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

POLITICAL SCIENCE · CHAPTER 4

Political Parties

Vote
Party
Power

Chapter Practice Booklet · Questions only

10 note blocks + parties 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: meaning, functions and need of parties, party systems, national and state parties, challenges and reforms. Revise from here – you should not need the textbook again.

1 What is a political party?

- Parties are the **most visible institutions** in a democracy.
- A **political party** is a group of people who come together to **contest elections and hold power** in government. They agree on some **policies and programmes** for society, with a view to promote the **collective good**.
- Parties try to persuade people that their policies are better and seek to implement them by **winning popular support** in elections.
- Parties reflect the **fundamental political divisions** of a society; a party is a **part** of society and so involves **partisanship**.
- **Three components:** the **leaders**, the **active members** and the **followers**.

2 Functions of political parties

1. **Contest elections** – parties put up candidates. In the **USA**, members and supporters choose candidates; in **India**, top leaders choose them.
2. **Put forward policies and programmes** – they reduce a vast number of opinions to a **few basic positions**; the government follows the ruling party's line.
3. **Make laws** – most legislators belong to parties and follow the **party leadership**.
4. **Form and run governments** – they recruit and train leaders and make them ministers.
5. **Play the opposition** – losing parties voice different views, **criticise** the government and mobilise opposition.
6. **Shape public opinion** – raise issues; lakhs of members; pressure groups linked to them; launch movements.
7. **Give access to government machinery and welfare schemes** – it is easier to approach a local party leader than an officer, so parties must be **responsive**.

3 Why do we need political parties?

- **Without parties** every candidate would be independent; no one could promise major policy changes; the government's utility would be uncertain; each MP would answer only to the locality and **no one would be responsible for the country**.
- Even in **non-party panchayat** elections, villages split into factions that put up a 'panel' of candidates.
- Parties rose with **representative democracy**: large, complex societies need an agency to **gather views** and present them to government, bring representatives together to form a **responsible government**, and support or restrain it.
- So parties are a **necessary condition** for democracy.

4 Party systems

- Any group of citizens is free to form a party; **more than 750** parties are registered with the Election Commission (textbook), but only a few are serious contenders.

System	Meaning	Example
One-party	only one party is allowed to control and run the government; **not a democratic** option, as there is no free competition	China (Communist Party)
Two-party	power usually changes between **two main parties**; others exist but rarely win a majority	USA, UK
Multiparty	more than two parties have a reasonable chance of coming to power, alone or in **alliance**	India

- An **alliance or front** is formed when parties join hands to contest elections and win power – e.g. in 2004: **NDA, UPA** and the **Left Front**.

- Multiparty systems can look **messy** and cause **instability**, but they let a **variety of interests** get representation.

5 Why India has a multiparty system

- A party system is **not chosen** by a country; it **evolves** over a long time, depending on the nature of society, its **social and regional divisions**, its history of politics and its **system of elections**.
- India's **social and geographical diversity** is too large to be absorbed by two or three parties.
- No system is **ideal** for all countries and situations.

6 Recognised parties: national and state

- Every party must **register** with the **Election Commission**. Large, established parties are **recognised** and get a **unique election symbol** that only their official candidates can use.
- **State party:** gets at least **6% of votes** in a State Assembly election and wins at least **two seats**.
- **National party:** gets at least **6% of votes** in Lok Sabha or Assembly elections in **four states** and wins at least **four Lok Sabha seats**.
- As recognised by the Election Commission in 2023, there are **six national parties**: AAP, BSP, BJP, CPI(M), INC and NPP (older textbook lists may differ).

7 State parties and coalitions

- Most other major parties are **State parties**, often called **regional parties** – though not always regional in outlook. **Samajwadi Party** and **RJD** have organisations in several states; **Biju Janata Dal, Sikkim Democratic Front, Mizo National Front** stress their state identity.
- Their number and strength have grown, making Parliament more **diverse**. Until 2014, no national party won a Lok Sabha majority on its own, so national parties formed **alliances** with State parties.
- Since **1996**, nearly every State party has been part of some national **coalition government** – strengthening **federalism and democracy**.

8 Challenges to political parties

Challenge	What it means
Lack of internal democracy	power in one or a few leaders; no membership registers, meetings or regular internal elections; members lack information; **personal loyalty to the leader** matters more than principles
Dynastic succession	top posts held by members of **one family**; ordinary workers rarely rise; people without experience or support get power
Money and muscle power	parties pick candidates who can raise **money**; rich donors influence policy; some parties back **criminals** who can win
Lack of meaningful choice	**ideological differences** have declined (e.g. Labour and Conservatives in Britain); the same leaders keep **shifting parties**

9 Reforms already made

- **Anti-defection law:** the Constitution was amended so that an MLA or MP who **changes party** loses the seat. Defection has fallen, but **dissent** has become harder – members must accept the leaders' decisions.
- **Affidavit (Supreme Court order):** every candidate must declare **property** and pending **criminal cases**. More information is public, but there is no check on whether it is true.
- **Election Commission order:** parties must hold **organisational elections** and file **income tax returns**; often a mere formality.

10 Suggested reforms and the citizen's role

- A **law to regulate internal affairs** of parties – membership register, follow their own constitution, an independent authority for disputes, open elections to top posts.
- About **one-third tickets** to **women** candidates, and a quota for women in party decision-making bodies.
- **State funding of elections** – in kind (petrol, paper, telephone) or in cash, based on votes in the last election.
- **Pressure** from citizens, pressure groups, movements and the **media** through petitions, publicity and agitations.

- **Join parties** – politics improves when good citizens take part instead of only criticising from outside; the quality of democracy depends on **public participation**.

National parties at a glance

Party–leader–year matching and odd-one-out MCQs come from here

Party	Founded	Remember
Indian National Congress (INC)	1885	centrist; secularism and welfare of weaker sections and minorities; ruled the Centre for long; led UPA 2004–2014
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)	1980	revived Bharatiya Jana Sangh (Syama Prasad Mukherjee, 1951); cultural nationalism; integral humanism and Antyodaya; led NDA from 1998 and since 2014
Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)	1984	Kanshi Ram; bahujan samaj – Dalits, Adivasis, OBCs, minorities; ideas of Sahu Maharaj, Phule, Periyar, Ambedkar; main base Uttar Pradesh
Communist Party of India (Marxist)	1964	Marxism–Leninism; socialism, secularism, democracy; strong in West Bengal, Kerala, Tripura; ruled West Bengal 34 years
National People's Party (NPP)	2013	P.A. Sangma; first party from the north-east to be a national party (2019)
Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)	2012	recognised as a national party in 2023

Key terms

1- and 2-mark answers

Political party – group that contests elections and seeks power to carry out agreed policies

Partisanship – taking one side and being unable to take a balanced view

Partisan – a person strongly committed to a party or faction

Ruling party – party (or parties) in government

Opposition – parties that lose and criticise and check the government

Party system – the number and nature of parties competing in a country

Alliance / front – parties joining to contest elections and form government

Coalition government – government formed by an alliance of parties

Recognised party – party given a unique symbol by the Election Commission

State party – 6% votes in an Assembly election and at least 2 seats

National party – 6% votes in Lok Sabha or 4 states' Assembly polls and 4 Lok Sabha seats

Defection – leaving the party on whose ticket one was elected for another

Affidavit – signed, sworn statement of personal information given to an officer

Dynastic succession – top party posts passing within one family

State funding – government paying parties' election expenses

Exam snapshot

What the board asks, and how to prepare

SYLLABUS 2026–27

- Why do we need political parties; meaning and functions
- How many parties: one-party, two-party, multiparty systems
- National and state parties
- Challenges to political parties; how parties can be reformed

BOARD WEIGHTAGE

20 / 80

Political Science is Section C (Q20–Q28). In both papers read in full for this section, the chapter gave **4 marks**: 2026 (32/1/1) – an **odd-one-out MCQ** on parties (Q22) and **functions of parties** (Q26, 3 marks); 2025 (32/1/1) – **components of a party** (Q14) and a 3-mark choice: **importance of parties** or **why India has a multiparty system** (Q28). Expect **4–5 marks**.

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

How often	Topic / question type	Marks	Papers
★★★	Functions / importance of political parties	3	2 of 2
★★★	Meaning and components of a party; national parties	1	2 of 2
★★☆	Party systems; why India has a multiparty system	3	1 of 2
★★☆	Challenges to parties	3–5	NCERT core
★★☆	Reforms: anti-defection, affidavit, EC order; suggestions	3–5	NCERT core

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

2 marks
Very short answer · up to 40 words · 2 clear points

3 marks
Short answer · up to 60 words · 3 points

4 marks
Case / source based · up to 100 words in all · answer from the source

5 marks
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

- Listing only two functions for a 3-mark answer – give **three**, each named first: contest elections, policies, laws, government, opposition, opinion, access.
- Saying India has a two-party system – India is **multiparty**; **USA and UK** are two-party; **China** is one-party.
- Mixing the criteria: **State party** = 6% + 2 seats; **national party** = 6% in 4 states / Lok Sabha + 4 Lok Sabha seats.
- Writing that the anti-defection law has no drawback – it makes **dissent difficult**.
- Forgetting the three components of a party: **leaders, active members, followers**.
- Mismatching founders: **BSP – Kanshi Ram (1984)**; **NPP – P.A. Sangma (2013)**; **CPI(M) – 1964**; **BJP – 1980**.

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.

Meaning, functions and need

A1. What is a political party? Name its three components. MUST DO [2]

A2. Why does a political party involve partisanship? [2]

A3. Describe any three functions of political parties. MUST DO [3]

A4. How do parties shape public opinion and give access to government? [2]

A5. What would happen if there were no political parties? MUST DO [3]

A6. Why are political parties called a necessary condition for democracy? MUST DO [3]

Party systems

A7. Why is a one-party system not a democratic option? [2]

A8. Distinguish between two-party and multiparty systems. MUST DO [3]

A9. Why has India adopted a multiparty system? MUST DO [3]

A10. What is an alliance or front? Give examples. [2]

National and state parties

A11. State the conditions for recognition as a State party and a national party. MUST DO [2]

A12. Give two features each of the BSP and the CPI(M). [2]

A13. How have State parties strengthened federalism and democracy? [3]

Challenges and reforms

A14. Describe the four challenges faced by political parties. MUST DO [4]

A15. What is defection? How has the anti-defection law affected it? MUST DO [3]

A16. Explain two steps taken by the Supreme Court and the Election Commission to reform parties. [2]

A17. Suggest three reforms to strengthen political parties. MUST DO [3]

B

PART B · SECTION C STYLE

Objective Practice

All the MCQ types used in the board paper: odd one out, matching party and leader, statements 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. Which is NOT a component of a political party? [1]

(a) Leaders
(b) Active members
(c) Followers
(d) Election Commission

B2. Find the odd pair: [1]

(a) BSP – Kanshi Ram
(b) NPP – P.A. Sangma
(c) CPI(M) – founded 1885
(d) BJP – founded 1980

B3. Which country has a one-party system? [1]

(a) China (b) USA (c) UK (d) India

B4. A State party must win at least how many seats in an Assembly election, with 6% votes? [1]

(a) One (b) Two (c) Four (d) Six

B5. Read the statements: [1]
I. In India, top party leaders usually choose candidates.
II. In the USA, members and supporters choose candidates.
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

B6. Which function is performed by parties that lose an election? [1]

(a) Running the government
(b) Playing the opposition
(c) Appointing judges
(d) Conducting elections

B7. The first party from the north-east to become a national party is the: [1]

(a) Mizo National Front
(b) Asom Gana Parishad
(c) Sikkim Democratic Front
(d) National People's Party

B8. Which law says an MLA or MP who changes party will lose the seat? [1]

(a) Anti-defection law
(b) Right to Information Act
(c) Representation of the People Act
(d) Equal Remuneration Act

B9. Which party draws inspiration from Sahu Maharaj, Phule, Periyar and Ambedkar? [1]

(a) INC (b) CPI(M) (c) BSP (d) BJP

B10. Candidates must file an affidavit giving details of property and criminal cases because of an order by the: [1]

(a) Election Commission (b) Supreme Court
(c) President (d) Parliament

B11. India has a multiparty system mainly because of its: [1]

(a) social and geographical diversity (b) one-party history
(c) small size (d) two-party tradition

B12. *Cartoon described:* a party leader sits on a throne; behind him stand his son and grandson holding the party flag, while workers wait outside the gate. The cartoon shows: [1]

(a) state funding (b) anti-defection
(c) a coalition (d) dynastic succession

B13. Which is a suggested reform, NOT yet made law? [1]

(a) State funding of elections (b) Anti-defection law
(c) Candidate affidavits (d) Income tax returns by parties

B14. Which party was in power in West Bengal for 34 years without a break? [1]

(a) INC (b) CPI(M) (c) AITC (d) BJP

B15. Which is an example of a two-party system? [1]

(a) India (b) China (c) United Kingdom (d) Nepal

B16. A recognised party gets: [1]

(a) free air travel (b) a seat in the Rajya Sabha
(c) government jobs for members (d) a unique election symbol

Assertion–Reason

1 mark each

B17. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): Political parties are a necessary condition for democracy.

Reason (R): Large societies need an agency to gather views and form a responsible government.

B18. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): The anti-defection law has reduced defection.

Reason (R): Elected members must now accept whatever party leaders decide.

B19. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): Voters in India today have very different ideological choices among major parties.

Reason (R): Differences among major parties on economic policies have reduced.

B20. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): State parties have strengthened federalism.

Reason (R): Since 1996 almost every State party has shared power in a national coalition.

C

PART C · BOARD PATTERN

Board Pattern Practice

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

Functions and need of parties

★★★ both papers · 3 marks

C1. Explain any five functions of political parties in a democracy. MUST DO [5]

C2. "Political parties are necessary for democracy." Justify. MUST DO [3]

Party systems

★★☆ 2025 32/1/1 · 3 marks

C3. Why does India have a multiparty system? Is it good or bad? MUST DO [3]

C4. Compare one-party, two-party and multiparty systems with examples. [3]

National and state parties

★★☆ both papers · 1 mark (MCQ)

C5. Describe any three national parties of India. [3]

Challenges and reforms

★★☆ NCERT core · 3–5 marks

C6. "Political parties face many challenges." Explain with examples. MUST DO [5]

C7. Describe the steps taken and suggested to reform political parties. MUST DO [5]

C8. How can ordinary citizens help reform political parties? [2]

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 · The Party Office [4]

In a small town, Ravi's grandmother cannot get her pension. Instead of the government office, she goes to the local office of a party. A worker writes an application and calls an officer. Before the next election, the same party promises free bus passes for the elderly.

(i) Which function of parties is seen first? [1]

(ii) Which function is seen in the election promise? [1]

(iii) Why must parties respond to such needs? Two reasons. [2]

D2. Case-Based · Many Parties, One Government [4]

No party won a majority in a general election. Twelve parties, including several strong in single states, agreed on a common programme and formed the government. Critics called it unstable; supporters said every region now had a voice.

(i) What type of party system does this show? [1]

(ii) What is such a group of parties called? [1]

(iii) Give one merit and one demerit of this system. [2]

D3. Case-Based · The Sworn Statement [4]

Before filing her nomination, a candidate signs a paper listing her house, land, bank savings and the fact that no criminal case is pending against her. Journalists publish such papers of all candidates.

(i) What is this document called? [1]

(ii) Who ordered that it be filed? [1]

(iii) Give one benefit and one limitation of this step. [2]

D4. Case-Based · The Switch [4]

An MLA elected on one party's ticket announced he was joining the ruling party to become a minister. The Speaker disqualified him, and a by-election was held.

(i) What is this act of switching called? [1]

(ii) Under which law was he disqualified? [1]

(iii) What is one good and one bad effect of this law? [2]

D5. Case-Based · Who Runs the Party? [4]

A party has not held internal elections for twenty years. Its president chooses all office-bearers and candidates; after him, his daughter is expected to take over. Workers who disagree are expelled.

(i) Which two challenges are shown? [1]

(ii) Why is this bad for democracy? [1]

(iii) Suggest two reforms to correct this. [2]

PART E · REAL BOARD QUESTIONS

E 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
★★★	**Functions / importance of political parties**	3	**2026:** 32/1/1 Q26 (functions) · **2025:** 32/1/1 Q28(A) (importance in democracy)	A2–A6, B6, B17, C1–C2, D1
★★★	**Meaning, components; national parties**	1	**2026:** 32/1/1 Q22 (odd one out among pairs of parties) · **2025:** 32/1/1 Q14 (components of a party)	A1, A11–A13, B1–B2, B4, B7, B9, B14, B16, B20, C5
★★☆	**Party systems; multiparty India**	3	**2025:** 32/1/1 Q28(B) (why India has a multiparty system)	A7–A10, B3, B11, B15, C3–C4, D2
★★☆	**Challenges and reforms**	3–5	Not asked in the papers read – NCERT core.	A14–A17, B5, B8, B10, B12–B13, B18–B19, C6–C8, D3–D5

Papers read in full for Political Science (2): 2026 – 32/1/1 · 2025 – 32/1/1. The national-party list follows the Election Commission's 2023 recognition; an older textbook list may differ. 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 ✓