

Lesson 19

National Political Parties

Summary –

Political parties exist in every democratic society and even in authoritarian systems. In a political system, parties act as the carrier of ideas, opinions and approaches to social needs and national goals. Parties provide a link between the citizens and the government, between the electorate and the representative institutions.

Meaning & Role of Political Parties –

A political party is an organised body of people who share certain common principles & goals regarding the political system of a country.

- The main purpose of political parties is to acquire and retain political power.

- It must aim at getting power through the democratic process.
- It must have a clear and acceptable leadership.
- It must focus on broad issues and major areas of government policies.

Types of Party System –

- India has a multi-party system.
- Indian politics is dominated by several national and regional parties.
- There are countries where there is one-party system or two-party system.

Essential features of political party:

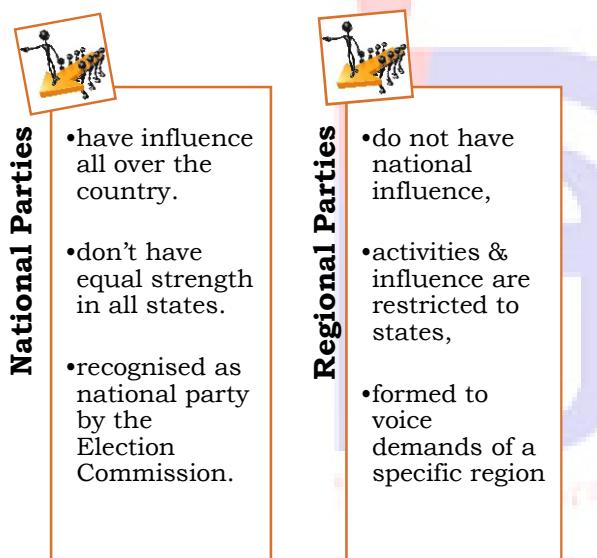
- It must be an organised body of people with a formal membership.
- It must have clearly spelt out policies and programmes.
- Its members should agree with its ideology, policies, and programmes.

Evolution of Party System in India -

- The evolution of Indian party system can be traced to the formation of the Congress as a political platform in 1885.
- Other parties and groups originated later.
- The Indian National Congress was formed as a response to the colonial rule and to achieve

independence from the British rule. After independence and with the adoption of a democratic Constitution a new party system emerged in the wake of the first general elections based on universal adult franchise in 1952.

- Post-independence period, the party system passed through various phases.



Evaluate yourself –

1. Write down the major role of National political parties of India.
2. Regional parties carry the agenda of the development of the local, if yes, support your answer with suitable example.
3. Mention the major essential features of political parties.

Major National Parties in India

1. Indian National Congress -

- Indian National Congress was formed in the year 1885 in Bombay.
- W.C. Bonnarjee was the first President of the Indian National Congress.
- After independence Jawahar Lal Nehru became the Prime Minister and led the Congress till his death in 1964.

2. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) -

- The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was formed in 1980.
- The BJP has emerged as a significant national party.

3. The Communist Parties -

- The two communist parties are the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)].
- the Communist Party is the oldest in India.

4. Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) -

- The BSP acquired the status of a national party in 1996.
- The BSP champions the cause of those sections which belong to low castes, deprived groups, and minorities.