

# CLASS NOTES

Class: IX

Topic: Electoral Politics

Subject: Democratic Politics

## 1. What are Reserved Constituencies?

a) Some constituencies are reserved for people who belong to the backward classes like the Scheduled Castes [SC] and Scheduled Tribes [ST]. In a SC reserved constituency only someone who belongs to the Scheduled Castes can stand for election.

b) Similarly only those belonging to the Scheduled Tribes can contest an election from a constituency reserved for ST. Currently, in the Lok Sabha, 79 seats are reserved for the Scheduled Castes and 41 for the Scheduled Tribes.

c) It is a measure to include representation for all classes in the legislature.

## 2. What is Voter's List?

a) 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.

b) 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.

c) It contains name, age, sex, fathers name or husband's name, address and serial number of the voters in a constituency.

## 3. What is meant by EPIC?

Ans. It is a new system called Election Photo Identity Card [EPIC]. The government has tried to give this card to every person on the voters list. The voters are required to carry this card when they go out to vote, so that no one can vote for someone else. But the card is not yet compulsory for voting.

## 4. What is meant by Nomination of Candidates?

Ans. a) Anyone who can be a voter can become a candidate in elections. The only difference is that in order to be a candidate the minimum age is 25 years, while it is only 18 years for being a voter. There are some other restrictions on criminals etc.

b) Every person who wishes to contest an election has to fill a 'nomination form' and register their name on or before the last date of the nomination.

### 5. What is the importance and purpose of Election Campaigns?

a) The main purpose of election is to give people a chance to choose the representatives, the government and the policies they prefer.

b) In our country such 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 mobilize their supporters.

c) In election campaigns, political parties try to focus public attention on some big issues. They want to attract the public to that issue and get them to vote for their party on that basis.

### 6. State any 4 important slogans raised by different political parties in India.

Ans. a) The Congress party led by Indira Gandhi gave the slogan of **Garibi Hatao (Remove poverty)** in the Lok Sabha elections of 1971. The party promised to reorient all the policies of the government to remove poverty from the country.

b) **Save Democracy** was the slogan given by Janata Party in the next Lok Sabha election held in 1977. The party promised to undo the excesses committed during Emergency and restore civil liberties.

c) The Left Front used the slogan of **Land to the Tiller** in the West Bengal Assembly elections held in 1977.

d) '**Protect the Self-Respect of the Telugus**' was the slogan used by N. T. Rama Rao, the leader of the Telugu Desam Party in Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections in 1983.

### 7. What are the election law campaigns to ensure that every political party and candidate gets a fair and equal chance to compete ?

Ans. a) No party or candidate can bribe or threaten voters;

b) No party or candidate can appeal votes in the name of caste or religion;

c) No party or candidate can use government resources for election campaign;

d) No party or candidate can spend more than Rs. 25 lakh in a constituency for a Lok Sabha election or Rs. 10 lakh in a constituency in an Assembly election.

### 8. Mention the Model **Code of Conduct** for election campaigns agreed by all the political parties

in our country.

According to this, no party or candidate can:

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

**9. State some unfair practices in the conducting of elections in India.**

Ans. i) Inclusion of false names and exclusion of genuine names in the voters' list;

ii) Misuse of government facilities and officials by the ruling party;

iii) Excessive use of money by rich candidates and big parties;

iv) Intimidation of voters and rigging on the polling day.

**10. Why should we have an Independent Election Commission in India?**

Ans. i) In our country elections are conducted by an independent and very powerful Election Commission (EC). It enjoys the same kind of independence that the judiciary enjoys.

ii) The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) is appointed by the President of India. But once appointed, the Chief Election Commissioner is not answerable to the President or the government.

iii) Even if the ruling party or the government does not like what the Commission does, it is virtually impossible for it to remove the CEC.

**11. Explain the functions of Election Commission.**

Or **Mention any three provisions which ensure the independency of Election Commission.**

Ans. i) EC takes decisions on every aspect of conduct and control of elections from the announcement of elections to the declaration of results.

ii) It implements the Code of Conduct and punishes any candidate or party that violates it.

iii) During the election period, the EC 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 prevent transfer of government officials.

iv) When on election duty, government officers work under the control of the EC and not the.

Govt.

**12. The outcome of India's elections speaks for itself. Explain.**

Ans. The outcome of India's elections speaks for itself:

- i) 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. It proves that unfair practices are not used by the ruling parties.
- ii) 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.
- iii) Candidates who are known to have spent a lot of money on 'buying votes' and those with known criminal connections often lose elections.
- iv) Except a very few disputed elections, the electoral outcomes are usually accepted as 'people's verdict' by the defeated party.

**13. What are the challenges to Free and Fair elections in India?**

Ans. i) A few candidates may win purely on the basis of money power and unfair means. But the overall verdict of a general election still reflects popular preference. There are very few exceptions to this rule in the last fifty years in our country.

- ii) 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.
- iii) 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.
- iv) Some families tend to dominate political parties; tickets are distributed to relatives from these families. It is known as dynastic succession in politics.
- v) 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.
- vi) Smaller parties and independent candidates suffer a huge disadvantage compared to bigger parties. They get less number of workers and less amount of money.