

Political Parties

1. State the various functions political parties perform in a democracy.

Solution :

The various functions political parties perform in a democracy are as follows:

- **Contest election:** Candidates are put forward by all political parties to contest in elections. These candidates may be chosen by the top leaders or by the members of the party.
- **Put forward policies and programmes:** Political parties put forward their policies and programmes for the welfare of the people and voters choose those parties whose policy they like the most.
- **Making Laws:** Political parties play a major role in making laws for the country. No law can become a bill unless a majority of the parties support it.
- **Form the government:** Political parties form and run governments. Parties recruit leaders, train them and then make them ministers to run the government in the way they want.
- **Play the role of opposition:** Parties that lose election play the role of opposition to the party in power, by voicing different views and criticizing the government for its failures or wrong policies. Opposition parties also mobilize opposition to the government.
- **Voice public opinion:** Political parties voice the public opinion and raise issues to social concern. Parties sometimes also launch movements for the resolution of problems faced by people. Often opinions in the society crystallize on the lines parties take.
- **Social welfare schemes:** Political parties form an important link between the government and the people. It is easy for the public to approach their local leader than a government official. The local leader has to listen to the public demand, otherwise, he will lose the next election.

2. What are the various challenges faced by political parties?

Solution :

The various challenges faced by political parties are:

- **Lack of Internal democracy:** Every member of the party does not have a chance to take part in the decision-making process. Power remains in the hands of a few top leaders, who do not consult ordinary members. All the major or minor decision are taken by the party head. Ordinary members have no information about the internal working of the party. They hardly get a 'ticket' in an election. Since one or few leaders exercise paramount power in the party, those who disagree with the leadership find it difficult to continue in the party. More than loyalty to party principles and policies, personal loyalty to the leader becomes more important.
- **Dynastic Succession:** The biggest challenge within the political party is the issues of dynastic succession. These parties do not have transparent functioning and always try to give an unfair advantage to their family members. Hence, a political party remains under the control of one family. This is unfair to the other members of the party. This is also bad for democracy since people who do not have adequate experience or popular support come to occupy the positions of power. We can take examples of Congress, SP, RJD, DMK, etc.
- **Money and Muscle Power:** Money is needed to organize demonstrations, public meetings, and speeches to publicize the image of the party. Parties choose those candidates who can raise money for the party and win elections with their money. Rich people and companies who give funds to the parties tend to have an influence on the policies and decisions of the party. Sometimes parties also support criminals candidates because they can win elections.
- **The Meaningful choice to others:** Most of the political parties have same fundamental and ideological issues. Voters do not have a meaningful choice. Even leaders keep changing parties, thus confusing the voter.

3. Suggest some reforms to strengthen parties so that they perform their functions well?

Solution :

Some reforms to strengthen parties are:

- A law should be made to regulate the internal affairs of political parties. Amendment was made in the constitution to prevent MPs and MLAs from changing parties. If anyone tries to change his/her party then he/she will lose their seat. This new law has helped to bring defection down.
- It should be mandatory for political parties to give a minimum number of tickets (about 1/3rd) to the women candidates. Similarly, there should be a quota for women in decision making bodies of the party.
- There should be state funding of elections. The government should give parties money to support the election expenses. This support could be given in the form of petrol, paper, telephone etc. This may reduce the influence of money in the election.
- Supreme court has helped in reducing the influence of criminals and money in elections. It is now mandatory for every person contesting the election, to give an affidavit regarding his wealth and criminal cases pending against him. The new system has made a lot of information available to the public.

4. What is a political party?

Solution :

A political party is a group of people who follow an ideology and thus come together to contest elections and hold power in the government. They agree on some policies and programmes for the society with a view to promote the collective good.

5. What are the characteristics of a political party?

Solution :

Characteristics of a political party are as follows:

- A political party has members who agree on same policies and programmes for the society keeping in view to promote common welfare for the people.
- It seeks to implement the policies by winning popular support from the people through elections.
- The presence of a leader makes the difference for the party workers and supporters.

- It is a group of people who come together to contest elections and hold power in the government.

6. A group of people who come together to contest elections and hold power in the government is called a _____.

Solution :

Political Party

7. Match List I (organisations and struggles) with List II and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists:

	List I					List II			
1	Congress Party				A.	National Democratic Alliance			
2	Bharatiya Janata Party				B.	State party			
3	Communist Party of India (Marxist)				C.	United Progressive Alliance			
4	Telugu Desam party				D.	Left Front			
	1	2	3	4					
(a)	C	A	B	D					
(b)	C	D	A	B					
(c)	C	A	D	B					

Solution :

	1	2	3	4
(c)	C	A	D	B

8. Who among the following is the founder of the Bahujan Samaj Party?

- A. Kanshi Ram
- B. Sahu Maharaj
- C. B.R. Ambedkar
- D. Jotiba Phule

Solution :

A. Kanshi Ram

Explanation: BSP seeks to represent and secure the power for the Bahujan Samaj party which includes the Dalits, Adivasis, OBC's and various religious minorities.

9. What is the guiding philosophy of the Bharatiya Janata Party?

- A. BahujanSamaj
- B. Revolutionary democracy
- C. Integral humanism
- D. Modernity

Solution :

D. Modernity

Explanation: Wants to build a strong and modern India by drawing inspiration from India's ancient culture and values.

10. Consider the following statements on parties.

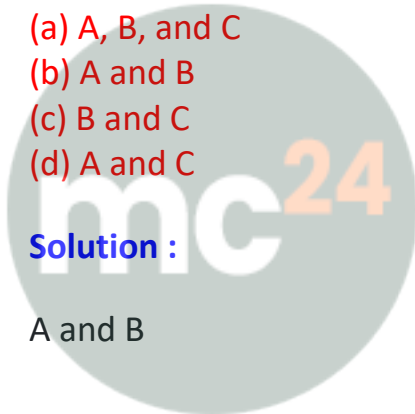
- A. Political parties do not enjoy much trust among the people.
- B. Parties are often rocked by scandals involving top party leaders.
- C. Parties are not necessary to run governments.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) A, B, and C
- (b) A and B
- (c) B and C
- (d) A and C

Solution :

A and B



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