



# Party System in India

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# Contents

- What is a Political Party?
- Functions of the Political Parties
- Why do we need Political Parties?
- Different Party Systems in World
- Characteristics of Indian Party System
- Types of Political Parties
- Major Political Parties of India
- Challenges to Political parties
- Conclusion

# What is a Political Party?

- A Political Party is a group of people who come together to contest elections and hold power in the government. They agree on some policies and programmes for a society with a view to promote collective good.
- A political party has three main components:-
  - The leaders
  - The active members and
  - The supporters

# Functions of the Political Parties

- Parties contest elections.
- Parties form and run governments in country.
- Parties put different policies and programmes.
- Parties play a decisive role in making laws for a country.
- Those parties that lose in the elections play the role of opposition to the parties in power.
- Parties shape public opinion by raising and highlighting issues.
- Parties provide people access to gov.t machinery and welfare schemes implemented.

# Why do we need political parties?

- We can understand the necessity of political parties by imagining a situation where political parties doesn't exist. Every candidate in the elections will be independent , so no candidate will be able to make any promises to the people about any major changes. The government may be formed but its utility will remain ever uncertain. Elected representatives will be accountable to their constituency only. No one will be responsible for how the country will be run

# Different Party Systems in World

## ➤ Single dominant party

- In one party systems ,one political party is legally allowed to hold effective power. Although minor parties may sometimes be allowed, they are legally required to accept the leadership of the dominant party. This party may not always be identical to the government, although sometimes positions within the party may in fact be more important than positions within the government. China is an example;

## ➤ Two political parties

- Two party systems are states such as United States of America in which there are two political parties dominant to such an extent that electoral success under the banner of any other party is almost impossible. One right wing coalition party and one left wing coalition party .

# Different Party Systems in World Contd.

## ➤ Multiple political parties

- Multi party systems are systems in which more than two parties are represented and elected to public office.
- Australia ,Canada ,Pakistan ,India ,Ireland ,United Kingdom and Norway are examples of countries with two strong parties and additional smaller parties that have also obtained representation. The smaller or "third" parties may form a part of a coalition government together with one of the larger parties or act independently from the other dominant parties.
- More commonly, in cases where there are three or more parties, no one party is likely to gain power alone, and parties work with each other to form coalition government.

# Characteristics of Indian Party System

- Multiple Party system – In 2006 – national parties -6; regional parties - 35, non – recognized parties – 612,
- Rise of Effective Opposition Party
- Independent Members
- Existence of many Communal and Regional Parties
- Absence of Specific Constitutional Provision - Article 19(C) -All citizens shall have the right to form associations or unions.

# Types of Political Parties

- There are two types of political parties –
  - **National parties** – A party that secures at least 6% of the total votes in lok sabha elections or assembly elections in four states and win at least 4 seats in lok sabha is recognized as a national party.
  - **State / Regional parties** – A party that secures atleast 6% of the of the total votes in state legislative assembly elections and wins at least 2 seats is recognized as state party

# Major Political Parties of India – Indian National Congress

- One of the oldest parties of the world. Founded in 1885 by members of the occultist movement Theosophical Society—Allan Octavian Hume, Dadabhai Naoroji, Dinshaw Wacha, Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee, Surendranath Banerjee, Monomohun Ghose, and Mahadev Govind Ranade
- It played a important role in the independence of India.
- It was a ruling party till 1977 after independence.
- A centrist party in its ideological orientation, the party espouses secularism and welfare of weaker sections. Currently leads the ruling united progressive alliance.
- The party's political symbol is hand.

# Major Political Parties of India – Indian National Congress

- It is centrist party (neither rightist nor leftist) in its ideological orientation.
- The party supports new economic reforms but with a human face
- The party has full faith in secularism
- The party aims at the welfare of the weaker sections and minorities.
- The Indian National Congress aims to:-
  - To build a modern secular democratic republic in India.
  - The party believes in equality of all countrymen.
  - Believes in education and welfare of weaker sections and minorities.
  - Supports new economic reforms with a human touch.

# Major Political Parties of India – Bharatiya Janta Party

- Bhartiya Janata Party was established in 1980 due to split in Janata Party. Bhartiya Janata was formed under the President ship of former foreign Minister. Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee. On April 24, 1980 the Election Commission granted recognition to the group led by Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee as a national party. The BJP was also provisionally allotted the symbol of `Lotus`.
- Policies and Programmes of B.J.P: AT the time of 15h Lok Sabha election, BJP released its election Manifesto in March, 2009. The programme and policies of BJP are as follows:
  - Restoration of State authority: The BJP favors promised to restore to our state its authority. The primary task is to restore to the state, and to governance its honor and prestige.
  - Constitutional Reforms: The BJP will appoint a commission to review the constitution of India, the commission will comprise the constitutional experts and eminent.
  - Centre- State Relations: The BJP favors restricting of centre – state relations in view of the quick economic development and decentralization.

# Major Political Parties of India – Bharatiya Janta Party

- Article 356: Article 356 permitting dissolution of state government by the centre will be invoked only when the constitutional machinery has in fact broken down and not promote any partism interest.
- National Unity: The BJP is pledged to defend the unity and integrity of India.
- Positive Secularism: The BJP is committed to the concept of positive secularism which means Sarva Dharma Sambhava and which does not connote an irreligious state.
- Smaller States: The Party stands for the information of smaller states which are economically and administratively viable.
- Languages: A commission will be setup to study the feasibility of treating all 18 languages included in schedule 8 of the constitution as official language.
- Inter State Council: BJP will appoint an Inter State Council to settle all inter- state and centre state disputes.
- Right to Information: The BJP will enhance public access to information to the maximum extent possible.
- Minorities: The BJP will guarantee to all minorities whether religious or linguistic peace and security and fulfill opportunities for progress and development.

# Challenges to political parties

- The lack of internal democracy within parties manifests in the following:
  - Parties do not keep membership registers
  - Parties do not hold organizational meetings.
  - Parties do not conduct internal elections regularly.
  - Ordinary members do not have sufficient information about the party. All powers get centralized among the top leaders.
- Dynastic succession
  - Dynastic succession is a feature common to most of the political parties, both at the national and state level where top positions in the party become hereditary. Others members cannot even aspire to reach these positions.
- Growing role of money and muscle
  - The role of money and muscle is on the rise in almost all the parties. Those with money and muscle power begin to control the various organs of the party.

# Conclusion – Reformation of Political Parties

- The Constitution was amended to prevent elected MLAs and MPs from changing parties. The law says that if any MLA or MP changes party, he/she will lose the seat in legislature.
- Now, it is mandatory for every candidate who contests election to file an Affidavit giving details of his property and criminal cases pending against him.
- The Election Commission passed an order making it necessary for political parties to hold their organizational elections and file their income tax returns.
- It should be made compulsory for political parties to maintain a register of its members, to follow its own constitution, to have an independent authority, to act as a judge in case of party disputes, to hold open elections to the highest posts.

# Conclusion – Reformation of Political Parties Contd.

- It should be mandatory for political parties to give about one-third of its tickets to women candidates.
- The government should give parties money to support their election expenses. This support could be given in kind: petrol, paper, telephone, etc.
- People can put pressure on political parties through petitions, publicity and agitations. Pressure groups and movements and media can play an important role in this.
- Political Parties can improve if those who want this join political parties. The quality of democracy depends on the degree of public participation.