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CLASS X · SOCIAL SCIENCE (087) · POLITICAL SCIENCE · CBSE BOARD EXAMINATION 2027

POLITICAL SCIENCE · CHAPTER 3

Gender, Religion and Caste

Equal
Secular
Just

Chapter Practice Booklet · Questions only

11 note blocks + communalism table | 5 case studies | PYQs 2025–2026 | 60 practice questions | Model Answer Booklet

INSIDE THIS BOOKLET

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STUDENT DETAILS

NAME _____

CLASS & SECTION _____

ROLL NO. _____

BOOKLET STARTED ON _____

CHAPTER TEST SCORE _____ / 20

1

READ THIS FIRST

Chapter Notes

The whole chapter in short-note form: gender and politics, religion and communalism, the secular state, and caste in politics. Revise from here – you should not need the textbook again.

1 Gender division and the sexual division of labour

- Gender division is a form of **hierarchical social division** seen everywhere; it is based **not on biology** but on **social expectations and stereotypes**.
- **Sexual division of labour:** women are expected to do all work **inside the home** – cooking, cleaning, washing, tailoring, looking after children – and men the work **outside**. Men can do housework but think it is for women; when such work is **paid** (tailors, hotel cooks), men do it.
- Women also work outside – fetching water and fuel, working in fields, as domestic helpers, in offices – but this work is often **unpaid or not valued**.
- Result: women are half of humanity, yet their role in **public life and politics is minimal** in most societies.

2 Women's movements and the political expression of gender

- Earlier, only men could take part in public affairs, vote and contest. Women organised and agitated for **equal rights** – first for the **right to vote**, then for better **political and legal status** and **education and career** opportunities; radical movements sought equality in **personal and family life** too. These are **feminist movements**.
- Political mobilisation on gender improved women's role in public life: women now work as scientists, doctors, engineers, lawyers, managers and teachers.
- In **Scandinavian countries** – Sweden, Norway, Finland – women's participation in public life is very high.

> **Feminist:** a woman or man who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men. **Patriarchy:** literally 'rule by father' – a system that values men more and gives them power over women.

3 Women in India: disadvantage and discrimination

- **Literacy:** women lag behind men (Census 2011: about **65%** for women and **82%** for men). Fewer girls go for higher studies; parents often spend more on boys' education.
- **Jobs:** few women in highly paid and valued jobs. An average Indian woman works about **one hour more** than a man every day, but much of it is **unpaid** and not valued.
- **Wages:** the **Equal Remuneration Act, 1976** says equal pay for equal work, yet in sports, cinema, factories and fields women are often paid less.
- **Son preference:** sex-selective abortion has lowered the **child sex ratio** (girls per 1000 boys) to **919** (Census 2011).
- **Violence:** harassment, exploitation and **domestic violence**; urban areas are particularly unsafe for women.

4 Women's political representation

- Many feminists argue women's problems get attention only when women **share power** – so we need more women representatives.
- Women's share in the **Lok Sabha** first crossed about **14%** in **2019** (textbook); in most **State Assemblies** it is far lower. India is near the **bottom** of nations in this respect, behind many developing countries of Africa and Latin America. Cabinets are largely all-male.
- **Local bodies: one-third** of seats in panchayats and municipalities are reserved for women – now over **10 lakh** elected women representatives.
- Women's groups long demanded one-third seats in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.

> **Beyond the textbook (update):** the **Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023** – the **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam** – reserves **one-third** of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies for women. It will come into force after the **delimitation** that follows the next census.

Gender shows that a social division sometimes **needs to be expressed in politics**, and that disadvantaged groups gain when it becomes a political issue.

5 Religion and politics – when it is fine

- **Gandhiji** said religion can never be separated from politics – he meant the **moral values** common to all religions should guide politics.
- **Human rights groups** say most victims of communal riots are from **minorities** and ask the government to protect them.
- The **women's movement** says **family laws** of all religions discriminate against women and should be made fairer.
- So: values from religion can guide politics; people can express their needs as members of a religious community; the state may **regulate religious practice** to stop discrimination – as long as it treats **every religion equally**.

6 Communalism

The problem begins when religion is seen as the **basis of the nation**, one religion is presented as **superior**, demands of one group are formed **against** another, and **state power** is used to make one religious group dominant. This is **communal politics**.

- It assumes that followers of one religion form **one community** with the **same interests**, and that people of different religions **cannot** be one community.
- In its extreme form, it says people of different religions cannot live as **equal citizens** in one nation – one must dominate, or they must form separate nations.
- **Why it is flawed:** people of one religion do not have the same interests in every context; each person has **many identities**; every community has **many voices**, and forcing unity suppresses them.

7 Secular state

Communalism was a major challenge, so the makers of the Constitution chose a **secular state**:

1. **No official religion** – unlike Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Islam in Pakistan, Christianity in England.
2. Freedom to **profess, practise and propagate** any religion, or none.
3. **No discrimination** on grounds of religion.
4. The state may **intervene in religion** to ensure **equality within communities** – e.g. it **bans untouchability**.

- Secularism is a **foundation of the country**, not the idea of a few parties. Communalism threatens the **very idea of India**.
- A secular Constitution is **necessary but not sufficient**: prejudice must be countered in **everyday life** and religion-based mobilisation in **politics**.

8 Caste inequalities and change

- Unlike gender and religion, caste division is **special to India**. In the caste system, **hereditary occupational division** was sanctioned by **rituals**; members married within the caste and did not eat with other castes; 'outcaste' groups faced **untouchability**.
- Reformers **Jotiba Phule, Gandhiji, B.R. Ambedkar** and **Periyar Ramaswami Naicker** worked for a society without caste inequality.
- **Changes:** economic development, **urbanisation**, growth of **literacy and education**, **occupational mobility** and weaker landlords have broken down caste hierarchy; the Constitution **prohibits caste discrimination**.
- **Yet caste persists:** most people still **marry within their caste**; untouchability has **not ended completely**; groups that had education earlier still do better, so 'upper castes' are **over-represented** in the urban middle class; caste is still linked to **economic status**.

9 Caste in politics

- Parties choose **candidates** keeping in mind the **caste composition** of voters, and include different castes in **governments**.
- Parties and candidates **appeal to caste sentiment**; some parties are seen as representing certain castes.
- **Universal adult franchise** and **one person, one vote** made leaders seek support from all, and gave new **consciousness** to castes once treated as low.

10 Elections are not only about caste

- **No constituency** has a clear majority of one caste, so every party must win the trust of **more than one caste**.
- No party gets **all the votes** of a caste; a 'vote bank' only means a large share.
- Many parties may field candidates of the **same caste**, while many voters have no candidate of their caste.
- **Ruling parties and sitting MPs/MLAs often lose** – impossible if caste loyalties were frozen.
- Voters' attachment to **parties**, their **economic interests** (rich and poor, men and women of a caste vote differently) and the **performance of governments** often decide elections.

11 Politics in caste, and the two sides of caste politics

Politics changes caste – caste gets **politicised**:

- Each caste group tries to become **bigger** by including neighbouring castes or sub-castes.
- Caste groups form **coalitions** and enter into **dialogue and negotiation** with others.
- New groups like '**backward**' and '**forward**' castes appear.

Positive	Negative
Gives disadvantaged groups – **Dalits and OBCs** – space to demand a share of power and better access to decisions; movements demand an end to discrimination and more dignity and resources	Politics based on caste alone is unhealthy; it can **divert attention** from poverty, development and corruption; it can cause **tension, conflict and violence**

Forms of communalism in politics

A favourite 3- and 5-mark answer

Form	What it looks like
Everyday beliefs	religious **prejudices**, stereotypes, belief that one's religion is superior
Quest for political dominance	majority – **majoritarian dominance**; minority – desire for a **separate political unit**
Political mobilisation on religious lines	sacred symbols, religious leaders, emotional appeal and fear; appeals to voters of one religion

Communal violence	riots and massacres – the worst at **Partition**; large-scale violence after Independence too

Key terms

1- and 2-mark answers

Sexual division of labour – work inside the home for women, outside for men

Feminist – a person who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men

Patriarchy – system that values men more and gives them power over women

Feminist movement – women's movement for equality in public and personal life

Child sex ratio – number of girl children per 1000 boys (0–6 years)

Equal Remuneration Act – 1976 law – equal pay for equal work

Communalism – politics that treats religion as the basis of community and seeks domination

Secular state – a state with no official religion that treats all religions equally

Family laws – laws on marriage, divorce, adoption, inheritance

Caste hierarchy – ladder-like ranking of castes from 'high' to 'low'

Untouchability – inhuman practice against 'outcaste' groups, banned by the Constitution

Occupational mobility – shift from one occupation to another

Vote bank – a group that largely votes for one party

Universal adult franchise – every adult citizen has the right to vote

Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam – 2023 law reserving one-third seats in Lok Sabha and Assemblies for women

Exam snapshot

What the board asks, and how to prepare

SYLLABUS 2026–27

- Gender and politics: public/private division, women's political representation
- Religion, communalism and politics; secular state
- Caste and politics: caste inequalities, caste in politics, politics in caste

BOARD WEIGHTAGE

20 / 80

Political Science is Section C (Q20–Q28). In both papers read in full for this section, the chapter gave a **2-mark question**: 2026 (32/1/1 Q25) – constitutional provisions that make India **secular**; 2025 (32/1/1 Q23) – measures to remove **gender inequality**. Expect **2–5 marks**; communalism and caste suit a 5-mark or case question.

MOST ASKED IN BOARD PAPERS, 2025–2026 (2 PAPERS READ IN FULL)

How often	Topic / question type	Marks	Papers
★★★	Secular state – constitutional provisions	2	1 of 2
★★★	Gender inequality – forms and measures; women's representation	2	1 of 2
★★☆	Communalism – meaning and forms	3–5	NCERT core
★★☆	Caste in politics; politics in caste	3–5	NCERT core
★☆☆	Feminist movements; sexual division of labour	1–2	NCERT core

ANSWER-WRITING RULES FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE (CBSE 2026–27)

2 marks	3 marks	4 marks	5 marks
Very short answer · up to 40 words · 2 clear points	Short answer · up to 60 words · 3 points	Case / source based · up to 100 words in all · answer from the source	Long answer · up to 120 words · 5 points, with an intro line

Write in points, underline key words, and give one example or date wherever you can. Read every "OR" choice before you start, and attempt only one.

MISTAKES THAT COST MARKS

- Writing 'India has no religion' – India has **no official religion**; people are free to follow any religion.
- Saying the 1992 amendment gave women one-third seats in Parliament – it was in **local bodies**; the **2023** Act covers Lok Sabha and Assemblies.
- Defining a feminist as 'a woman who fights men' – it is **any person** who believes in **equal rights** for women and men.
- Writing only 'caste is bad' in caste-politics answers – give the **positive** side too (Dalits and OBCs gained power).
- Calling any link of religion and politics communal – it is communal only when one religion seeks **domination** or is made the basis of the nation.
- Forgetting the example in 'state can intervene in religion' – write **ban on untouchability**.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

1. **Day 1:** Read the Chapter Notes twice; learn the key terms.
2. **Next day:** Parts A and B. **Then:** Parts C and D – MUST DO questions first.
3. Check every answer against the **Model Answer Booklet**: same points, same keywords, within the word limit.
4. Write every mistake on the My Mistakes page and redo it after 3 days.

A

PART A · NCERT PRACTICE

Textbook Check

Every section of the chapter and every NCERT exercise idea, asked in new words. Model answers for all of these are in the Model Answer Booklet.

Gender and politics

A1. What is the sexual division of labour? Give an example. MUST DO [2]

A2. Who is a feminist? What is patriarchy? [2]

A3. What were the demands of women's movements? [3]

A4. Describe three ways in which women face discrimination in India. MUST DO [3]

A5. Suggest two measures to remove gender inequality. MUST DO [2]

A6. Why is women's representation in Indian legislatures low? How is it being improved? MUST DO [3]

Religion and politics

A7. When is the use of religion in politics not wrong? [2]

A8. What is communalism? MUST DO [2]

A9. Why is the idea behind communal politics flawed? [3]

A10. Describe the forms communalism takes in politics. MUST DO [4]

A11. State the constitutional provisions that make India a secular state. MUST DO [3]

Caste and politics

A12. What made the caste system different from other divisions of labour? [2]

A13. What factors have weakened the caste system in modern India? MUST DO [3]

A14. "Caste has not disappeared from contemporary India." Give three reasons. MUST DO [3]

A15. In what ways does caste take various forms in politics? [3]

A16. What is meant by 'politics in caste'? [3]

B

PART B · SECTION C STYLE

Objective Practice

All the MCQ types used in the board paper: statements, picture-based, identify the idea and assertion–reason.

ASSERTION–REASON: HOW TO ANSWER

(a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
(b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.
(c) A is true, but R is false.
(d) A is false, but R is true.

Multiple choice

1 mark each

B1. A person who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men is a: [1]

(a) feminist **(b)** patriarch **(c)** communalist **(d)** secularist

B2. The Equal Remuneration Act was passed in: [1]

(a) 1956 **(b)** 1976 **(c)** 1992 **(d)** 2005

B3. Women's participation in public life is very high in: [1]

(a) South Asian countries **(b)** Gulf countries
(c) Scandinavian countries **(d)** Latin American countries

B4. The child sex ratio in India (Census 2011) was: [1]

(a) 940 **(b)** 933 **(c)** 927 **(d)** 919

B5. Which provision makes India a secular state? [1]

(a) No official religion **(b)** Hindi as official language
(c) Reservation for OBCs **(d)** Universal adult franchise

B6. Which country has Buddhism as a special state religion? [1]

(a) India **(b)** Sri Lanka **(c)** Nepal **(d)** Pakistan

B7. Read the statements: [1]
I. The Constitution allows the state to intervene in religion to ensure equality.
II. Untouchability is banned.
Choose the correct option.

(a) Only I is correct **(b)** Only II is correct
(c) Both I and II are correct **(d)** Neither I nor II is correct

B8. Use of sacred symbols and religious leaders to unite voters of one religion is: [1]

(a) secularism **(b)** feminism
(c) casteism **(d)** political mobilisation on religious lines

B9. Which reformer worked against caste inequality? [1]

(a) Jotiba Phule **(b)** Lala Lajpat Rai
(c) Bal Gangadhar Tilak **(d)** Gopal Krishna Gokhale

B10. Which is NOT a reason for the weakening of caste hierarchy? [1]

(a) Urbanisation (b) Marriage within the caste
(c) Growth of literacy (d) Occupational mobility

B11. Which statement about caste and elections is correct? [1]

(a) Every constituency has a majority of one caste.
(b) A party gets all the votes of a caste.
(c) Sitting MPs and MLAs often lose elections.
(d) Voters always choose a candidate of their caste.

B12. Reservation of one-third seats in panchayats and municipalities for women came through the: [1]

(a) 1976 Act (b) Constitution of 1950
(c) 2023 Act (d) 1992 amendment

B13. *Picture described:* a woman carries a pot of water on her head, a bundle of firewood, and a baby, while a man sits reading a newspaper. The picture shows: [1]

(a) the sexual division of labour (b) communalism
(c) caste hierarchy (d) secularism

B14. 'Politics in caste' means that: [1]

(a) politics becomes caste-free
(b) caste gets politicised and caste groups form coalitions
(c) caste disappears from elections
(d) only one caste rules

B15. The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (2023) reserves one-third seats for women in: [1]

(a) panchayats only (b) the Rajya Sabha only
(c) Lok Sabha and State Assemblies (d) municipal corporations only

B16. Which is an example of a negative effect of caste politics? [1]

(a) Dalits gain access to power
(b) OBCs demand dignity
(c) Disadvantaged groups get representation
(d) Attention is diverted from poverty and corruption

Assertion–Reason

1 mark each

B17. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): Women's problems get attention when women share power.
Reason (R): Feminists demand more women as elected representatives.

B18. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): Secularism is a foundation of India.
Reason (R): Communalism threatens the very idea of India.

B19. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): Elections in India are decided only by caste.
Reason (R): No constituency has a clear majority of one caste.

B20. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): Caste is still linked to economic status.

Reason (R): Groups that had access to education earlier have done better in modern education.

C

PART C · BOARD PATTERN

Board Pattern Practice

Written-answer questions grouped by topic. ★★★ = asked in the papers read · ★★ = NCERT core · ★ = supporting topic.

Gender and politics

★★★ 2025 32/1/1 · 2 marks

C1. Explain five ways in which women are discriminated against in India. MUST DO [5]

C2. Why is political representation of women important? Suggest measures to increase it. MUST DO [3]

C3. How did the political expression of gender division help women? [2]

Religion, communalism and secularism

★★★ 2026 32/1/1 · 2 marks

C4. "Communalism is a major challenge to democracy." Explain its forms. MUST DO [5]

C5. Describe the provisions that make India a secular state. MUST DO [2]

C6. How can communalism be combated? [3]

Caste and politics

★★☆ NCERT core · 3–5 marks

C7. "Elections in India are not only about caste." Justify with five points. MUST DO [5]

C8. Explain the positive and negative roles of caste in politics. MUST DO [3]

C9. "Caste has changed, but not disappeared." Comment. [3]

D

PART D · CASE-BASED STYLE

Case-Based Questions

Each case carries 4 marks (1 + 1 + 2), as in Q28 of the board paper.

D1. Case-Based · Equal Work, Unequal Pay [4]

At a brick kiln, Sunita and her husband carry the same number of loads each day. At the end of the week he gets more money than she does. At home she cooks, fetches water and looks after the children, while he rests.

(i) Which law is being violated at the kiln? [1]

(ii) What idea is shown by her work at home? [1]

(iii) Suggest two measures to reduce such inequality. [2]

D2. Case-Based · The State and Religion [4]

A student project lists four features of a country's constitution: it names no official religion; it lets citizens follow, practise and spread any faith or none; it forbids discrimination on grounds of religion; and it has outlawed a practice that kept some people out of temples and wells.

(i) What kind of state is described? [1]

(ii) Which practice was outlawed? [1]

(iii) Why can the state intervene in religion? Give two reasons. [2]

D3. Case-Based · Before the Vote [4]

Before an election, posters with religious symbols appear in a town. A speaker tells a crowd that their faith is in danger and only people of their religion should be trusted. Shopkeepers of another faith shut early, fearing trouble.

(i) Name the idea at work. [1]

(ii) Which form of it is seen at the meeting? [1]

(iii) Give two harms it can cause to democracy. [2]

D4. Case-Based · The Constituency [4]

In Ward 12, no caste makes up more than a quarter of voters. Two leading parties both field candidates of the same caste. The sitting MLA, despite belonging to the largest caste, loses to a newcomer who promised better roads and water.

(i) Why must parties seek votes from many castes here? [1]

(ii) Why did the sitting MLA lose? [1]

(iii) What two lessons about caste and elections does this give? [2]

D5. Case-Based · Seats for Women [4]

In a district, half the sarpanches are now women. One of them, Kamla Devi, got a road and a girls' school built. Women's groups say Parliament and the Assemblies should have the same share of women.

(i) Which provision helped women become sarpanches? [1]

(ii) Which 2023 law answers the women's groups' demand? [1]

(iii) Give two benefits of women's representation. [2]

E

PART E · REAL BOARD QUESTIONS

Board PYQ Index

Real questions from recent Social Science board papers, by topic. Open the official paper and attempt the listed questions.

Frequency	Topic	Marks	Where asked (year: paper code, question number)	Practise here
★★★	**Secular state – constitutional provisions**	2	**2026:** 32/1/1 Q25	A7, A11, B5–B7, B18, C5–C6, D2
★★★	**Gender inequality; measures; representation**	2	**2025:** 32/1/1 Q23	A1–A6, B1–B4, B12–B13, B15, B17, C1–C3, D1, D5
★★☆	**Communalism – meaning and forms**	3–5	Not asked in the papers read – NCERT core.	A8–A10, B8, C4, D3
★★☆	**Caste in politics; politics in caste**	3–5	Not asked in the papers read – NCERT core.	A12–A16, B9–B11, B14, B16, B19–B20, C7–C9, D4

Papers read in full for Political Science (2): 2026 – 32/1/1 · 2025 – 32/1/1. The 2023 women's reservation law is not in the current NCERT text; learn it as an update. Download official papers from cbse.gov.in → Previous Year Question Papers.

F

PART F · YOUR RECORD

My Mistakes

Write down each mistake from this chapter, including the Sunday Chapter Test.

Every wrong answer is a free lesson. Write it here, find the point you missed, and redo the question after three days.

Date	Part & Q No.	What went wrong	Correct point or fact	Redone ✓