

## 4 GENDER, RELIGION AND CASTE

### CONCEPT

#### GENDER AND POLITICS

- At home, women do cooking, washing, cleaning, tailoring etc.
- Women do upbringing of children.
- Outside the house — men are given superior jobs, dominate politics and public life.
- Women's social status — low. Not much value attached to their work.
- **Result** : Gender or sexual division of work. Gender bias in assignment of work.

Work Outside the Home	
Rural areas	Urban areas
(i) In villages, women fetch water; (ii) gather fuel; (iii) work in the fields; (iv) are hardly paid anything.	(i) Middle-class women work in offices. (ii) Poor women work as domestic help. (iii) Not much valued, equal wages not given. (iv) Literacy rate low compared to men.

#### Men at work

- Men hardly do any household work.
- They work as cooks, tailors when they are paid in hotels.

#### PUBLIC LIFE AND POLITICS

Women's role is minimum in public life — specially politics. Though they constitute half of the humanity, their role is minimal. In many, even in advanced countries of the world, women were not given voting rights for a long time. They were not allowed and even now not allowed to participate in public affairs or contest for public offices. Women all over the world (not in India) organised agitations, e.g. the suffragette movement in England for equal rights.

- Women demanded educational and job opportunities, improvement in their legal and political status.
- **Feminist movements** demanded equality in personal and family life also.

**Results** : There has been a marked change. Women now work as scientists, doctors, engineers, lawyers, managers, college and university teachers. In countries like Norway, Sweden and Finland women participation in public life is very high.

#### STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA

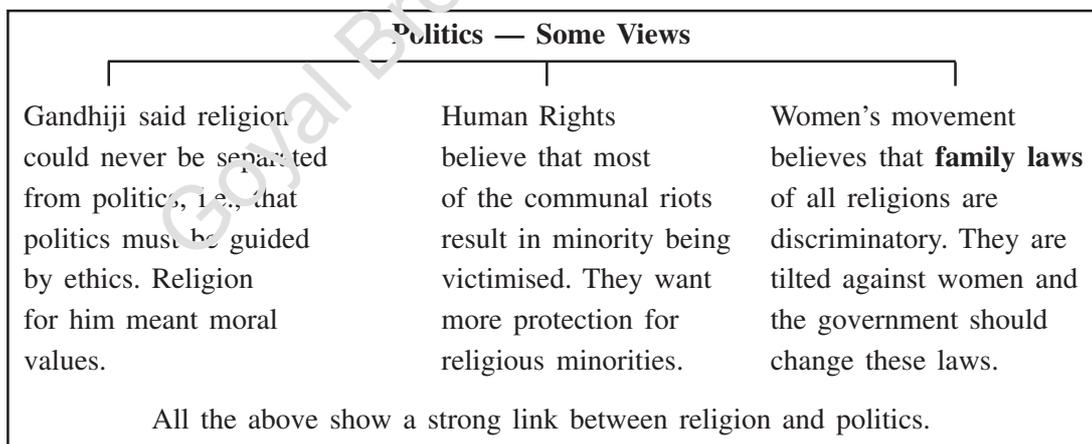
- India has a **patriarchal** society, a society that gives more power to men, values them more and considers them superior to women.

- The **literacy rate** among women is 54% as compared to the 76% among men.
- Every year girls do better than boys in school results, but more girls dropout as parents want to spend their resources on their sons' education.
- Though there is an Equal Wages Act which states that women should be paid equal wages for equal work, women are still paid less for the same work.
- A woman works an hour more than a man on an average, yet her work is neither valued nor paid.
- The sex ratio for women is low – 927 girls per 1000 boys. In some states, it is less than 800 per 1000.
- The percentage of elected women members in the Lok Sabha has never even reached 10% of the total members.
- In the assemblies it is only 5%. Among the world nations, India is at the bottom, behind even developing countries, of Africa and Latin America.
- Women are harassed, exploited and subjected to violence, specially in urban areas.
- First step to empower women : Reservation of seats for women in Panchayati Raj. One-third seats are now reserved for women. **At present 10 lakh women** are elected representatives in **rural and urban** local bodies.

## RELIGION, COMMUNALISM AND POLITICS

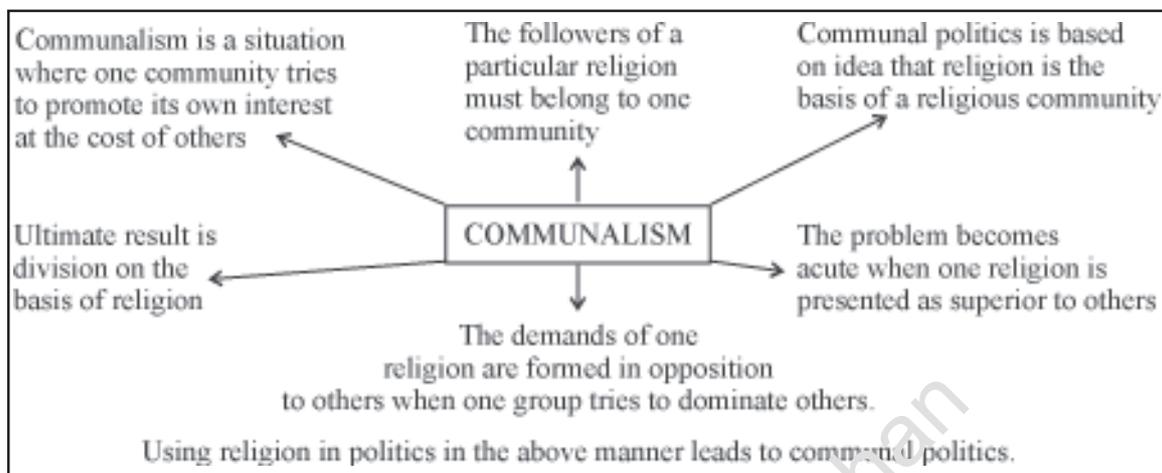
### Religious Differences

- **India** is a land which gave birth to **four religions** : Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism.
- Religious differences usually find expression in politics.



- If all religions are treated equally, then people will be able to express their needs, interests and demands.

## Features of Communalism



## Secularism

- India chose secularism — because communalism was a major challenge.
- No state religion — no religion has a special status (unlike Pakistan, Sri Lanka and England)

## CASTE AND POLITICS

- **Caste and politics** have both positive and negative sides.
- **Caste inequalities** – special to India.
- All societies had some form of **division of labour, occupations** passed from one generation to another.
- **Caste system** is an extreme form of division of labour — it has hereditary occupational divisions sanctioned **by rituals**.
- Political leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jyotiba Phule, B.R. Ambedkar, Periyar Ramaswami Naicker promoted a **casteless** society.
- **Nowadays, the caste hierarchy** is breaking down.

**Reason :** Economic development, growth of literacy and education, the loss of power and position by landlords in the villages and occupational mobility.

- **But caste has NOT totally disappeared from present-day India.**
- Caste continues to be linked with economic status and access to education.

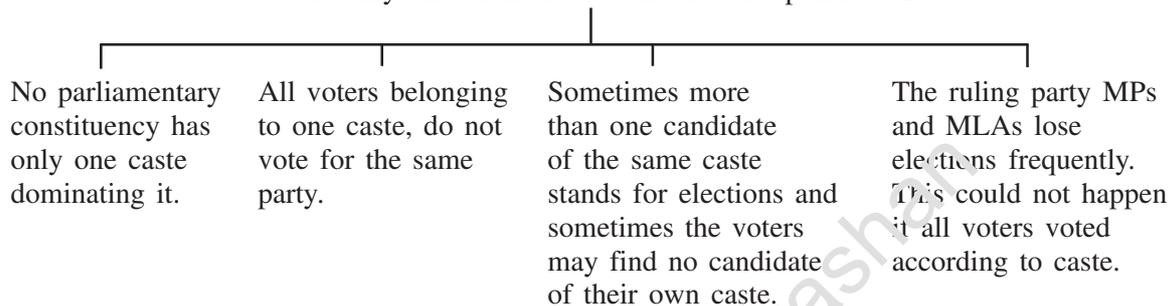
## CASTE IN POLITICS

- Caste like communalism, encourages the belief that people belonging to the same caste belong to the same natural community and have the same interests which they do not share with other communities.
- In many places, people vote on the basis of caste and fail to select suitable candidates.
- When political parties nominate candidates or choose them for elections, they keep in mind the caste composition of their constituencies and the people voting.

- When a government is formed after elections, political parties take care of caste equations and different castes are represented in the government. Political parties appeal to caste sentiments during elections.

***The focus of caste in politics can create the impression that elections are about caste and nothing else.***

**Caste** is only one of the factors in electoral politics. How?

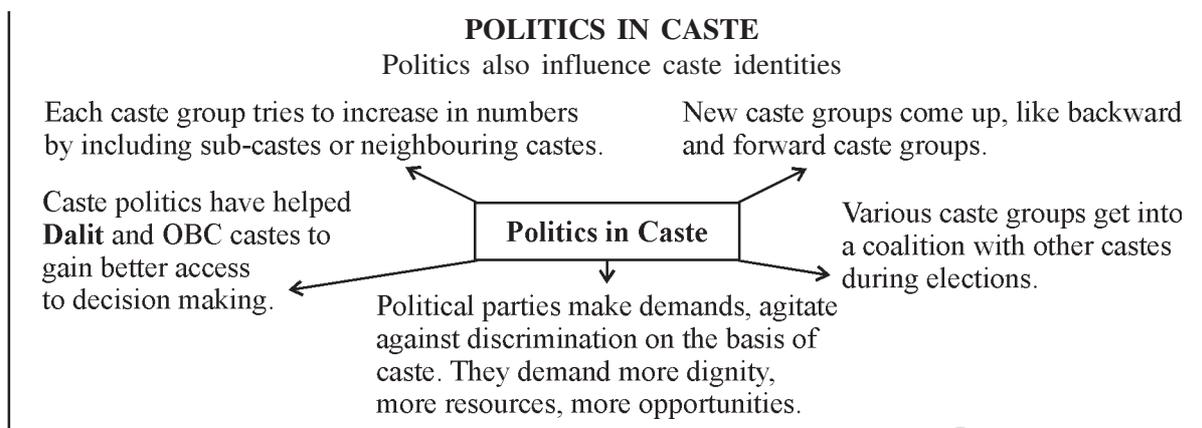


### **Caste Inequalities Today**

- Caste created economic inequality, the untouchable class was denied the right to own land, the right to education. These have been outlawed, but new kinds of inequalities have developed.
- Today, it is possible to find very rich and very poor in **every** caste.
- Still the upper castes are better off. **Dalits** and **Adivasis** are the worse off and Backward classes are in between.
- People living below the poverty line are to be found more in the lowest castes and much less in the upper castes.

**Percentage of Population Living Below the Poverty Line, 1999–2000**

Caste and Community Groups	Rural	Urban
Scheduled Tribes	45.8	35.6
Scheduled Castes	35.9	38.3
Other Backward Castes	27.0	29.5
Muslim Upper Castes	26.8	34.2
Hindu Upper Castes	11.7	9.9
Christian Upper Castes	9.6	5.4
Sikh Upper Castes	0.0	4.9
Other Upper Castes	16.0	2.7
<b>All Groups</b>	27.0	23.4



## I. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

### A. NCERT TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS

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

**Ans.** They are discriminated against in politics, spheres of education, economic rights, status and opportunities.

**Q.2. State different forms of communal politics with one example each.**

**Ans.** (i) The most common expression of communalism is in everyday beliefs, e.g., religious prejudices.

(ii) A communal mind often leads to a quest for political dominance of one's own religious community.

(iii) Political mobilisation on religious lines is another frequent form of communalism. e.g., the use of sacred symbols.

(iv) Sometimes communalism takes its most ugly form of communal violence, riots and massacre, e.g., India and Pakistan during the time of Partition.

**Q.3. State how caste inequalities are still continuing in India?**

**Ans.** Caste has not disappeared from contemporary India.

- (i) Even now most people marry within their own caste or tribe.
- (ii) Untouchability has not ended completely despite constitutional prohibition.
- (iii) Effects of centuries of advantages and disadvantages continue to be felt today, e.g., Caste continues to be closely linked to economic status.

**Q.4. State two reasons to say that caste alone cannot determine election results in India.**

**Ans.** There are many reasons :

- (i) State legislature has a majority of any caste group. Every caste group is represented in the Parliament. Caste groups can be ignored and all voters' support is needed to win elections.

- (ii) In one constituency you cannot have candidates from one caste only or voters belonging to the majority caste. It means that no political party represents one caste.
- (iii) It may happen that more than one candidate may stand from a particular caste. Also, there may not be any candidate from other castes.

**Q.5. What is the status of women's representation in India's legislative bodies?**

**Ans.** India's women representation in legislatures and their participation in politics is very low. The strength of women in the Lok Sabha is not even 10%. In the state assemblies it is even lower — only 5%. Some developing countries of Africa and Latin America have more women representatives. The Women's Reservation Bill, a move to make 33% reservation for women in the Parliament, is still pending before the Parliament and it has yet to pass it. Only in the **Panchayati Raj** — local governing bodies — seats are reserved for women. Now there are 10 lakh elected women representatives in rural and urban local bodies.

**Q.6. Mention any two constitutional provisions that make India a secular state.**

**Ans.** (i) Freedom to practice, profess and propagate the religion of one's choice.  
(ii) There is no state or official religion.

**Q.7. When we speak of gender divisions, we usually refer to .**

- (a) Biological difference between men and women.
- (b) Unequal roles assigned by society to men and women.
- (c) Unequal child sex ratio.
- (d) Absence of voting rights for women in democracies.

**Ans.** The right answer is (b) Unequal roles assigned by society to men and women. (c) and (d) are illustrations to prove that (b) is correct.

**Q.8. In India, seats are reserved for women in :**

- (a) Lok Sabha
- (b) State Legislative Assemblies
- (c) Cabinets
- (d) Panchayati Raj bodies

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.9. Consider the following statements on the meaning of communal politics.**

**Communal politics is based on the belief that :**

- (a) Our religion is superior to that of others.
- (b) People belonging to different religions can live together happily as equal citizens.
- (c) Followers of a particular religion constitute one community.
- (d) State power cannot be used to establish the domination of one religious group over the other.

Which of the statements is / are correct?

- (a) A, B, C and D
- (b) A, B, C
- (c) A and C
- (d) B and D

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.10. Which among the following statements about Indian Constitution is wrong?**

- (a) Prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion
- (b) Gives official status to one religion
- (c) Provides all individuals freedom to profess any religion.
- (d) Ensures equality of citizens within religious communities.

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.11. Social divisions based on \_\_\_\_\_ are peculiar to India.**

**Ans.** castes

**Q.12. Match list I with list II and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists.**

**List 1**

1. A person who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men
2. A person who says that religion is the principal basis of community
3. A person who thinks that caste is principal basis of community
4. A person who does not discriminate on the basis of religious beliefs

**List 2**

- A. Communalist
- B. Feminist
- C. Secularist
- D. Castiest

	1	2	3	4
(a)	B	C	A	D
(b)	B	A	D	C
(c)	D	C	A	B
(d)	C	A	B	D

**Ans.** (b)

**OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS (AS PER CCE PATTERN)**

**B. MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (1 MARK)**

**Q.1. What is meant by 'gender division'?**

- (a) Division between rich and poor
- (b) Division between males and females
- (c) Division between educated and uneducated
- (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.2. What is meant by the term 'Feminist'?**

- (a) Having the qualities considered typical of women.
- (b) A person who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men.
- (c) The belief that men and women are equal.
- (d) Men who look like women.

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.3. Which one of these does not refer to the 'Feminist movement'?**

- (a) Improving educational and career opportunities for women
- (b) Giving voting rights to the women
- (c) Training them in household jobs
- (d) Improving their political and legal status

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.4. What is the result of political expression of gender division?**

- (a) Has helped to improve women's role in public life
- (b) Has provided a superior status to women
- (c) The position remains the same, as it was
- (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.5. In which of these countries, the participation of women is not very large?**

- (a) Sweden
- (b) Norway
- (c) India
- (d) Finland

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.6. Indian society is considered as**

- (a) a matriarchal society
- (b) a patriarchal society
- (c) a fraternal society
- (d) none of these

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.7. Which of these Acts provides that equal wages should be paid for equal work to both men and women?**

- (a) Same Wages Act
- (b) Equal Wages Act
- (c) Wages Equality Act
- (d) Equality Wages Act

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.8. In which of these categories of work do you think less time is spent by men?**

- (a) Household and related work
- (b) Income-generating work
- (c) Sleep, self-care, reading etc.
- (d) Talking, gossiping

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.9. The representation of women in state assemblies is less than :**

- (a) 2%
- (b) 5%
- (c) 6%
- (d) 3%

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.10. To provide representation to women in Panchayats and Municipalities, the following step has been taken :**

- (a) Reservation for election to half of the seats for women
- (b) Appointment of 1/3 women members
- (c) Reservation for election to 1/3 of the seats for women
- (d) None of the above

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.11. What did Gandhiji mean when he said that religion and politics can never be separated?**

- (a) Effect of Hinduism on politics is more
- (b) Effect of Islam on politics is more
- (c) Need moral values in politics
- (d) None of these

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.12. In some places in India, the child sex ratio has fallen to as low as :**

- (a) 927
- (b) 840
- (c) 820
- (d) 800

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.13. According to some feminist movements, which of these is the best way to achieve women's well-being?**

- (a) Women should stop cooperating with men (b) All women should go out for work  
(c) Women should share power (d) None of these

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.14. The percentage of elected women members in the Lok Sabha has never reached even \_\_\_\_\_ per cent of its total strength.**

- (a) 25% (b) 15% (c) 10% (d) 5%

**Ans.** (c)

**Q.15. Partly due to the efforts of reformers and partly due to other \_\_\_\_\_ changes, caste system in modern India has undergone great changes.**

- (a) fundamental (b) socio-economic (c) cultural (d) professional

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.16. What is leading to the breakdown of caste hierarchy?**

- (a) Large-scale urbanisation (b) Growth of literacy and education  
(c) Occupational mobility (d) All the above

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.17. In India, seats are reserved for women in :**

- (a) Lok Sabha (b) State Legislative Assemblies  
(c) Cabinets (d) Panchayati Raj bodies

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.18. Which of these is true about the ugliest form of communalism?**

- (a) Communal violence (b) Riots  
(c) Massacre (d) All the above

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.19. Which of these statements is incorrect?**

- (a) There is only one-way relation between caste and politics.  
(b) Politics too influences the caste system.  
(c) New kinds of caste groups have come up in the political arena.  
(d) None of the above.

**Ans.** (a)

**Q.20. \_\_\_\_\_ groups in our country have argued that most of the victims of communal riots in our country are people from religious minorities.**

- (a) Trade Union (b) Feminist (c) Students (d) Human Rights

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.21. Which of these matters deal with the 'Family Laws'?**

- (a) Marriage and divorce (b) Adoption (c) Inheritance (d) All of these

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.22. What is meant by 'Communal Politics'?**

- (a) Participation of different communities in politics

- (b) When state power is used to establish domination of one religious group over the rest
- (c) Communist type of government
- (d) All the above

Ans. (b)

**Q.23. Which of these forms can communalism take in politics?**

- (a) In everyday beliefs, like religious prejudices
- (b) A quest for political dominance of one's own religious community
- (c) Political mobilisation on religious lines
- (d) All the above

Ans. (d)

**Q.24. Which of these countries has an official state religion?**

- (a) Sri Lanka
- (b) Pakistan
- (c) England
- (d) All of these

Ans. (d)

**Q.25. In India, the official religion of the state is :**

- (a) Hinduism
- (b) Islam
- (c) Christianity
- (d) None

Ans. (d)

### PREVIOUS YEARS' QUESTIONS

**Q.1. Laws concerning family matters such as marriage, divorce, adoption etc. are known as:** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) Family laws
- (b) Constitutional Laws
- (c) Criminal Laws
- (d) Civil Laws

Ans. (a)

**Q.2. In which system of elected bodies about one-third seats are reserved for women?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Panchayats and Municipals
- (b) Lok Sabha
- (c) State Assemblies
- (d) None of these

Ans. (a)

**Q.3. A system that values men more and gives them power over women is called?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Feminist
- (b) Socialist
- (c) Patriarchy
- (d) Communist

Ans. (c)

**Q.4. What does caste hierarchy mean?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) A shift from rural areas to urban areas
- (b) Shift from one occupation to another
- (c) A ladder-like formation in which all caste groups are placed from the highest to the lowest
- (d) None of these

Ans. (c)

**Q.5. Who among the following said that religion can never be separated from politics?** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) Acharya Vinobha Bhave (b) Mahatma Gandhi  
(c) Sarojini Naidu (d) Rajendra Prasad

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.6. Which of the following statement about India as a secular state is incorrect?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Allows freedom to practice any religion  
(b) There is no official religion  
(c) Prohibits discrimination on religious grounds  
(d) It reserves seats for religious minorities

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.7. A person who does not discriminate others on the basis of religious beliefs is called?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Communalist (b) Secular (c) Casteist (d) Feminist

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.8. India is a secular state because :** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) It allows freedom to practise any religion (b) There is no official religion  
(c) It prohibits discrimination on religious grounds (d) All the above

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.9. On which of the following ideas is communal politics based?** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) One religion is considered superior than the others  
(b) Creating a vote bank of the basis on religion  
(c) Parties promote religious stereotypes (d) All the above

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.10. In which one of the following countries the participation of women in public life is very high?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) India (b) Sweden (c) Bangladesh (d) Pakistan

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.11. Which of the following divisions is unique to India?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Gender division (b) Caste division  
(c) Economic division (d) Religious division

**Ans.** (b)

**Q.12. Which one of the following is the literacy rate among women in India according to the census of 2001?** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) 50% (b) 76% (c) 28% (d) 54%

**Ans.** (d)

**Q.13. Which one of the following is not a cause of communalism?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Religion is taken as the basis of nation  
(b) When one religion is discriminated against other

- (c) State has no official religion
- (d) Demands of one religious group are formed in opposition to another

Ans. (c)

**Q.14. Which one of the following statements depicts Gandhiji's views on religion and politics?** [2010 (T-I)]

- (a) Politics should be guided by one religion only
- (b) Religion should be ahead of politics
- (c) Politics should be guided by ethics drawn from religion
- (d) None of the above

Ans. (b)

**Q.15. Which of the following is correct for patriarchical society?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Women dominated society
- (b) Male-dominated society
- (c) Educated society
- (d) Cultured society

Ans. (b)

**Q.16. Gender division usually means** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) biological difference between men and women
- (b) unequal roles assigned by the society to men and women
- (c) unequal child sex ratio
- (d) absence of voting rights for women

Ans. (b)

**Q.17. A man or woman who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women is a** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) Communist
- (b) Socialist
- (c) Feminist
- (d) Communalist

Ans. (c)

**Q.18. What is the percentage of literacy rate among men in India?** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) 54
- (b) 58
- (c) 62
- (d) 76

Ans. (d)

**Q.19. In which of the following countries the very participation of women in public life is very low?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Sweden
- (b) Denmark
- (c) South Africa
- (d) Norway

Ans. (c)

**Q.20. Who among the following is a feminist?** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) Some one who does not believe in equal rights and opportunities for women and men
- (b) Some one who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men
- (c) Some one who believes in secularism
- (d) None of the above

Ans. (b)

**Q.21. In which of the following countries? The participation of women in public life is very high?** [2010 (T-1)]

- (a) Scandinavian countries (b) African countries  
(c) Asian countries (d) All the above

Ans. (a)

**Q.22. Which one of the following statements is the opinion of Mahatma Gandhi?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

- (a) The religion can be separated from politics  
(b) The religion can never be separated from politics  
(c) There is no relationship between religion and politics  
(d) None of the above

Ans. (b)

**Q.23. 'Feminist movements' are aimed at** [2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Liberty (b) Equality (c) Participation (d) Power

Ans. (b)

**Q.24. According to 2001 census what was the sex ratio in India?** [2011 (T-1)]

- (a) 1000 males 950 females (b) 1000 males 850 females  
(c) 1000 males 927 females (d) 1000 males 922 females

Ans. (c)

**Q.25. Which type of state is India?** [2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Democratic (b) Secular (c) Welfare (d) All the above

Ans. (d)

**Q.26. Communalism refers to a division based on** [2011 (T-1)]

- (a) Religion (b) Caste  
(c) Gender (d) Socio-economic status

Ans. (a)

### **C. SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (3 MARKS)**

**Q.1. How can religion influence politics?**

- Ans. ● Gandhiji believed that politics must be guided by ethics drawn from all religions.  
● Ideas, ideals and values drawn from different religions can play a role in politics.  
● People should have the freedom to express in politics their needs, interest and demands as a member of a religious community.  
● People who hold political power should see that discrimination and oppression does not take place due to religion.

**Q.2. What is communal politics?**

**OR**

**How does communalism create problems in politics?**

- Ans. (i) When one uses religion in politics, it is communal politics. It creates problems when one sees religion as the basis of the nation.  
(ii) When one religion considers itself superior to other religions.

- (iii) When there is discrimination against the followers of the other religion.
- (iv) When state power is used to help one religion to dominate other religious groups and;
- (v) When the demands of one religious group are in opposition to others.

**Q.3. What are the effects of communalism on politics?**

- Ans.** (i) Political parties are formed on communal basis — Muslim League, Akali Dal, the Hindu Mahasabha, the DMK are some examples.
- (ii) Religion rather than ability becomes the criteria to choose candidates for elections.
- (iii) People prefer to cast votes in favour of candidates of their own religion.
- (iv) Communalism can turn ugly and lead to violence, massacre and riots.

**Q.4. What is secularism? Mention any four provisions of the Indian Constitution which makes it a secular state.**

- Ans.** Secularism means all religions are given the same respect and there is no state religion.
- (i) No religion has a special status.
  - (ii) Freedom to practice, profess and propagate one's religion is allowed by the Constitution.
  - (iii) No discrimination of any kind is allowed on religious grounds.
  - (iv) 'Untouchability' is banned.

**Q.5. Has caste disappeared from India?**

- Ans.** No. The following points prove the fact
- (i) Even now people marry in their own caste.
  - (ii) Untouchability is still practised in many parts of India.
  - (iii) The caste groups which had better education are still ahead of other caste groups.

**Q.6. Why is it necessary to have secularism in India?**

- Ans.** India is a land of many religions and it has led to communalism in India. In fact, one of the results of communalism was partition of India into two nations. It was a challenge for Indian democracy and they chose a secular state as a model. Several constitutional provisions were made to secure secularism in India. It was not just an ideology of some party or people. Secularism is the basic, one of the foundations, of our country. To avoid the threat of communalism, secularism was chosen.

**Q.7. When does the problem of communalism begin?**

- Ans.** The problem of communalism begins when religion is seen as the basis of the nation. The problem becomes more acute when religion is expressed in politics in exclusive and partisan terms, when one religion and its followers are pitted against another. This happens when the beliefs of one religion are presented as superior to those of other religions, and when the state power is used to establish domination of one religious group over the rest.

**Q.8. Which factors have led to weakening of caste hierarchy in India?**

- Ans.** Caste hierarchy in India is weakening due to number of reasons :
- (i) Efforts of social reformers like Gandhiji, Periyar, Jyotiba Phule etc. did the starting part of establishing a society in which caste inequalities are absent.
  - (ii) It has also weakened due to economic development, large-scale urbanisation, growth of literacy and education, occupational mobility, and the weakening of the position of landlords in the villages.

**Q.9. Do you agree with the view that casteism has not disappeared from Indian society? Discuss.** [HOTS]

**Ans.** Although the old barriers of caste system are breaking down, but still casteism continues to be there in the Indian society.

- (i) Even now most people marry within their own caste or tribe
- (ii) Untouchability has not ended completely.
- (iii) Effects of centuries of advantages and disadvantages continue to be felt today.

**Q.10. Do the 'caste' and 'vote bank' factors completely control the elections in India?[HOTS]**

**Ans.** There is an impression that elections in India are all about caste and nothing else. But it is also true that 'caste' and 'vote bank' factors alone cannot determine elections in India due to the following reasons :

- (i) No single caste is ever elected with a clear majority in any parliamentary constituency. So votes of more than one caste is required to win the election for any candidate or party.
- (ii) 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.
- (iii) No party wins the votes of all the voters of a caste or community.

### PREVIOUS YEARS' QUESTIONS

**Q.1. Define a feminist movement. What is their objective?** [2010, 2011 (T-1)]

**Ans.** A woman or a man who believes in equal rights and opportunities for women and men. More radical women's movements aimed at equality in personal and family life as well. These movements are called feminist movements. The objectives of the feminist movements are enhancing the political and legal status of women, improving their educational, health and career opportunities.

**Q.2. What are the factors other than the caste which play a decisive role at the time of the election?** [2010 (T-1)]

**Ans.** Other than caste some more are there which play a decisive role at the time of the election –  
(i) Money (ii) Power (iii) Prestige.

- (i) **Money** – During election some candidates purchase the vote by giving money.
- (ii) **Power** – Power also attracts the voter. Sometimes willingly and sometimes by force.
- (iii) **Prestige** – Suppose any party or candidate having good prestige, then also voters are attracted.

**Q.3. Unless women are empowered, their problems will never get adequate attention. Suggest any 3 ways to empower them.** [2010 (T-1)]

**Ans.** Women can be empowered by –

- (i) Enhancing the political and legal status
- (ii) Enhancing their educational status
- (iii) By giving them equal rights and career opportunities.

**Q.4. How are religious differences expressed in politics?** [2011 (T-1)]

**Ans.** Sometimes religion is expressed in politics in exclusive and partisan terms when one religion

and its followers are pitted against another. This happens when beliefs of one religion are presented as superior to those of other religions, when the demands of one religious group are formed in opposition to another and when state power is used to establish domination of one religious group over the rest. This manner of using religion in politics is communal politics.

**Q.5. How does the Constitution of India ensure secularism? [2011 (T-1)]**

- Ans.** (i) There is no official religion for the Indian state. Our Constitution does not give a special status to any religion.
- (ii) The Constitution provided to all individuals and communities freedom to profess, practise and propagate any religion or not to follow any.
- (iii) The Constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion.
- (iv) The Constitution also allows the state to intervene in matters of religion to ensure equality within religious community.

**Q.6. "In our country women still lag much behind men despite some improvements since independence." Support the statement by giving three reasons. [2011 (T-1)]**

- Ans.** (i) The literacy rate (as per 2001 census) among women is only 54 per cent compared with 76 per cent among men. Similarly, only a smaller proportion of girls go for higher studies.
- (ii) The proportion of women among the highly paid and valued job is still very small. On an average, an Indian woman works one hour more than an average man every day. Yet much of her work is not paid and therefore often not valued.
- (iii) As per the Equal Wages Act, 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, even when both do exactly the same work.

#### **D. LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (4 MARKS)**

**Q.1. Explain the sexual division of labour.**

**Ans.** In India, women are supposed to bring up children and look after the home. They do all the cleaning, washing, cooking, even tailoring. There is no value attached to this work. In rural areas, women work in the fields, fetch water and fuel but are hardly paid anything.

In urban areas, middle-class women work in offices, factories etc. Poor women work as domestic help, but none of them get the same wages as men. Their status is lower than that of men.

Men do not do any housework. They are excellent cooks or tailors but they take up these jobs only when paid in hotels, etc.

**Q.2. What forms can caste take in politics?**

**Ans.** The caste can take following forms in politics :

- (i) Sometimes candidates are chosen on the basis of their caste. When political parties choose candidates, they keep in mind the caste composition of their voters.
- (ii) In many places voters vote on the basis of caste and fail to choose suitable candidates.
- (iii) When a government is formed after elections, political parties take care that different castes are represented in the government.

- (iv) Political parties appeal to caste sentiments during elections.
- (v) To gain support political parties raise caste-based issues during elections. This they do to get political support, as 'one man one vote' system or adult franchise has made the voter very powerful.
- (vi) The castes considered inferior or low until now have been made conscious of their rights by the political parties.

**Q.3. Explain the major factors responsible for the rigid caste system disappearing from India. Give two suggestions of your own.**

- Ans.** (i) Social reformers like Gandhi, Jyotiba Phule, B.R. Ambedkar and Ramaswami Naickar have worked hard for a society free of caste inequalities.
- (ii) Literacy, education, occupational mobility and economic development have been other factors. The position of the landlords has been weakened.
- (iii) The Constitution of India prohibits any kind of discrimination based on caste.
- (iv) The fundamental rights have also played a major role because they are provided to every citizen without any discrimination.
- (v) The caste system can be further reduced if education is spread in every group to every caste.
- (vi) Inter-caste marriages can also remove caste barriers.

**Q.4. Describe the influence of politics on caste system.**

**Ans.** It is not only that caste influences politics but politics also affects the caste system. This takes the following forms :

- (i) Each caste group tries to become bigger by incorporating within it neighbouring castes or sub-castes which were earlier excluded from it.
- (ii) Various caste groups are required to enter into a coalition with other castes and thus enter into a dialogue.
- (iii) New kinds of caste groups have come up in the political arena like 'backward' and 'forward' caste groups.

**Q.5. Is the ideological basis of communalism flawed? Substantiate your views. [HOTS]**

**Ans.** Communal politics is based on the idea that religion is the principal basis of social community. This ideology is itself full of flaws for the following reasons :

- (i) It believes that the followers of a particular religion must belong to one community.
- (ii) Their fundamental interests are the same.
- (iii) It believes that people who follow different religions cannot belong to same social community.
- (iv) Their interests are bound to be different and involve a conflict.
- (v) In its extreme form, communalism leads to the belief that people belonging to different religions cannot live as equal citizens within one nations. Either, one of them has to dominate the other, or they have to form different nations, e.g., Pakistan was formed as a result of communal beliefs.

**Q.6. Discuss the socio-economic conditions of women in our society. Has the political expression of gender division really helped? [HOTS]**

**Ans.** Socio-economic conditions of women :

- (i) The literacy rate among women is only 54 per cent compared with 76 per cent among men.
- (ii) The proportion of women among the highly paid and valued jobs is still very small.
- (iii) In almost all areas of work, women are paid less than men, even when both do exactly the same work.
- (iv) In many parts of India, parents prefer to have sons and find ways to have the girl-child aborted before she is born.

Political expression of gender division has helped to some extent but not as much as is required. Due to reservation of seats for women in the local government bodies, now there are more than 10 lakh elected women representatives in rural and urban local bodies. But a lot needs to be actually done in the society to end the gender divisions.

### PREVIOUS YEARS' QUESTIONS

**Q.1. Write a note on the status of women in India.**

**OR**

**How women in India still face discrimination and oppression in various ways? Explain with four examples. [2008]**

**Ans.** India has a patriarchal society, a society that gives more power to men, values them more and gives them power over women. Even after so many years of independence, the status of women is very low. The literacy rate of women is 54% as compared to 76% among men. There are more women dropouts from school than among men. Parents want to spend more on boys' education than on girls'. Even today, in many states of India, a girl-child is aborted before birth. The sex ratio has fallen in many states like Haryana, Rajasthan, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Tamil Nadu. In 2001, according to the census, the average male-female ratio was 1000 : 933.

Though the government has passed Equal Wages Act, yet women are paid much less. There are still no equal wages for equal work in the field of sports, movies, factories and fields, the household work a woman does is given no importance or value. Women have hardly any role in decision making process. We can see this by the low percentage of women in the Parliament, State assemblies, managerial posts, senior officials and among professionals and technical workers.

India has celebrated "Year of the Child," and "Year of the Women". We had a woman Prime Minister, but still the status of women is low. There have been some changes in recent years, yet nothing much has been done. Reservation alone cannot solve this problem. More power has to be given to women to find their rightful place at home and in public affairs also.

**Q.2. How does communalism take various forms in politics? Explain four forms. [2008]**

**Ans.** Communalism can take various forms in politics :

- (i) The most common expression of communalism is in everyday beliefs. It involves religious, prejudices, belief in the superiority of one's religion over others.

- (ii) When it tries to have political dominance of one's own religious community, especially by the majority community, it leads to the desire in minority community to form a separate political unit.
- (iii) Political mobilisation on religious lines is another form of communalism. It involves the use of sacred symbols, religious leaders, emotional appeal and plain fear in order to bring the followers of one religion together in the political arena. In electoral politics, it leads to emotional appeals to the voters of one religion in preference to others.
- (iv) Sometimes communalism takes its ugliest form — communal violence, riots and massacres. This we have seen in the case of India and Pakistan at the time of partition of the country.

**Q.3. How do women in our country still lag much behind men despite some improvement since Independence? Explain with four examples. [2008]**

**OR**

**Describe any four aspects of life in which women are discriminated in Indian society.**

**Ans.** In India, women are supposed to bring up children and look after the home. They do all the cleaning, washing, cooking, even tailoring. There is no value attached to this work. In rural areas, women work in the fields, fetch water and fuel but are hardly paid anything.

In urban areas, middle-class women work in offices, factories etc. Poor women work as domestic help, but none of them get the same wages as men. Their status is lower than that of men. Men do not do any housework. They are excellent cooks or tailors but they take up these jobs only when paid in hotels etc.

**Q.4. How does casteism affect politics? [2008]**

**OR**

**Explain any four forms of casteism in Indian politics. [2009]**

**OR**

**Caste can take various forms in politics. Describe any four forms. [2010]**

**Ans.** The caste can take following forms in politics :

- (i) Sometimes candidates are chosen on the basis of their caste. When political parties choose candidates, they keep in mind the caste composition of their voters.
- (ii) In many places, voters vote on the basis of caste and fail to choose suitable candidates.
- (iii) When a government is formed after elections, political parties take care that different castes are represented in the government.
- (iv) Political parties appeal to caste sentiments during elections.
- (v) To gain support, political parties raise caste-based issues during elections. This they do to get political support, as one man, one vote system or adult franchise has made the voter very powerful.
- (vi) The castes considered inferior or low until now have been made conscious of their rights by the political parties.



this lead to end of gender discrimination? Visualise the social scenario after 25 years and give your views in detail.

3. Read the following verse (English translation) by noted Urdu poet 'Faiz' and elaborate the meaning and theme in two paragraphs.

*"We remain strangers  
Even after so many meetings  
Blood stains remain  
Even after so many rains."*

4. 'Communalism should not be seen as a threat to some people in India. It threatens the very idea of India.'  
Do you agree with this view? Describe the various facets of communalism and communal politics in India.
5. What did Gandhiji mean to say by opening that 'religion can never be separated from politics.' Discuss with your teacher and describe the views of Gandhiji about religion and politics.

#### **D. GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. Divide the class into various groups and have a discussion on the topic 'The challenges facing Indian democracy are so many that they will lead to loss of faith in the democratic system'.
2. What can the youth of India do to meet the challenges facing democracy in our country? Divide the class into four groups. Each group shall discuss the following topics :  
Casteism, communalism, corruption, gender discrimination.

#### **E. MAKING A POSTER / COLLAGE**

Collect cartoons, drawings, pictures from internet, newspapers, books and other sources regarding the themes of casteism, communalism and gender discrimination. Make three different posters on these themes.

#### **F. DEBATE**

'The ruling party and the sitting MP or MLA frequently lose elections in our country. That could not have happened if all castes and communities were frozen in their political preferences'. Do you agree?

Organise a debate in the class on the topic 'Influence of caste on politics in India.'

#### **G. SURVEY**

Conduct a survey in your own household. Observe all the adult male and female members of your family for one week. Everyday note down the number of hours each of them spends on the following activities : income-generating activity (working at the office or shop or factory or field, etc.), household-related activity (cooking, cleaning, washing, fetching water, looking after children or elders, etc.), reading and recreation, talking/gossiping, self-care, taking rest or sleeping. If necessary, make new categories. Add up the time taken on each activity for a week and calculate the daily average for each activity for each member. Do women work more in your family ? What other conclusions can you draw?