policies better than others
3. Try to win elections to implement their policies
4. **Partisanship –**
 - Parties show a fundamental division by representing a part of a society
 - It is known by the part it stands for
 - The part it supports
 - The part whose interests it upholds
5. **Components of political Parties**
 - The leader
 - The active members
 - The followers

Board Questions:

1. What is meant by a political party? Describe the three components of a political party. (2015, 16, 19)
2. What is a political party? Explain any four characteristics of a political party. (2019)

Functions of political parties

- A. **Contest elections –** Candidates are put up by parties to contest elections. Now more and more countries are following the USA method where the members and supporters chose its candidates. In India, Party leaders chose candidates for elections.
- B. **Put forward different policies and programmes –** In a democracy people have different views about policies of parties. Therefore, Parties assess different opinions and reduces a vast multitude of these opinions into a few basic positions. But, in any condition, policies are based on the lines of the ruling party.
- C. **Make laws-** During debate and discussion, in the legislature, the members go by the Party-direction to support or oppose the laws debated.
- D. **Form and run governments-** Parties recruit leaders, train them and then make them ministers to run the government in the way they want.
- E. **Role of opposition –**
 - The parties that lose elections play the role of opposition.
 - Puts different views and criticise the government for its failures and wrong policies
 - Mobilise (try to gather support) opposition to the government.
 - Raise questions in the Parliament keep the government on toe
- F. **Shape public opinion –**
 - Parties raise and highlight issues
 - They form pressure groups as an extension to their influence
 - They launch movements to get resolution to the problems faced by people
 - They have lakhs of members and activists spread all over the country
 - People appear to fall on the lines that parties take

Board Questions:

1. Describe any five major functions of political parties performed in a democracy. (2015, 18, 19)
2. Explain any five functions of ruling parties. (2019) (for ruling party functions refer to 2,3,4, points of the topic- functions of political parties)
3. Explain any three functions of opposition political parties. (2019)
4. How do political parties help in shaping public opinion? (2012)
5. Explain any two functions each of the ruling party as well as of the opposition parties. (2012)

- G. **Provide access to government machinery and welfare schemes** – People have easy access to party leaders than government officers. people come to know of govt activities by party leaders and activists. Parties also have to be responsive to demands and needs of the people.

Necessity of political parties (modern democracy cannot exist without political parties)

- I. We need political parties because they perform various functions
(as mentioned above- see the topic functions of the political parties)
- II. **If there were no political parties** –
 - Every candidate will contest independently
 - The utility of the Govt would remain uncertain
 - Candidates would be accountable to their constituencies only
 - No one will be responsible for how the country will be run.
- III. The rise of political parties is directly linked to the emergence of representative democracies. Political parties bring various representatives from the people to form govt or a representative democracy.
- IV. Gather different views on different issues and present them to government.
- V. They support or restrain the government, make policies, justify or oppose them.

Board Questions.:

6. Explain the role of political parties in a democracy.

OR

Explain any five needs to have political parties to strengthen democracy. (2019)

1. 'Political Parties are a necessary condition for a democracy.' Analyse the statement. (2016)
2. What is the Necessity of a political party for a democracy? (2015, 19)
3. Why cannot modern democracies exist without political parties? Explain. (2011,2014)

We can say that political parties are a necessary condition for a democracy because they perform various functions at different levels to provide a representative govt.

How many parties should we have?

One-party system

- One party controls and runs the government
- No free competition for power
- No opposition
- Example – China, N. Korea, Cuba

Demerits

- It is not a democratic option
- No any opposition to criticise government
- No fair chance for competing parties to come to power.

Board Questions:

1. Why is one-party system not considered a good democratic system? (2016)

Two-party system (Bi-party system)

- Power usually changes between two main dominant parties
- Other parties may exist and can also win few seats in national legislature
- People have choice to vote for any party
- Other parties sit as opposition

Merits

- Stability and smooth functioning of government
- Presence of opposition good for democracy
- Prompt decisions may be taken and implemented

Board Questions:

1. Describe any three features of two-party system. (2015)
2. What do you mean by the bi-party system? Write it's one merit and one demerit. (2012)

Demerits

- Only two parties have chances of winning majority of seats
- Limited choices for voters

Multi-Party System

When more than two parties have a reasonable chance of coming to power it is called multi-party system.

Coming to power can be two ways-

i. Getting majority on alone – One party gains majority and forms the government.

ii. Alliance - When several parties join hands to fight elections together to come to power, it is called an Alliance.

Example – In 2004 there were 3 such alliances –

1. UPA- United Progressive Alliance
2. NDA- National Democratic Alliance
3. Left Front

Board Questions:

1. What is Multi-Party system? Explain merits and demerits of Multi-Party system. (2011,12)

Merits

- This system allows a variety of interests and opinions to enjoy political representation (different religions, castes, races get pasts in parties and government.)
- People have choice between several candidates
- It is more democratic option of all-party systems

Demerits

- Difficult for a party to gain full majority
- This system appears very messy (complex and confusing)
- Leads to political instability
- Vote-Bank politics is given preferences
- Delayed decisions

Which party system is better?

- Party system is not a matter of choice
- Each country develops a party system according to its conditions and circumstances
- Party system evolves out of
 - i. Nature of society
 - ii. Social and regional divisions
 - iii. History of politics
 - iv. Election System

India adopted a Multi-Party System because

1. A two-part system could not accommodate the great and vast social and geographical diversity of India.
2. A Multi-Party System better suits to the conditions and circumstances of India.
3. The social and geographical diversity in India is not easily absorbed two or even three parties.

Board Questions:

1. Why has India adopted a Multi-Party System? Explain. (2015,16)

- The Multi-Party System allows a variety of interests and opinions to enjoy political representation.
- The Multi-Party System makes India more democratic with more choices and competitions.

We can say that the conditions in India demand for a Multi-Party System to give due and proper representation to the variety of interests and views of people coming from different religions, castes, societies. Any other party system other than a Multi-Party System would be injustice to the diversity of India.

National Political Parties

In a federal system there are two kinds of parties.

- Parties present only in one of the federal units (state or regional parties)
- Parties present in many or all units of federation (National parties)

Recognised Parties in India

- Parties register with election commission
- All parties are given unique election symbol which is used by official candidates of the party.
- All parties are treated equally
- The big and established parties are given some special facilities

Conditions required to be recognised as a National party

- Party that secures (gets) at least 6% of the total votes in general elections to Lok Sabha or Assembly Elections in four states.
- Wins at least 4 seats in Lok Sabha

Conditions required to be recognised as a State Party

- Party secures at least 6% votes of the total valid votes State Legislative Assembly elections
- Wins at least 2 seats in the Legislative Assembly

National Parties

- These are present country-wide
- Have their units in power in various states
- National level policies, programs and strategy is followed by state units also
Example- BJP at centre and ruling in many other dates.

(As on May 2017, the total number of parties registered was 1841, with 7 national, 49 state and 1785 unrecognised.)

These are - BJP, Congress, BSP, NCP, CPI, CPM and Trinamool Congress.

Board Questions:

- How are political parties recognised as national parties in India? Explain with examples. (2019)
- What is the requirement laid down by the Election Commission for a political party to be recognised as a 'State Party'? (2015)
- What is meant by national parties? State the criteria for recognising a party as National and state party. (2012)

Board Questions:

- What is meant by 'National Political Parties'? State the conditions required to be a national political Party. (2012,16)

Board Questions:

- Name the National Parties of India in a chronological order. (2014)

Indian National Congress



- Founded in 1885 and one of the oldest parties of the world.
- Ideology-** a centrist party and espouses(supports) secularism and welfare of weaker sections. Supports new economic reforms with a human face. (that does not harm the poor)
- Dominated Indian politics at the national and state level for several decades after India's Independence
- Ruling party till 1977 and from 1980-89 and then from 2004 to 2014.
- Its great leader Jawaharlal Nehru is regarded as Architect of Modern India.
- At present INC is an opposition
- Heads UPA (United Progressive Alliance)

Board Questions:

- Name the National Political Party which espouses secularism and welfare of the weaker sections and minorities. Mention any four features of that party. (2013)

Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP)



- Founded in 1980 (earlier name Bhartiya Jan Sangh)
- **inspiration-** India's ancient culture and values.
- **Ideology-** a strong and modern India. Cultural nationalism (or Hindutva) as the core of Indian Nationhood and politics.
- **J &K** – wants full territorial and Political integration of Jammu & Kashmir with India
- **Uniform Civil code-** wants a uniform Civil code for all living in India irrespective of religion
- Wants ban on religious conversions
- Its support base increased substantially (with a noticeable increase) in the 1990s.
- Came to power in 1998, lost in 2004 and now in power since 2014.
- Heads NDA (National Democratic Alliance)

Board Questions:

1. Name the political party which gets inspiration from India's ancient culture and values. Mention four features of that party. (2013)
2. What is a political party? State any two points of the ideology of BJP? (2016)
3. Mention the sources of inspiration of BJP. (2009)

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)



- Formed in 1984 by Kanshi Ram
- Ideology- stands for the cause and welfare of the oppressed, Dalits, Adivasis, OBCs,
- Inspiration- Teachings of Sahu Maharaj, Mahatma Phule, Periyar, Ramaswami Naicker, Babasaheb Ambedkar
- Its main base is in Uttar Pradesh and substantial presence in MP, Chhattisgarh, Uttrakhand, Delhi, Punjab
- Formed govt many times in UP with support from other parties. Once it got full majority also.

Board Questions:

1. Describe about the ideology and Organisation of Bahujan Samaj Party. (2016)

Communist Party of India (CPI-M)



- Founded in 1964 after a split in CPI
- Ideology- believes in Marxism-Leninism Supports socialism, secularism and democracy
- Has strong support in W. Bengal, Kerala, Tripura among factory workers, farmers, agricultural labourers and intelligentsia
- Believes in socio-economic justice
- Critical of free flow of FDI (foreign direct investment)
- Remained in power in W. Bengal without a break for 30 years.
- Supports UPA

Communist Party of India (CPI)



- Formed in 1925
- Ideology- believes in Marxism-Leninism, secularism and democracy
- Opposes the forces of secessionism and communalism
- Promotes interests of the working class, farmers and the poor
- Got split in 1964 resulting in the formation of CPI(M)
- Has considerable presence in Kerala, W. Bengal, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu
- It advocates building a strong left front and supports UPA.



Nationalist Congress Party (NCP)

- Formed in 1999 after a split in Congress Party
- Supports democracy, Gandhian secularism, equity, social justice and federalism
- Supports for high offices of the country to be held by natural born citizens of India
- It is a major party in Maharashtra and has presence in Meghalaya, Manipur and Assam.
- It is a member of UPA

State Parties

Regional Parties

The parties, other than national parties, are recognised by Election Commission as state parties (also called regional parties).

- The regional parties need not be regional in their ideology or outlook.
- Some regional parties have national level organisation and presence in several states

Example- Samajwadi Party, Rashtriya Janta Dal

- Some parties focus on their state identity like- Biju Janta Dal, Sikkim Democratic Front and Mizo National Front

• Examples of Regional Parties operating in states only.

- Tamil Nadu – AIADMK (All India Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam)
DMK
- Andhra Pradesh- Telugu Desham Party, Lok Satta
- Kerala- Kerala Congress
- Puducherry- AINRC (All India N. R. Congress)
- Jharkhand- JMM (Jharkhand Mukti Morcha)
- Maharashtra- INC (Indian National Congress)
- Odisha- BJD (Biju Janta Dal)

Board Questions:

1. What is meant by regional political party? State the conditions required to be recognised as a regional political party. (2016)
2. Name any six regional parties of the four southern states of India. (2014)
3. Name the regional political parties that are predominant in Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha respectively with their symbols. (2014)

Role of Regional Parties

- Over the last three decades the number and strength of regional Parties has expanded
- The presence of regional parties has made Parliament politically more diverse
- In case of fractured verdict Regional Parties come to play their role
- Since 1996, every one of the state Parties have got opportunities to be part of one or the other national level coalition government
- National parties are compelled to form alliance with state parties
Example- Atal Bihari Vajpayee Govt was formed by taking support from regional parties.
- The Alliance of national and state parties has strengthened the federalism and democracy in India.

Board Questions:

1. Explain the role of regional political parties in Indian politics. (2015)
2. "Nearly every one of the state parties wants to get an opportunity to be a part of one or the other national level coalition" Support the statement with arguments. (2016)

Challenges to Political Parties

- Political Parties are the most visible as well as the least trusted institution in a democracy.
- Political Parties are blamed for whatever wrong is found in democracy.
- All over the world, people express strong dissatisfaction with the failure of political parties to perform their functions well.

Board Questions:

1. What are the various challenges faced by Political Parties? (2016)
2. Explain in four different manners that political parties are still in the grip of some serious challenges. (2011)
3. Highlight the main challenges faced by political parties. (2012, 13, 2016)
4. Which three challenges do you feel are being faced by political parties in India? Give your opinion. (2016)
5. "All over the world people express their dissatisfaction with the failure of political parties to perform their functions well". Analyse the statement with arguments. (2016)

Four main challenges faced by political parties are given below.

1. Lack of Internal Democracy.

- Concentration of power in in one or few leaders at the top.
- Parties do not keep membership registers
- No organisational meetings held
- Do not conduct regular internal elections
- Top leaders have greater power to take decisions
- Personal loyalty to leaders becomes more important than loyalty to party principles

Board Questions:

1. "Lack of internal democracy within parties is the major challenges to political parties all over the world". Analyse the statement. (2012, 15)

2. Dynastic Succession

- It is unfair to the other top members of the party
- In many parties, the top positions are always controlled by members of one family.
- Most parties do not practice open and transparent procedures for their functioning
- It is bad for democracy that people with no adequate experience and popular Support come to occupy powerful positions
- There are few ways fir an ordinary worker to rise to the top of in a party

Board Questions:

1. "Dynastic succession is one of the most serious challenge before the political parties. Analyse the statement. (2015)

3. Money and Muscle Power

- During elections money and Muscle Power is used
- Parties find short-cut means to win elections
- Parties nominate those candidates who have or can raise money for party
- Parties even support criminals who can win elections
- Rich people or companies providing fund to the party, influence policies and decisions of the party
- Increasing role of rich people and big companies has been a cause of worry for Democrats

Board Questions:

1. How do money and muscle power play an important role. Explain. (2015)

4. Problem of Meaningful Choice to the Voters

- Parties do not seem to offer Meaningful choice to voters
- In recent years there has been a decline in ideological differences among parties
Example- In Britain, the two main parties, Labour Party and Conservative Party don't shoe much difference. They differ only the methodology of policy framing and implementation
- In India-
 - Differences on the economic policies has reduced among major parties
 - Economic policy options appear to be limited
 - It is difficult to elect different leaders as the same set of leaders keep shifting from one part to another

How can Parties be reformed

Question of reforms in Political Parties

Citizens all over the world face the Question of reforms in Political Parties

- i. Are political parties willing to reform?
- ii. Can political parties be forced to reform

Some efforts to reform Political Parties

1. Anti-defection law – The constitution was amended to prevent elected MLAs and MPs from changing parties in return for cash or ministerial berth. According to the law of an MLA or MP changes party, he or she will lose the seat in the legislature.....This law has been effective in bringing down defections

2. Affidavit filing made mandatory- Supreme court passed an order making it mandatory for every candidate to file an affidavit giving details of the property and criminal cases pending.

3. Organisational elections made compulsory- Election Commission passed an order making it necessary for political Parties to hold their organisational elections and file their income tax.

Some Suggestions to reform Political Parties

1. A law should be made to regulate the internal affairs of a political party
2. Make it necessary to maintain a register of its members
3. Properly follow the party constitution
4. Highest posts should be filled with open elections.
5. It be made mandatory to give, at least, $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of tickets to women.
6. Women should be a part of decision-making bodies of the party
7. There should be state funding of elections. This support can be in cash or in kind- petrol, paper, telephone etc.

Reaction of political parties to suggestions- Political parties are not willing to accept the above-mentioned suggestions.

Over regulations of political Parties can be counterproductive- The political parties would try to find out ways to cheat laws.

Political Parties may not agree to pass law – Political Parties may not like to pass laws that may curb their freedom or bring them under control.

Public Participation in reforming Political Parties

1. People can put pressure on Political Parties through petitions, publishing and agitations
2. Ordinary citizens, pressure and media canna major role
3. The degree of public participation People, who want reform, should join political parties.
4. The degree of public participation improves the quality of democracy.

Board questions:

1. Describe any three broad guidelines for devising ways and means for political reforms in India. (2011,12)
2. What steps shall be taken to reform the political parties in India? Suggest any four steps. (2011,12,16)
3. "Serious efforts were made by the legal organisation to reform political parties in India." Support the statement. (2015)
4. What is meant by Defection in democracy? Explain. (2014)
5. Examine any two institutional amendments made by different institutions to reform political parties and their leaders. (2016)
6. Elucidate some of the recent efforts to reform political parties and its leaders. (2016)
7. Suggest and explain any five measures to reform political parties. (2012,16)

Difference between National Parties and Regional Parties

National Parties	Regional Parties
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> National Parties have their influence all over the country or in many states. The parties raise national and international issues. They need to secure at least 6% of total valid votes in Lok Sabha Elections or assembly elections in four states and wins at least four seats in the Lok Sabha. Example- INC, BJP, BSP, CPI 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Parties have their influence in one state or a few regions. They raise regional issues. They need to secure at least 6% of total valid votes in an election to Legislative Assembly of a state and wins at least 2 seats. Example- Samajwadi Party, DMK, AIADMK

Board Questions:
Differentiate between national and regional parties. Write any four points.
(2011, 12, 13)

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