

## Examrace

# Competitive Exams: Political Science Study Material Political parties

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## Political Parties and Elections

- Political parties are the established part of modern mass democracy, and the conduct of elections in India is largely dependent on the behaviour of the political parties.
- Although many candidates for Indian elections are independent, the winning candidates for the Lok Sabha and the Vidhan Sabha elections usually stand as members of political parties, and opinion polls suggest that people tend to vote for a party rather than participating candidate.
- Parties offer candidates organisational support, and by offering a broader election campaign, looking at the record of Government and putting forward alternative proposals for the Government, help voters make a choice about how the Government is run.

## Registration with Election Commission

- As per the provisions of the Peoples Representation Act, 1951 political parties have to get registered with the Election Commission of India.
- The Commission determines whether the party is structured and committed to the principles of Democracy, Secularism and Socialism in accordance with the Indian Constitution and would uphold the Sovereignty, Unity and Integrity of India.
- Parties are expected to hold organisational elections and have a written Constitution of their own.
- The Anti-defection law, passed in 1985, prevents the MPs or the MLAs elected as candidates from one party forming or joining a new party, unless they comprise more than one-third of the original party, in. The legislature.

## Recognition and Reservation of Symbols

- A party registered with the Election Commission may be granted recognition as a National or a State party on the basis of its performance in polls.
- Further, other parties are simply declared registered-unrecognised parties.
- How a party is classified determines a party's right to certain privileges, such as access to electoral rolls and provision of time for political broadcasts on the state-owned television

and radio stations-All India Radio and Doordarshan-and also the important question of the allocation of the party symbols.

- Party symbols enable illiterate voters to identify the candidate of the party they wish to vote for:
- National parties are given a symbol that is for their use only, throughout the country.
- State parties have the symbol in the State or States in which they are recognized.
- Registered-unrecognised parties can choose a symbol from a selection of 'free' symbols.

## Media Coverage

- In order to bring as much transparency as possible to the electoral process, the media is encouraged and provided with facilities to cover the elections, although subject to maintaining the secrecy of the vote.
- Media is also free to conduct Opinion Polls and Exit Polls.
- By a recent set of guideline issued, the Election Commission has stipulated that the results of Opinion Polls cannot be published between two days before the start of polling and after the close of the poll in any of the constituencies.
- Results of Exit Polls can only be published or made otherwise known only after half an hour of the end of polling hours on the last day of poll.

## State Funding of Elections

There has been a demand that State funding of elections be introduced so that money power in elections can be reduced, genuine candidates, on the basis of leadership qualities, can have a chance, as contesting the elections will be open to the poor candidates as well.

corruption in the form of politician-criminal-businessman nexus can be drastically reduced.

Thus, free and fair elections demand that the

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