

## **Chapter – 03 Political Science**

### **Why Do We Need a Parliament**

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Parliament enables citizens of India to participate in decision making and control the government, thus making it the most important symbol of Indian democracy and a key feature of the Constitution.

#### **Why Should People Decide:**

- (i) Independence was long and difficult struggle, they got inspired by the ideas of freedom, equality and participation in decision-making.
- (ii) Under the colonial rule, the people did not criticised British government but the freedom movement changed this situation. The nationalist began to oppose the British government and make demands.
- (iii) The Constitution in independent India laid down the principle of universal adult franchise i.e, that all adult citizens of the country have the right to vote.

#### **People and their Representatives:**

- (i) A democracy is the idea of consent, i.e., the desire, approval and participation of people.
- (ii) It is the decision of the people that creates a democratic government and decides about its functioning.
- (iii) The basic idea in democracy is that the individual or the citizen is the most important person and that in principle the government as well as other public institutions need to have the trust of these citizens.
- (iv) The Parliament, which is made up of all representatives together, controls and guides the government.

#### **The Role of the Parliament:**

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- (i) The Indian Parliament is an expression of the faith that the people of India have in the principles of democracy.
  - (ii) The Parliament in our system has immense powers because it is the representative of the people.
  - (iii) The Lok Sabha is elected once every five years. The country is divided into a number of these constituencies. Each of these constituencies elect one person to the parliament.
  - (iv) Once elected, the candidates become **members of parliament or MPs**. These MPs together make up the Parliament.

### **Parliament Performs the Following Functions:**

- Some of the major functions of the parliament are as follows:

#### **1. Legislative Functions:**

- The Parliament makes laws on all subjects listed in the Union List. It can also make laws on subjects listed under the Concurrent List.
- In case there is any conflict or overlapping in the provisions existing in the Union and State enactment, the Union law prevails.
- In cases when an emergency has been declared, the Union Parliament can also make laws on subjects that fall within the State List.

#### **2. Financial Control:**

- Union Parliament has exclusive powers to provide ways and means through which revenue has to be raised for public services. To that end it imposes taxes and also ensures that the money sanctioned for expenditure to various departments of the government has been spent for the authorized purposes.

#### **3. Providing and exercising control over Cabinet:**

- Our Parliamentary system blends the legislative and the executive organs of the State in as much as the executive power is wielded by a group of Members of the Legislature who command majority in the Lok Sabha.

#### **4. Critical Assessment of the Work of the Cabinet:**

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- The Parliament provides the forum through which is ensured that the Cabinet remains in power only as long as it commands majority support in the Lok Sabha which comprises elected representatives of the people.
  - It is one of the most important functions of the Parliament to bring about discussions and critical assessments of the performance of the government departments.

#### **5. Role of opposition:**

- The existence of opposition also ensures that the nation gets to know about the alternative points of view.

#### **6. An organ of information:**

- Parliament is the most powerful organ so far information about the functioning of the government is concerned.
- The information provided in the Houses is authoritative and Ministers are bound to provide information on matters of government when so desired by the members.

#### **7. Constitutional Functions:**

- The power to amend the Constitution vests with the Parliament.
- Constitutional amendments have to be passed by each house by a majority of total membership as well as by two-third majority of members present in voting.

#### **8. Judicial Functions:**

- Parliament has the exclusive powers to impeach the President and remove judges of the Supreme Court and the High Court's through a prescribed procedure.

#### **9. Elective functions:**

- Elected members of the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha constitute the Electoral College for the election of the Vice-President.
- Along with elected members of the State Legislatures they form the Electoral College for election to the office of the President.
- The Parliament can also by legislation create new States or make changes in the existing boundaries of the States.