

Chapter 6 - Political Parties

Meaning : A political party is a group of people who come together to contest elections and hold power in govt and make public opinion among the people of country.

Topic : The role of Political Parties to Shape Public Opinion :

- They raise and highlight issues.
- The parties clear the policies of govt. to people.
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- Political parties give their ideas in favour and against the govt.
- Political parties give their ideas about the new laws made by the govt.
- In this way the political parties help to create public opinion in people. So it is necessary for people if they want to establish democratic govt. they have to analyze for and against democracy.

2. Topic : Challenges to Political Parties

Parties are for the working of democracy parties are the most visible face of democracy. It is natural that people blame parties, criticise them.

Parties have to face many challenges :-

1. Lack of Internal democracy :-

1. Concentration of powers in one hand.
 2. Parties do not conduct internal election.
 3. Leaders assume greater power to make decision in name of party.
- The second challenge of dynastic succession is related to the first one. Those who happen to be the leaders are in a position of unfair advantage to favour people close to them or even their family members.

Growing role of money and muscle power in parties :

1. The parties tend to nominate those candidates who have or can raise lots of money. In some cases parties support criminals.
- The fourth challenge is that very often parties **do not seem to offer a meaningful choice**. In order to offer meaningful choice, parties must be significantly different.
 - There has been a decline in the ideological differences among parties.
 - The difference among all the major parties on the economic policies have reduced.

- Those who want really different policies have no option available to them.
- Lack of good leaders.

3. Topic : Reforming the Political Parties

- The constitution was amended to prevent elected members from changing parties.
- 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.
- The election commission passed an order making it necessary for political parties to hold their organizational elections and file their income tax returns.
- A law is made to regulate the internal affairs of political parties.
- The govt. should give money to parties for election so that every one who wants to participate in elections can do the same.

Questions :

1. What is public opinion?
2. Explain the role of political parties in making public opinion.
3. What is ruling party?
4. What is defection?
5. What is affidavit?
6. What are the various challenges faced by political parties.
7. What steps have been taken by the govt for the smooth functioning of political parties.
8. Give two merits of any political party.