



DELHI PUBLIC SCHOOL BANGALORE - EAST
SOCIAL SCIENCE (POLITICAL SCIENCE)
ELECTORAL POLITICS (NOTES)

NAME: _____ CLASS: IX SEC: _____ DATE: _____

I. Terms to remember:

1. Constituency -

Ans-Voters in a geographical area who elect a representative to the legislative bodies.

2 Incumbent-

Ans-The current holder of a political office. Usually the choice for the voters in elections is between the incumbent party or candidate and those who oppose him.

3. Code of Conduct-

Ans-A set of norms and guidelines to be followed by political parties and contesting candidates during election time.

4.Ballot Paper-

Ans-It is a sheet of paper on which the names of the contesting candidates along with their party name and symbols are listed.

5.Booth capturing –

Ans-It is a type of electoral fraud, in which party loyalists capture a polling booth and vote in place of legitimate voters to ensure that their candidate wins.

6. Rigging-

Ans- Fraud and malpractices indulged by a party or candidate to increase its votes.

II. Very short answers:.

7. What is election?

Ans- It is a mechanism by which people can choose their representatives at regular intervals and change them if they wish to do so.

8. Define the term General Election.

Ans- When elections are held in all constituencies at the same time, either on the same day or within a few days to elect representatives to the Lok Sabha or Vidhan Sabha is called General Elections.

9. What is called a ‘party’s ticket’?

Ans-Political parties nominate their candidates who are given the party symbol and support. This nomination done by the party is called ‘party’s ticket’.

10. What is By-Elections?

Ans- Sometimes election is held only for one constituency to fill the vacancy caused by death or resignation of a member.

11.What is voters turnout?

Ans- Voters turnout indicates the percent of eligible voters who actually cast their vote.

III. Answer in brief:(60-80 words)

12. What details are required from the candidates who wish to contest elections?

Ans: The candidates who wish to contest elections have to make a legal declaration, giving full details of:

- Serious criminal cases pending against the candidate.
- Details of the assets and liabilities of the candidate and his or her family.
- Education qualifications of the candidate.

13.What are reserved constituencies?

Ans - Reserved Constituencies are :

- Constitution has a special system of reserved constituencies for the weaker sections.
- Constituencies are kept reserved for Scheduled Castes (84 seats) and Scheduled Tribes. (47 seats).
- At local and district level the reservation system is extended to other weaker sections like women and OBC.

14. What are the choices generally a voter can make in an election?

Ans - In an election, the voters make the following choices:

- They can choose who will make laws for them.
- They can choose who will form the government and take major decisions.
- They can choose the party whose policies will guide the government and law-making process.

15. “Election campaigns are needed to regulate”. Why?

Ans: It is sometimes necessary to regulate campaigns to ensure that every political party and candidate gets a fair and equal chance to compete.

According to our election law, no party or candidate can:

- Bribe or threaten voters.
- Appeal to them in the name of caste or religion.
- Use government resources for election campaign.
- Spend more than Rs 25 lakhs in a constituency for a Lok Sabha election or Rs10 lakhs in a constituency in an Assembly election.

16. What is the 'Model Code of Conduct' for election campaign?

Ans: According to the Model Code of Conduct, no party or candidate can:

- Use any place of worship for election propaganda.
- Use government vehicles, aircrafts and officials for election.
- Once elections are announced, the Ministers shall not lay foundation stones of any projects, take any big policy decisions or make any promises of providing public facilities.

17. Why should elections be held regularly?

Ans: Elections should be held regularly because:

- It provides incentives to the political parties and leaders.
- They know that if they raise issues that people want to raise, it would make them popular and increase their chances of victory in the next elections.
- But, if they fail to satisfy the voters with their work, they will not be able to win again.

18. Why is there a provision of reservation of seats in the legislatures?

Ans:

- The constitution makers were worried that in an open electoral competition, certain weaker sections may not stand a good chance to get elected to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies.
 - They may not have the required resources, education and contacts to contest and win elections against the more influential and resourceful contestants.
- Hence, the seats are reserved for them in the legislatures.

19. Write a short note on election campaign.

Ans:

- In our country, election campaigns take place for a two-week period between the announcement of the final list of candidates and the date of polling.
- During this period, the candidates contact their voters, political leaders address election meetings and political parties mobilise their supporters.
- This is also the period when newspapers and television news are full of election related stories and debates. But, election campaign is not limited to these two weeks only. Political parties start preparing for elections months before they actually take place.

20. How does the polling take place?

Ans:

- The final stage of an election is the day when the voters cast or 'poll' their vote. That day is usually called the election day.
- Every person whose name is on the voters' list can go to a nearby 'polling booth', situated usually in a local school or a government office.
- Once the voters go inside the booth, the election officials identify them, put a mark on their finger and allow them to cast their vote. An agent of each candidate is allowed to sit inside the polling booth and ensure that the voting takes place in a fair way.
- Earlier the voters used to indicate who they wanted to vote by putting a stamp on the ballot paper. Nowadays electronic voting machines (EVM) are used to record votes.

21. What unfair practices are generally used in elections by our contesting candidates?

Ans: Unfair practices are quite common in elections. A lot of unfair practices are used during this time. Some of these are:

- Inclusion of false names and exclusion of genuine names in the voters' list.
- Misuse of government facilities and government officials by the ruling party.
- Excessive use of money by rich candidates and big parties; intimidation of voters and rigging on the polling day.

22. Why do we need elections?

Ans: Elections are essential for any representative democracy. In an election the citizens have many choices.

- They can choose the people who will make laws.
- They can choose the government that will rule them.
- They can decide on the party whose policies they prefer.

IV. Answer in detail(100-120words)

23. State the merits and demerits of political competition?

Ans: An electoral competition has many demerits:

- In the name of party politics, many unwanted practices are followed.
- It creates a sense of disunity and 'factionalism' in every locality.
- Parties level allegations against each other by using dirty tricks to win elections.
- This pressure to win electoral fights does not allow long-term and sensible policies to be formulated.
- Some good people who wish to serve the country do not enter politics because they do not like to be dragged into unhealthy competition.

Merits of electoral politics:

- Elections are good because they force the ruling party to perform well. The government is aware that it will be voted out of power if it does not perform as the people expected.
- It forces parties and leaders to perform, so competition is good.
- Political competition may cause divisions and ugliness, but it finally helps to force political parties and leaders to serve the people.
- This system works better in the long run because leaders know what is good for the people and are motivated only by the desire to serve them.

24.What are the minimum conditions of a democratic election?

Ans: The minimum conditions of a democratic elections are:

- Everyone should be able to choose. This means that everyone should have one vote and every vote should have equal value.
- There should be something to choose from. Parties and candidates should be free to contest elections and should offer some real choice to the voters.
- The choice should be offered at regular intervals. Elections must be held regularly after every few years.
- The candidate preferred by the people should get elected.
- Elections should be conducted in a free and fair manner where people can choose them at their will.

25 What do you mean by Voter's List? What is its significance?

Ans:

- In a democratic election, the list of those who are eligible to vote is prepared much before the election and given to everyone. This list is officially called the 'Electoral Roll' and is commonly known as the 'Voters' List'.

The significance of Voter's List is as follows:

- This is an important step for it is linked to the first condition of a democratic election. Everyone should get an equal opportunity to choose representatives.
- In our country, all the citizens aged 18 years and above can vote in an election. Every citizen has the right to vote, regardless of his or her caste, religion or gender.
- It is the responsibility of the government to get the names of all the eligible voters put on the Voter's List. As new persons attain voting age, names are added to the voters' list. Names of those who move out of a place or those who are dead are deleted.
- A complete revision of the list takes place every five years. This is done to ensure that it remains up to date. In the last few years a new system of Election Photo Identity Card (EPIC) has been introduced. The government has tried to give this card to every person on the voters' list. But the

card is not yet compulsory for voting. For voting, the voters can show many other proofs of identity like the ration card or the driving licence.

26. Explain the role of the Election Commission in conducting free and fair elections.

OR

Write a short note on the Election Commission of India.

Ans:

- The Election Commission is independent and very powerful .
- It enjoys the same kind of independence that the judiciary enjoys.
- The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) is appointed by the President of India. He heads the Election Commission. After his election the CEC is not answerable to the President or the government. It is impossible for the government to remove the CEC, even if it is dissatisfied with him.

The role of the Election Commission in conducting the free and fair elections is as follows:

- Election Commission takes decisions on every aspect of conduct and control of elections from the announcement of elections to the declaration of results.
- It implements the Code of Conduct and punishes any candidate or party that violates it.
- It allots election symbols to parties and independent candidates.
- During the election period, the Election Commission can order the government to follow some guidelines, to prevent use and misuse of governmental power to enhance its chances to win elections, or to transfer some government officials.
- When on election duty, government officers work under the control of the Election Commission and not the government.

27. What are the changing trends of people's participation in elections in India?

Ans: The changing trends of people's participation in elections in India are as follows:

- People's participation in election is usually measured by voter turnout figures. Turnout indicates the per cent of eligible voters who cast their vote. In India, the turnout figures over last few decades have either remained stable or gone up.
- In India, the poor, illiterate and underprivileged people vote in larger proportion as compared to the rich and privileged sections. This is in contrast to western democracies.
- Common people in India attach a lot of importance to elections. They feel that through elections, they can bring pressure on political parties to adopt policies and programmes favourable to them.
- The interest of voters in election-related activities has been increasing over the years. During the 2004 elections, more than one-third voters took part in a campaign-related activity.
- More than half of the people identified themselves as being close to one or the other political party. One out of every seven voters is a member of a political party.

28. What are the challenges to free and fair elections in India?

Ans: The elections in India are basically free and fair. But, a few candidates may win purely based on money power and unfair means. These challenges exist not just in India but also in many established democracies. These deeper issues are a matter of concern for those who believe in democracy.

The challenges to free and fair elections in India are as follows:

- Candidates and parties with a lot of money may not be sure of their victory but they do enjoy a big and unfair advantage over smaller parties and independents.
- In some parts of the country, candidates with criminal connection have been able to push others out of the electoral race and to secure a 'ticket' from major parties.
- Some families tend to dominate political parties, tickets are distributed to relatives from these families.
- Very often elections offer little choice to ordinary citizens, for both the major parties are quite similar to each other both in policies and practice.
- Smaller parties and independent candidates suffer a huge disadvantage compared to bigger parties.

29. How can you say that the outcome of elections is a final test of free and fair elections? Explain.

Ans: One final test of the free and fair of election has in the outcome itself. If elections are not free or fair, the outcome always favours the powerful. In such a situation, the ruling parties do not lose elections. Usually, the losing party does not accept the outcome of a rigged election.

The outcome of India's elections speaks for itself:

- The ruling parties routinely lose elections in India both at the national and state level. In fact, in every two out of the three elections held in the last fifteen years, the ruling party lost.
- In the US, an incumbent or 'sitting' elected representative rarely loses an election. In India, about half of the sitting MPs or MLAs lose elections.
- Candidates who are known to have spent a lot of money on 'buying votes' and those with known criminal connections often lose elections.
- Barring very few disputed elections, the electoral outcomes are usually accepted as 'people's verdict' by the defeated party.
