

# Political Parties

## SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (3 MARKS)

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### Previous Years' Questions

**Q.1. How has multi-party system strengthened democracy in India ? Explain. [Delhi 200]**

**Ans.** The multi-party system has strengthened democracy in India in various constructive ways like :

- Multi-party system has given the opportunities to a variety of interests and opinions to enjoy political representation. For example, in India more than 750 political parties are registered with the Election Commission.
- Multi-party is more representative and accountable to democratic ideals. It creates a system of internal checks and balances within a coalition government.

### Additional Questions

**Q.2. List out the elements of a political party.**

**Ans.** In brief, there are four basic elements of every political party. Common aims, Organisation, National interest, Constitutional means.

These are some basic elements which are necessary to form a political party

#### **Common Aim**

⇒ Its members must have a similar and unanimous opinion regarding public matters and issues.

#### **Organisation**

⇒ The members with common objectives must form themselves into an organisation.

#### **National Interest**

⇒ The political parties must aim at promoting national interest.

#### **Constitutional Mean**

⇒ A political party must follow peaceful and constitutional means in order to capture political power.

**Q.3. List out one merit and one demerit of bi-party system.**

**Ans.** Merits and demerits of Bi-party system.

#### **Merits**

⇒ Stable Government : The very first merit of Bi-party system is that the government in this party would be very stable as it comes to power by a majority and thus, there will be continuity of policies and programmes.

⇒ Strong Opposition : Secondly, the opposition will be very strong and effective as only one party forms the opposition.

#### **Demerits**

⇒ Undemocratic : Sometimes the two-party system is considered as undemocratic as the ideological choice is very limited between two parties. The opinion of people cannot be expressed properly.

⇒ Cabinet Dictatorship : Since the party comes to power by an absolute majority, it is difficult to remove it and it can result in the dictatorship of the cabinet, i.e., the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers.

#### **Q.4. What are the advantages of a multi-party system ?**

**Ans.** The multi-party system is supposed to be in the advantageous position than other party systems.

⇒ Democratic in Nature : Multi-party system is a very democratic system of representative government as various opinions of the people are represented by one of the many parties.

There is a wide spectrum of choice for the voters.

⇒ Absence of Cabinet Dictatorship : The Dictatorship of Cabinet is avoided and Legislature is not a puppet in the hands of the cabinet.

⇒ Represents Interests of Various Groups : In a multi-party system the coalition government only works keeping in mind the interests of various groups and sections.

#### **Q.5. List out important national parties with their aims.**

**Ans.** According to the classification of Election Commission in 2006. There were six political recognised parties in the country like :



Indian National Congress (INC) : Its main aim are secularism and welfare of weaker sections and minorities.



Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) : Its main aim is cultural nationalism and uniform civil code.



Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) : Main aim — seeks to represent and secure power for the Bahujan Samaj which includes the dalits and adivasis, OBCs and religious minorities.



Communist Party of India - marxist (CPI-M) : Main aim- supports socialism, secularism and democracy. It opposes imperialism and communalism.



Communist Party of India (CPI) : Main aim— Opposed to forces of secessionism and communalism.

It accepts Parliamentary Democracy.



Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) : Main aim— Democracy. Gandhian secularism, equity, social justice and federalism.

**Q.6. Why modern democracies cannot exist without political parties ?**

**Or**

**Why are political parties necessary for a democracy ?**

**Ans.** Political parties are necessary for democracy because :

- ⇒ They unite and aggregate like-minded people from diverse backgrounds, religions, etc. to form a wide coalition of people and give unity in diversity.
- ⇒ Political party which wins a majority form the government and undertake socio-economic and cultural reforms to try and establish a welfare state. The parties, which get a minority of votes, form the opposition and check the government through different means.
- ⇒ Parties provide an important two-way link between the government and the people. In this way they keep the government in close touch with the people.
- ⇒ Besides, Political parties impart Political education to the people by popularising their manifesto and through other means like meetings, posters, demonstrations, etc.

All these show that political parties are necessary and modern democracies cannot exist without political parties.

**Q.7. Examine the rise and growth of political parties.**

**Ans.** The Rise and Growth of political parties is directly linked to the emergence of representative democracies.

- ⇒ As societies became large and complex, they also needed some agency to gather different views on various issues and to present these to the government.
- ⇒ They needed some way to bring various representatives together, so that a responsible government could be formed. Societies also needed a mechanism to support or restrain the government, make policies, justify or oppose them. Hence, the growth of political parties fulfils these needs that every representative government has. The Indian party system originated during the British rule as a response to the British colonial challenge.

**Q.8. Discuss the merits and demerits of Mono-party system.**

**Ans.** "One-party or mono-party system" is such a system in which only one party operates in the political system for various reasons.

**Merits :**

- (i) Less Expensive : The mono party is not an expensive system as there is only one party and mostly one candidate contests, thus there is no or not much campaigning. People have no choice but to vote for him.
- (ii) Stability : It provides a stable form of government, as there is only one party, which is not voted out of power and there is no opposition.

**Demerits :**

But we cannot consider one party system as a good option because this is not a democratic option,

- (i) Undemocratic : Mono party is an undemocratic system as in a democracy there has to be more than one party. One party can become dictatorial, authoritarian and corrupt. Competition between parties gives practical meaning to democracy.
- (iii) Encroachment of Rights : In the single party system there is a tendency for the rights of the people to be taken away as there is no other party to check the government. Thus, the government becomes all powerful and encroaches on the rights of the people.

**Q.9. Examine the advantages and disadvantages of Bi-party system.**

**Ans.** Bi-party system. The two party system is one in which the power alternates between two parties :

**Advantages :**

Stable Government : The government in this party system would be very stable as it comes to power by a majority and thus there will be continuity of policies and programmes.

Strong Opposition : In the Bi-party system the opposition will be very strong and effective as only one party forms the opposition.

Responsible Government : This system best reconciles responsiveness with order and representative government with efficient governance.

**Demerits :**

Refer to Ans. 3 (3 Marks).

**Q.10. How are Regional parties different from the National parties ?**

**Ans.** Difference between national and regional parties :

National Parties	Regional Parties
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(i) National parties have influence all over the country.	(i) While, the influence of regional parties is limited to particular regions or state.
(ii) National parties deal with national problems.	(ii) Whereas, regional parties are concerned with the problems and demands of a particular region only.
(iii) The activities of the national parties give	(iii) But the activities of regional parties are

**Q.11. What are the conditions fulfilled by any party to become a National party ?**

**Ans.** The Election Commission has laid down detailed criteria of the proportion of votes and seats that a party must get in order to be a recognised party :

**Regional Party**

⇒ A party that secures at least 6 per cent of total votes in an election to the Legislature/Legislative Assembly of a state and wins at least two seats is recognised as a state party or Regional party.

**National Party**

⇒ A party that secures at least six per cent of total votes in Lok Sabha elections or Assembly elections in four states.  
 ⇒ Wins at least four seats in the Lok Sabha is recognised as a National party.

**Q.12. Who was the founder of Bahujan Samaj Party ? What are its main aims ? Which states act as the base of this party ?**

**Ans.** Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) was formed in 1984 under the leadership of Kanshi Ram. It is the youngest among the national parties and is an example of Dalit resurgence.

⇒ This party has its origin in All India Backward [SM, ST, OBC] and Minorities Communities Employees Federation founded in 1978 by Kanshi Ram. In 1981 he launched another organisation called the DS-4, i.e., the Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti and in 1984 finally the BSP was launched. Bahujan Samaj Party draws inspiration from the ideas and teachings of Sahu Maharaj, Mahatma Phule, Periyar, Ramaswami Naicker and Baba Saheb Ambedkar.

**Aims, Principles and Goals :**

⇒ Bahujan Samaj Party seeks to represent and secure power for the Bahujan Samaj which includes dalits, adivasis, OBCs and religious minorities.

- It stands for the cause of securing the interests and welfare of dalits and oppressed people.
- Bahujan Samaj Party has its main base in the state of Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, and Punjab.

**Present Status :**

Formed government in Uttar Pradesh several times by taking the support of different parties at different times. In the Lok Sabha elections held in 2004, it polled about 5 per cent and secured 19 seats.

**Q.13. Which national party of India opposes imperialism and communalism ? Discuss its main objectives.**

**Ans.** Communist Party of India Marxist (CPI-M) supports socialism, secularism, and democracy and opposes imperialism and communalism. This party was formed in 1964.

**Main Aims and Objectives :**

- ⇒ It believes or accepts democratic elections as a useful and helpful means for securing the objective of socio justice in India.
- ⇒ The party is critical of the new economic policies that allow free flow of foreign capital and goods in country. CPI-M enjoys strong support in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura, especially among the poor, factory workers, farmers, agricultural labourers and the intelligentsia. This party has been in power in West Bengal without a break for 30 years.

**Present Status :**

In 2004 elections, it won about 6 per cent of votes and 43 seats in the Lok Sabha. Currently, it supports the UPA government from outside.

**Q.14. Write a note on CPI.**

**Ans.** The Communist Party of India was formed in 1925. Till 1977, it remained an ally of the Congress. Thereafter, it started to be anti-Congress and anti-BJP, left and democratic front.

**Aims, Objectives and Goals :**

- ⇒ CPI believes in Marxism, Leninism, secularism and democracy.
- ⇒ It opposes the forces of secessionism and communalism.
- ⇒ It accepts parliamentary democracy as a means of promoting the interests of the working class, farmers and the poor.
- ⇒ It favours control over foreign trade, new and equitable international economic order.
- ⇒ It advocates crop insurance schemes and cancellation of loans taken by small peasants; radical land reforms, including fair wages to agricultural workers, etc. (Any three)

**Present Status :**

CPI supports base states are Kerala, West Bengal, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. But its support base has gradually declined over the years. It secured about 1.4 per cent votes and 10 seats in the 2004 Lok Sabha elections. Currently CPI supports UPA government from outside.

**15. Which is recently formed national party ? Examine its objectives.**

**Ans.** The recently formed national party is Nationalist Congress Party (NCP). It was formed in 1999 following a split in the Congress Party.

- ⇒ This party espouses democracy, Gandhian secularism, equity, social justice and federalism.
- ⇒ It also wants that high offices in government be confined to natural born citizens of the country.
- ⇒ A major party in Maharashtra, it has a significant presence in Meghalaya, Manipur and Assam.
- ⇒ It is a coalition partner in the state of Maharashtra in alliance with the Congress. Since 2004, it is a member of the "United Progressive Alliance". (Any three)

**Q.16. Examine the concept of money and muscle power in a political party.**

**Ans.** The growing role of money and muscle power is one of the challenges of political parties especially during elections.

- ⇒ Since parties are focussed only on winning elections, they tend to use shortcuts to win elections.
- ⇒ They tend to nominate those who have or can raise lots of money.
- ⇒ Rich people and companies who give funds to their parties tend to have influence on their policies and decisions.
- ⇒ In some cases, parties support criminals who can win elections. In this way, role of money and muscle power becomes a part of our democratic set-up. Democrates all over the world are worried about the increasing role of the rich and big companies in democratic politics.

**Q.17. What are the ways in which political parties can be reformed ?**

**Ans.** The two ways in which political parties can be reformed are as follows :

- (I) By Putting Pressure : People can put pressure on political parties. This can be done through petitions, publicity and agitations.
  - If political parties feel that they would lose public support by not taking up reforms, they would become more serious about reforms.
- (II) Public Participation : Political parties can improve if right people join political parties. The quality of democracy depends on the degree of public participation. It is difficult to reform politics if ordinary citizens do not take part in it and simply criticise it from outside.
 

Thus, the problem of bad politics can be solved by more and better politics.

**Q.18. Write a short note on the growth of regional political parties in India.**

**Ans.** The growth of regional parties goes back to the "Geo-political nature of India" India is a country of a continental size and a heterogeneous population. It has a plural society and democratic culture.

- ⇒ Continental size, heterogeneous population, Plural society, Democratic culture have led to the desire for political autonomy and thus the growth of Regional parties. These parties are more sensitive to the specific interest of a region and protect and preserve the regional identity.

⇒ Dominance of Congress : The Congress High Command treated the state units not as autonomous but as subordinate branches of the Congress. This hurt the pride and dignity of the people of the state as their leaders were treated like puppets. They wanted regional parties to represent their interests. All these causes led to the rise of various regional parties in India.

**Q.19. "Increase in the number of states or regional parties strengthened democracy in India." Comment.**

**Ans.** As India is a federal state, so more regional parties mean, more influence of state parties in national politics. Now regional parties have a say in political policies as they win elections in their states.

In the present political scenario no single National party has been able to form a government on its own strength since 1996.

- They had to form alliances with the regional parties to form a coalition government at the centre. This has broadened the concept of popular participation and strengthened the federation and democracy in our country.