CBSE CLASS 10 SST

Complete NCERT Notes for Board Exam

Civics Chapter – 6

POLITICAL PARTIES

Why do we need political parties?

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 the society with a view to promote the collective good. Thus, a party is known by which part it stands for, which policies it supports and whose interests it upholds

A political party has three components:

- The leaders
- The active members
- The followers

Functions of a Political Party

- Parties contest elections

- Parties put forward different policies and programmes and the voters choose from them. A party reduces a vast number of opinions into a few basic positions which it supports.

- Parties play a decisive role in making laws for a country.

- Parties form and run governments

- Those parties that lose in the elections play the role of opposition to the parties in power, by voicing different views and criticising government for its failures or wrong policies.

- Parties shape public opinion. They raise and highlight issues.

- Parties provide people access to government machinery and welfare schemes implemented by governments

The Necessity of Political Parties

- We need political parties because they perform all the functions which are mentioned above. If there wre no political parties then every candidate in the elections will be independent. So no one will be able to make any promises to the people about any major policy changes.

- The government may be formed, but its utility will remain ever uncertain. Elected representatives will be accountable to their constituency for what they do in the locality. But no one will be responsible for how the country will be run.

How many parties should we have?

More than 750 parties are registered with the Election Commission of India. But not all these parties are serious contenders in the elections.

- **There are three types of party system a country can have.**

One Party System

Only one party is allowed to control and run the government. We cannot consider one-party system as a good option because this is not a democratic option. Any democratic system must allow at least two parties to compete in elections and provide a fair chance for the competing parties to come to power. Example - China

Two Party System

Power usually changes between two main parties. Example - The United States of America and the United Kingdom

Multi-Party System

Several parties compete for power, and more than two parties have a reasonable chance of coming to power either on their own strength or in alliance with others. Example - India

Note: When several parties in a multi-party system join hands for the purpose of contesting elections and winning power, it is called an alliance or a front.

For example, in India there were three such major alliances in 2004 parliamentary elections- the National Democratic Alliance, the United Progressive Alliance and the Left Front.

Election Commission

Every party in the country has to register with the Election Commission. While the Commission treats all parties equally, it offers some special facilities to lar ge and esta blished parties . These parties are given a unique symbol - only the official candidates of that party can use that election symbol

State Party

A party that secures at least six per cent of the total votes in an election to the Legislative Assembly of a State and wins at least two seats is recognised as a State party

National Party

A party that secures at least six per cent of the total votes in Lok Sabha elections or Assembly elections in four States and wins at least four seats in the Lok Sabha is recognised as a national party

Major National Parties in India

There were 7 recognised national parties in the country in 2018.

Indian National Congress (INC):

- Popularly known as the Congress Party. One of the oldest parties of the world. Founded in 1885.
- Under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, the party sought to build a modern secular democratic republic in India.
- Ruling party at the centre till 1977 and then from 1980 to 1989. After 1989, its support declined.
- The party's main idea is to promote secularism and welfare of weaker sections and minorities.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP):

- Founded in 1980 by reviving the erstwhile Bharatiya Jana Sangh.
- Wants to build a strong and modern India by drawing inspiration from India's ancient culture and values and Deendayal Upadhyaya's ideas of integral humanism and Antyodaya.

- Cultural nationalism (or 'Hindutva') is an important element in its conception of Indian nationhood and politics
- Emerged as the largest party with 303 members in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP):

- Formed in 1984 under the leadership of Kanshi Ram.
- Seeks to represent and secure power for the Bahujan samaj which includes the Dalits, Adivasis, OBCs and religious minorities.
- It has its main base in the state of Uttar Pradesh and substantial presence in neighbouring states like Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Punjab
- Stands for the cause of securing the interests and welfare of the Dalits and oppressed people.

Communist Party of India (CPI):

- Formed in 1925. Believes in Marxism-Leninism, secularism and democracy.
- Opposed to the forces of secessionism and communalism.
- Accepts parliamentary democracy as a means of promoting the interests of the working class, farmers and the poor.
- Significant presence in the states of Kerala, West Bengal, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

Communist Party of India – Marxist (CPI-M):

- Founded in 1964. Believes in Marxism-Leninism. Supports socialism, secularism and democracy and opposes imperialism and communalism.
- Accepts democratic elections as a useful and helpful means for securing the objective of socio-economic justice in India.
- Enjoys strong support in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura.
- The party was in power in West Bengal without a break for 34 years.

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP):

- Formed in 1999 following a split in the Congress party
- Supports democracy, Gandhian secularism, equity, social justice and federalism.
- A major party in Maharashtra and has a significant presence in Meghalaya, Manipur and Assam.
- A coalition partner in the state of Maharashtra in alliance with the Congress. Since 2004, a member of the United Progressive Alliance.

All India Trinamool Congress (AITC)

- Launched on 1 January 1998 under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee.
- Recognised as a national party in 2016.
- The party's symbol is flowers and grass.
- Committed to secularism and federalism.
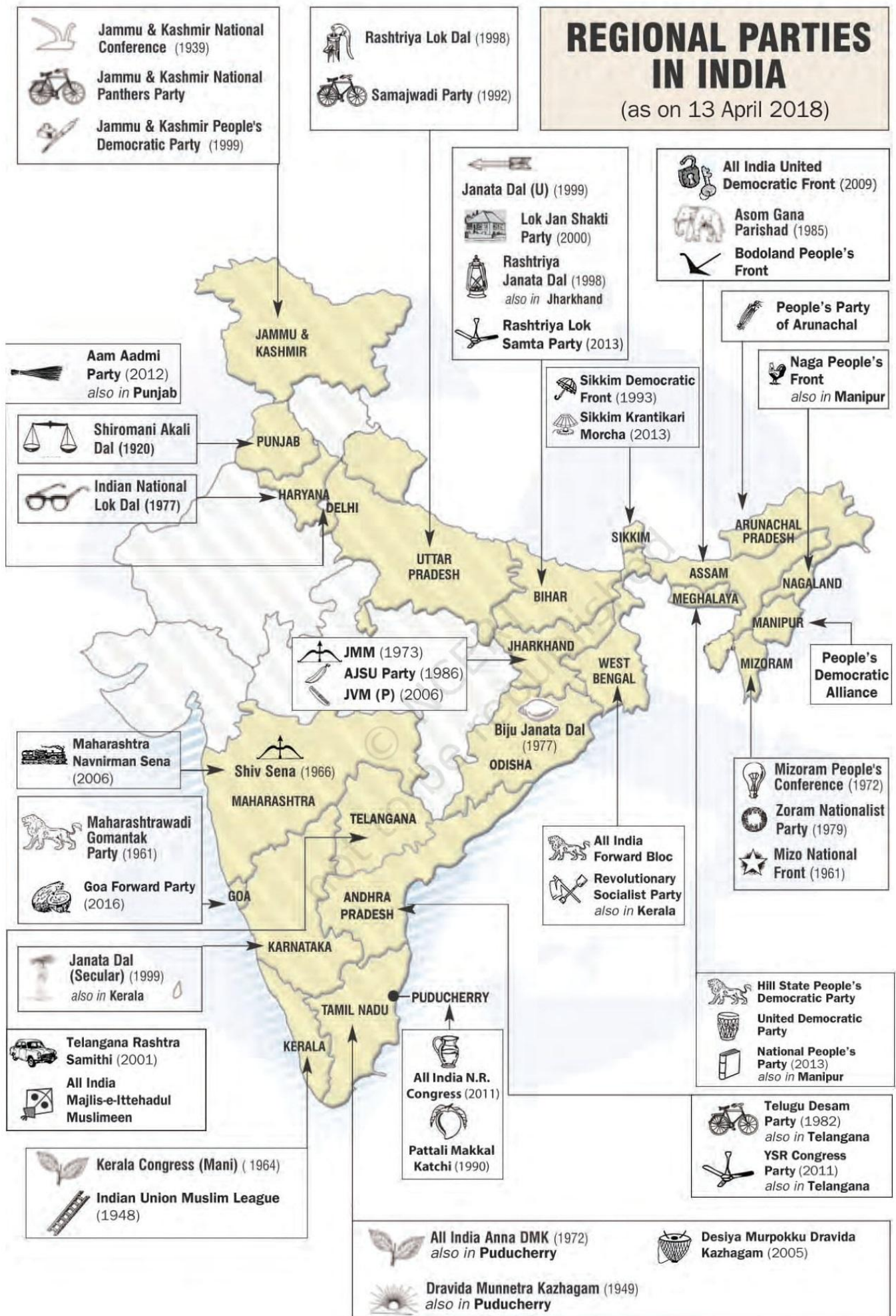
State Parties

- The Election Commission has classified some of the major parties of the country as "State parties".
- The Samajwadi Party , Samata Party and Rashtriya Janata Dal have national level political organisation with units in several states .
- Some of these parties like Biju Janata Dal, Sikkim Democratic Front and Mizo National Front are conscious about their State identity.

REGIONAL PARTIES IN INDIA

(as on 13 April 2018)

Jammu & Kashmir National Conference (1939)

Jammu & Kashmir National Panthers Party

Jammu & Kashmir People's Democratic Party (1999)

Rashtriya Lok Dal (1998)

Samajwadi Party (1992)

Janata Dal (U) (1999)

Lok Jan Shakti Party (2000)

Rashtriya Janata Dal (1998) also in Jharkhand

Rashtriya Lok Samta Party (2013)

All India United Democratic Front (2009)

Asom Gana Parishad (1985)

Bodoland People's Front

People's Party of Arunachal

Naga People's Front also in Manipur

Aam Aadmi Party (2012) also in Punjab

Shiromani Akali Dal (1920)

Indian National Lok Dal (1977)

Sikkim Democratic Front (1993)

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (2013)

JMM (1973)

AJSU Party (1986)

JVM (P) (2006)

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (2006)

Shiv Sena (1966)

Biju Janata Dal (1977)

Mizoram People's Conference (1972)

Zoram Nationalist Party (1979)

Mizo National Front (1961)

Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (1961)

Goa Forward Party (2016)

All India Forward Bloc

Revolutionary Socialist Party also in Kerala

Janata Dal (Secular) (1999) also in Kerala

Telangana Rashtra Samithi (2001)

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen

Hill State People's Democratic Party

United Democratic Party

National People's Party (2013) also in Manipur

Telugu Desam Party (1982) also in Telangana

YSR Congress Party (2011) also in Telangana

Kerala Congress (Mani) (1964)

Indian Union Muslim League (1948)

All India N.R. Congress (2011)

Pattali Makkal Katchi (1990)

People's Democratic Alliance

All India Anna DMK (1972) also in Puducherry

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (1949) also in Puducherry

Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (2005)

JAMMU & KASHMIR

PUNJAB

HARYANA

DELHI

UTTAR PRADESH

BIHAR

SIKKIM

ARUNACHAL PRADESH

ASSAM

MEGHALAYA

NAGALAND

MANIPUR

MIZORAM

JHARKHAND

WEST BENGAL

ODISHA

MAHARASHTRA

TELANGANA

GOA

ANDHRA PRADESH

KARNATAKA

PUDUCHERRY

TAMIL NADU

KERALA

Challenges to political parties

- The first challenge is lack of internal democracy within parties. Parties do not keep membership registers, do not hold organisational meetings, and do not conduct internal elections regularly.

- The second challenge of dynastic succession is related to the first one. Most political parties do not practice open and transparent procedures for their functioning n many parties, the top positions are always controlled by members of one family.

- The third challenge is about the growing role of money and muscle power in parties, especially during elections
Since parties are focused only on winning elections, they tend to use short-cuts to win elections. In some cases, parties support criminals who can win elections.

- The fourth challenge is that very often parties do not seem to offer a meaningful choice to the voters. Sometimes people cannot even elect very different leaders either, because the same set of leaders keep shifting from one party to another

How can parties be reformed?

Some of the recent efforts and suggestions in our country to reform political parties and its leaders:

- The Constitution was amended to prevent elected MLAs and MPs from changing parties. This was done because many elected representatives were indulging in DEFECTION in order to become ministers or for cash rewards.

  Now the law says that if any MLA or MP changes parties, he or she will lose the seat in the legislature. This new law has helped bring defection down. At the same time this has made any dissent even more difficult. MPs and MLAs have to accept whatever the party leaders decide.

- The Supreme Court passed an order to reduce the influence of money and criminals. Now, it is mandatory for every candidate who contests elections 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 organisational elections and file their income tax returns

Many suggestions are often made to reform political parties:

- A law should be made to regulate the internal affairs of political parties

- It should be made mandatory for political parties to give a minimum number of tickets, about one-third, to women candidates.

- There should be state funding of elections. The government should give parties money to support their election expenses

Note: These suggestions have not yet been accepted by political parties.

There are two other ways in which political parties can be reformed

- People can put pressure on political parties. This can be done through petitions, publicity and agitations.

- Political parties can improve if people who want change can join political parties. It is difficult to reform politics if ordinary citizens do not take part in it and simply criticise it from the outside.