

7th Social Science Lesson 7 Notes in English

7] Political Parties

Political Parties:

Political parties are the voluntary associations of individuals with broad ideological identity who agree on some policies, formulate an agenda and programme for the society. Political parties seek to implement their policies by winning people's support through election. Parties vary in size and in the ways they organize themselves as well as in their policies.

Any political party has three basic components

- ❖ the leader
- ❖ the active members
- ❖ the followers

Importance of political parties:

Political parties are the backbone of democracy. Parties are not part of the formal arrangement of a government but they are essential elements to form the government. They formulate public opinion. They serve as intermediaries between the citizen and the policy makers.

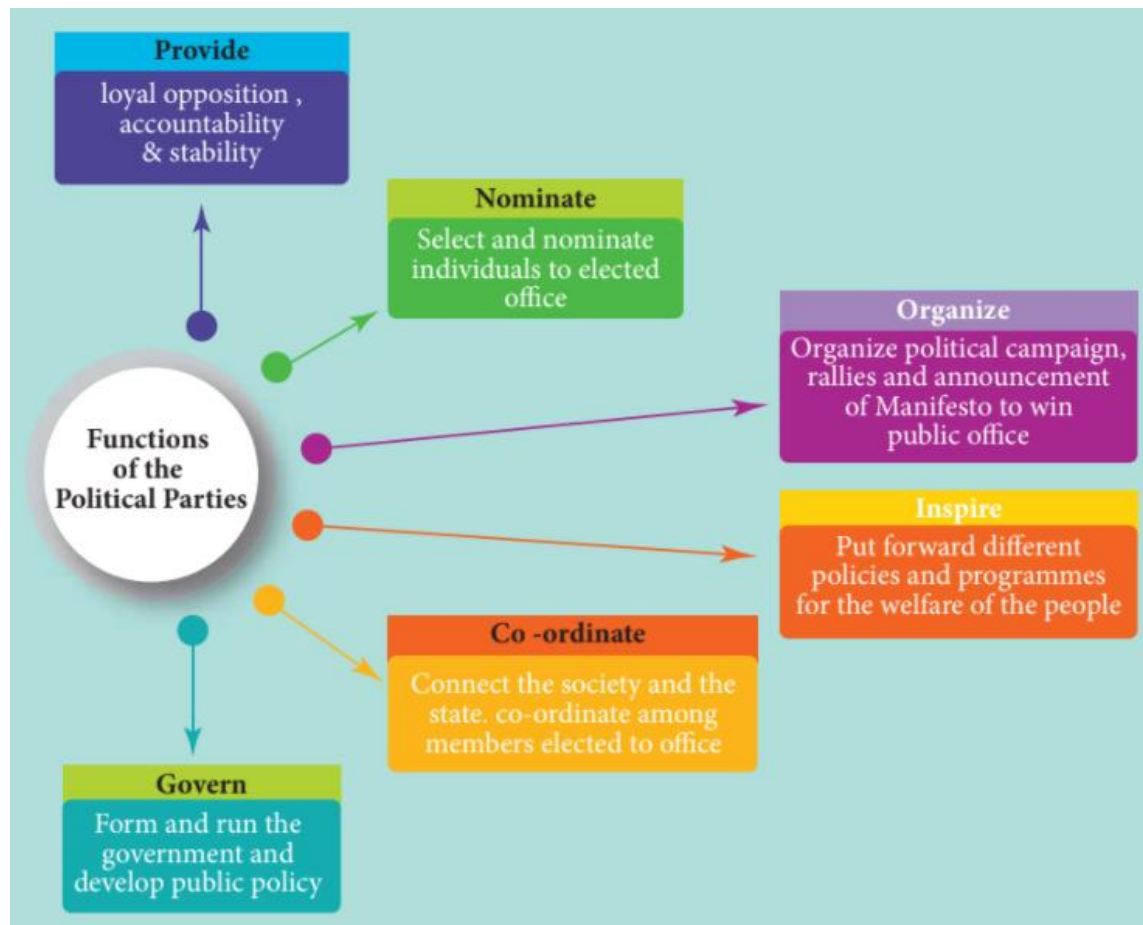
A party is recognized if

- ❖ It has been engaged in political activity for five years.
- ❖ Its candidates secure at least six percent of total votes in the last general election.

Characteristics of Political Parties:

Political parties

- ❖ Consist a group of persons of common goals and shared values.
- ❖ Have its own ideology and programme.
- ❖ Capture power only by constitutional means.
- ❖ Endeavour to promote the national interest and national welfare.



Types of Party System:

There are three major types of party system.

Single Party System:

A system in which a single political party has the right to form the government. Single party is existed in the communist countries such as China, North Korea and Cuba.

Bi – Party System:

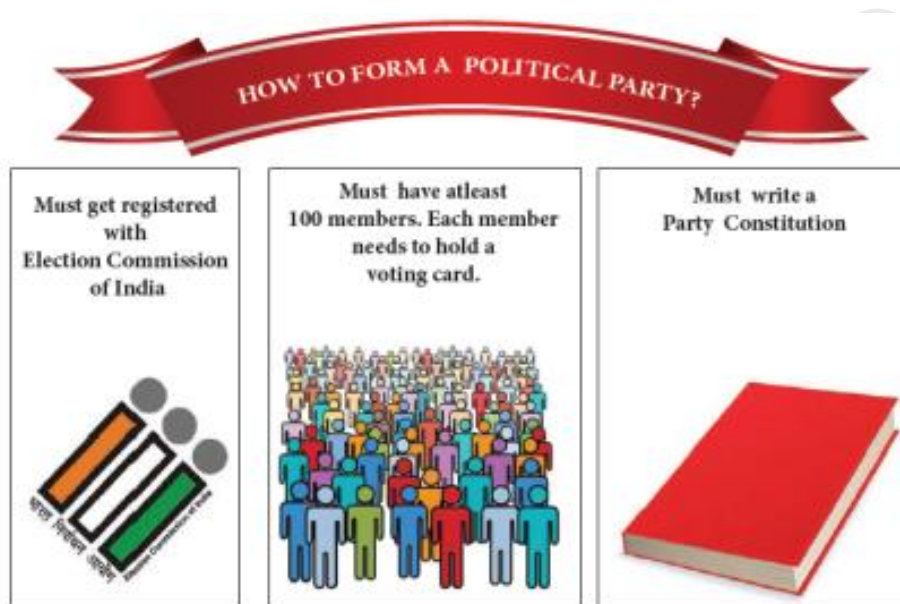
In Bi –Party system the power is usually shared between two parties. Of the two parties one becomes the ruling party and the other becomes opposition. eg Bi-Party system can be seen in U.K. (the Labour Party and the Conservative Party) and in U.S.A (the Republican Party and the Democratic Party)

Multi – Party System:

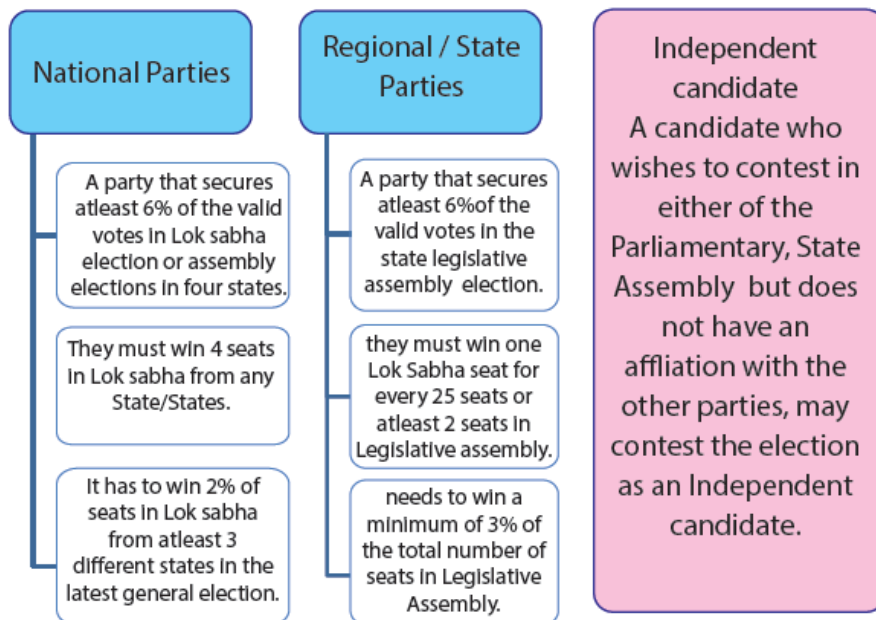
When the competition for power is among three or more parties, the system is known as multi party system. This type of party system is in existence in India, France, Sweden and Norway etc.

Party system in India:

Countries that follow a federal system have two kinds of parties. India's party system originated in the late 19th century. In fact India has the largest number of political parties in the world. In India we find the existence of political parties at three levels. They are National parties, Regional parties, and Registered but unrecognised parties (independent candidates). Every party in the country has to register with Election Commission.

**Criteria for Recognition:**

The Election Commission of India has some criteria for the recognition of political parties in India.



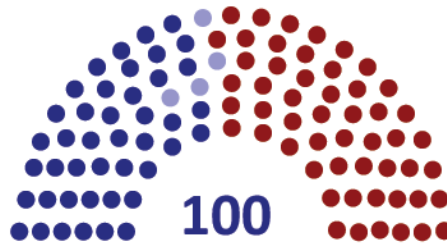
Recognized parties:

Parties that fulfill these criteria are called recognized parties. They are given a unique symbol by the Election Commission.

A registered but unrecognized political party cannot contest election on its own symbol. This party has to choose one symbol from free symbol 'poll panel' announced by the Election Commission.

Majority Party:

The Political Party whose number of candidates elected is more than the others is called the majority party. The Majority Party forms and runs the government. They select and appoint their ministers to run the government. They play a decisive role in making laws for the country.

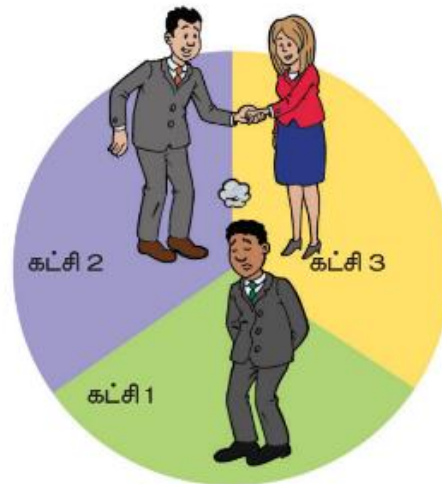
**Minority Party:**

Those with lesser number of elected candidates are called the minority party.

Opposition Party:

The party which gets second largest number of seats next to the majority party in the election is called the Opposition party. An effective opposition is very essential for the successful operation of the democracy. They are as important as that of ruling party. They check the autocratic tendencies of the ruling party. They critically examine the policies and bills introduced by the government. They raise their voice on the failures and wrong policies. They highlight important issues which are not acted upon the Government. The leader of the opposition party enjoys the rank of Cabinet Minister.

Coalition Government:



In a Multiparty system a single party sometimes may not secure the majority required to form the government. In such a case, some parties join together to form the government. Such government is called Coalition Government.

Electoral Symbols and its importance:

An electoral symbol is a standardised symbol allocated to a political party. They play an important role in elections. They can be easily identified, understood, remembered and recognized by the voters. The Election commission has stopped allotting animals as symbols. The only exceptions are the lion and the elephant. The symbol of nationally recognized parties is standard throughout India. That symbol will not be allotted to any other party or individual.

State parties are allotted to certain symbols that no other party can use the symbol in that particular state but which different parties in different states can use the same symbol. (e.g Shiv Sena in Maharashtra and Jharkhand Mukti Morsha in Jharkhand use bow and arrow as their symbol).

National Party	Regional / State Party
❖ National parties are political parties which participate in different elections all over India.	❖ Regional parties are political parties which participate in different elections but only within one state.
❖ It should be strong enough in at least four states.	❖ It should be strong enough in at least one or two states.
❖ It has an exclusive symbol throughout the country.	❖ A symbol is reserved for it in the state in which it is recognized. But the same symbol can be allotted to different parties in different states.
❖ It resolves State, National and International issues.	❖ It promotes regional and state interest.

Both National and Regional parties trigger the growth of the nation and work for the welfare of the people.

Summary:

- ❖ Modern age is an age of mass society and of large population and party system is a modern phenomenon.
- ❖ A group of people with broad common interest who organize to win elections, control government and thereby influence government policies.
- ❖ There are three major types of party system (i.e.) single party system, Bi - party system, and Multi - party system.
- ❖ In India we have Multi – party system.
- ❖ Individual citizen who are not members of a party may also be elected. They are known as Independents.
- ❖ Election Commission is responsible for free and fair elections in India.

Do You Know?**Party 'manifesto':**

During the campaign before election, the candidates announce the programmes and policies that their party will undertake if voted to power.

Election Commission - Statutory body:

The Election Commission of India is an autonomous, constitutional authority responsible for administering elections. Its head quarter is located in New Delhi.

**Free symbols 'Poll panel':**

As per the Election Symbols order 1968, symbols are either reserved or free.

- ❖ A reserved symbol is meant for a recognized political party.
- ❖ A free symbol is reserved for unrecognized party.