



## Freebie politics in India

### Description

#### Theme :-

It's elections time, and hence every party is trying to offer freebies to attract voters. There is so much criticism on freebie politics.

#### Background :-

The term Freebies is not new; rather it is a prevalent culture in Indian politics. The political parties are always trying to outdo each other in luring the Indian voters with assorted freebies. From free water to free smartphones the Indian politicians promise everything to attract prospective voters in favour. This trend has gained more momentum in the recent times with the political parties being innovative in their offerings as the 'traditional free water and electricity' is no longer sufficient as election goodies.

For instance in the recent elections in Telangana, calls were made to people to provide them a pick and drop facility along with food facility on the election day if they vote for the particular party. Another example would be Rajasthan's CM Vasundhara Raje's promise to provide subsidised smartphones to 10 million poor people in the state with free data for the first six months. In counter to this, Shivraj Singh Chouhan offered a smartphone to every student who joins a government college.

In 2013, Mr. Subramaniam Balaji challenged the freebie culture in the SC, when the people of Tamil Nadu were offered TV sets, fans, mixer grinders and laptops by parties on winning 2006 and 2011 elections. The SC gave a ruling in the favor of the Tamil Nadu Government when it mentioned that offering freebies in election manifestos cannot be considered as a corrupt practice.

In India, offering sops has become a mandatory practice, the only question left is which party is able to do it better and hence attain fake credibility in the public eye.

### **Effects of Freebie Politics:**

- It makes citizens irresponsible:

India is among the countries which face hurdles in respect to excessive drinking and gambling habits of its people. Thus offering free food or other free facilities will make the citizens even lazier to work as now they will depend on such benefits provided by the political parties from time to time.

- It is a never ending trail:

The continuity of freebies is another major disadvantage as parties keep on coming up with lucrative offers to lure more number of votes and thus minimize the risk of losing in the elections. This affects some immature voters as they are blinded by such offers and are unable to judge the prospective leader.

- Freebies are given out of the tax revenue:

People forget that such benefits are been given at the cost of exchequer and from the tax paid. They consider them as free supplies which creates more expectations from the Government.

- The poor suffer:

The corrupt politicians and middlemen wipe away the benefits and the poor have to suffer as they are deprived from their share of benefits.

### **Conclusions:**

Over the years political parties have been promoting the freebie culture in name of welfare schemes. These election goodies have taken center stage in the election process and some voters make biased decisions based on account of greater benefits offered rather than the real capability of the leader. This not only has effects on the mind-sets of the people who get crushed in this game of politics but also degrades the importance of election process.

### **Your Turn..**

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