

Class X

Politics – Chapter – 4

Gender, Religion & Caste

1. Mention different aspects of life in which women are discriminated or disadvantaged in India.

- The literacy rate among women is only 54% compared with 76% among men. The parents preferred to spend the resources for their boys education rather than spending equally on their sons and daughters.
- The proportion of women among the highly paid and valued jobs is still very small.
- The Equal Wages Act provides that equal wages should be paid to equal work but in almost all areas of work, from sports and cinema to factories and fields, women are paid less than men.
- In many parts of India parents prefer to have sons and find ways to have the girl child aborted before she is born.

2. What is the status of women's representation in India's legislative bodies ?

In India the proportion of women in legislature has been very low. For eg. The percentage of elected women members in Lok Sabha has never reached even 10% of its total strength. Their share in the state assemblies is less than 5%. In this respect, India is among the bottom group of nations in the world.

In order to solve this problem one third of seats in local government bodies-in panchayats and municipalities are now reserved for women.

3. State different forms of communal politics.

- The most common expression of communalism is in every day beliefs. These involve religious prejudices, stereo types of religious communities and belief in the superiority of ones religion over other religions.
- A communal mind often leads to the political dominance of one's own religious community. For eg. those belonging to majority community takes the form of majoritarian dominance and the minority community take the form of a desire to form a separate political unit.

- Political mobilization on religious lines is another form of communalism. This involves the use of sacred symbols, religious leaders and emotional appeals in order to bring the followers of one religion together in the political arena.

4. State how caste inequalities are still continuing in India.

- Even now most people marry within their own caste or tribe.
- Untouchability has not ended completely despite constitutional prohibition.
- The higher caste groups that had access to education under the old system acquired modern education. Those groups that did not have access to education have naturally lagged behind.

5. ‘Caste and caste system in modern India have undergone great changes.’ State the reasons to support the view.

- Partly due to the efforts of political leaders and social reformers and partly due to other socio-economic changes, caste and caste system in modern India have undergone great changes.
- With economic development, large scale urbanization, growth of literacy and education, occupational mobility and the weakening of the position of landlords in the villages, the old notions of caste hierarchy are breaking down.
- Now in Urban areas it does not matter much who is walking along next to us on a street or eating at the next table in a restaurant.

6. State reasons to say that caste alone can't determine election results in India.

- No parliamentary constituency in the country has a clear majority of one single caste. So every candidate and party needs to win the confidence of more than one caste and community to win elections.
- No party wins the votes of all the voters of a caste or community.
- Many political parties may put up candidates from the same caste. Some voters have more than one candidate from their caste while many voters have no candidate from their caste.

7. Mention any 3 three constitutional provisions make India a secular state.

- There is no official religion for India. Unlike the status of Buddhism in Srilanka, Islam in Pakistan and Christianity in England, our constitution does give a special status to any religion.

- The constitution provides to all individuals and communities freedom to profess, practice and propagate any religion or not to follow any.
- The constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion.

8. Suggest some measures to remove the inequality of women.

- Women should struggle for their equal rights through movements like feminist movement.
- Political participation of women should be improved by reservation of seats in the legislatures like 33% seats should be reserved in all legislative assemblies.
- Women's education should be given high priority.