

# CBSE Notes Class 8 Social Science Civics

## Chapter 3 - Why Do We Need a Parliament?

In this chapter, you will learn how Parliament enables citizens of India to participate in decision making and control the government. Thus, it makes the most important symbol of Indian democracy and a key feature of the Constitution. Explore more about it by studying CBSE Notes Class 8 Social Science Civics Chapter 3 - Why Do We Need a Parliament? You can also refer to these CBSE notes Class 8 Civics during your exams for revision.

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#### Why Should People Decide?

The decision of people matters in a democratic country because:

1. A democratic government is run by the consent, approval, and participation of the people or citizens.
2. The people in a democracy are the citizens and they are an integral part of any democracy.
3. The people elect a few candidates who represent their collective voices in the Parliament.

#### The Role of the Parliament

The Indian Parliament is an expression of the faith that the people of India have in principles of democracy. The Parliament in the Indian system has immense powers as it is the representative of the people.

- Elections to the Parliament are held in a similar manner as they are for the state legislature.
- The Lok Sabha is elected once every 5 years.

#### Functions of Parliament

India has numerous constituencies. Each of these constituencies elects one person to the Parliament. The candidates who contest elections usually belong to different political parties. These candidates become Members of Parliament or MPs. Once elections to the Parliament have taken place, the Parliament needs to perform the following functions:

- 1) To Select the National Government

Parliament of India consists of

- The President
- The Rajya Sabha
- The Lok Sabha

After the **Lok Sabha elections**, a list is prepared showing how many MPs belong to each political party.

1. There are 543 elected (plus 2 Anglo-Indian nominated) members in Lok Sabha.
2. For a political party to form the government, they must have a majority of elected MPs. A majority party should have at least half the number, i.e. 272 members or more.
3. The Opposition in Parliament is formed by all the political parties that oppose the majority party/coalition formed. The largest amongst these parties is called the **Opposition party**.

One of the most important functions of the Lok Sabha is to select the executive. The **executive** is a group of persons who work together to implement the laws made by Parliament for which we use the term government. The **Prime Minister** of India is the leader of the ruling party in the Lok Sabha. When two or more than two different political parties join together to form a government, it is known as a **coalition government**.

The **Rajya Sabha functions** primarily as the representative of the states of India in the Parliament. It has an important role in reviewing and altering the laws initiated by the Lok Sabha.

1. The Rajya Sabha can also initiate legislation.
2. A bill is required to pass through the Rajya Sabha in order to become a law.
3. The members of the Rajya Sabha are elected by the elected members of the Legislative Assemblies of various states.
4. There are 233 elected members plus 12 members nominated by the President.

## 2) To Control, Guide and Inform the Government

The Parliament begins with a question hour. The question hour is an important mechanism through which MPs can elicit information about the working of the government. By asking questions the government is alerted to its shortcomings. The government also comes to know the opinion of the people through their representatives in the Parliament (the MPs). In all matters dealing with finances, the Parliament's approval is crucial for the government.

## 3) Law-Making

Law-making is a significant function of Parliament. You will learn about it in the next chapter.

## Who are the People in Parliament?

Parliament now has more and more people from different backgrounds. There has also been an increase in political participation from the Dalits and backward classes. Some seats are reserved in Parliament for SCs and STs. Similarly, there is a reservation of seats for women.

