

Class - 9
Subject - SOCIAL SCIENCE (CIVICS)

Chapter - 1

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY, WHY DEMOCRACY

Democracy comes from the Greek word 'Demokratia'. In Greek 'Demos' means people and kratia means rule. So democracy is the rule by the people. According to Abraham Lincoln Democracy is government of the people, by the people and for the people.

Why define democracy:- Defining democracy is very essential to make the people understand clearly about democracy because different people use it for different purposes and also different kinds of governments call themselves as democracies.

Simple definition:- Democracy is a form of government in which rulers are elected by the people.

Features of Democracy:-

1. Major decisions by elected leaders
2. Free and fair electoral competition
3. One people, one vote, one value
4. Rule of law and respect for rights

Demerits of Democracy:-

1. Leaders keep changing in a democracy. This leads to instability.
2. Democracy is all about political competition and powerplay. There is no scope of morality.
3. So many people have to be consulted in a democracy which leads to delays.
4. Elected leaders do not know the best interests of the people. It leads to bad decisions.
5. Democracy leads to corruption for it is based on electoral competition.
6. Ordinary people don't know what is good for them.

Merits of Democracy

1. A democratic government is more accountable form of government.
2. It improves the quality of decision making.
3. Democracy provides a method to deal with differences and conflicts.
4. Democracy enhances the dignity of citizens.
5. It is better than other forms of government because it allows us to correct its own mistakes.

Questions

1. What would happened if India was not a democracy? Could we have stayed together a single nation?
Ans. No, we would have not stayed together as a single nation if India was not a democracy. India has a multi religious, multi cultural and multi linguistic populations.
If there was no democracy then all the people could not have followed their religion and customs with freedom. There would have been conflicts between different religious and linguistic groups and minorities would have lived in fear and insecurity.
2. How does democracy improve the quality of decision making?
Ans. In democracy decision making is based on consultation and discussion. It always involves many person, discussion and meetings. When many people put their hands together , they are able to point out possible mistakes or drawbacks in any decision. This process may be time consuming but it reduces the chances of irresponsible decision. thus the lengthy process of on any important issue in democracy improves the quality of decision making.
3. Is China a democratic country or not? Give two arguments in favour of your answer.
Ans. No, China is not a democratic country though election is held there after every five years but still it can

not be called a democratic country because:-

- i. Before contesting election, a candidate needs the approval of ruling Chinese Communist Party. Only the members of Communist Party and its eight allies are allowed to contest in the election.
- ii. There is one party rule in China which is not the indication of a true democracy. Therefore, China can not be called a true democracy.

4. What were the dirty tricks applied by PRI to win the election?

Ans. The dirty tricks applied by PRI to win the election were:-

- i. Government employees were forced to attend party meeting.
- ii. Teachers in government schools forced student's parents to vote for PRI.
- iii. Media mostly ignored the activities of opposition political party except criticizing them.
- iv. Sometimes polling booth were shifted from one place to another at the last minute of the election.
- v. The PRI spent a large sum of money in the campaign for its candidates.

5. Why Pakistan under General Musharraf can not be called a democracy? give any five reasons.

Ans. Pakistan under General Pervez Musharraf can not be called a democracy due to following reasons:-

- i. General Musharraf conducted a military coup in October 1999 in Pakistan. He overthrew a democratically elected government.
- ii. In 2002, he held a referendum which granted him a five year extension. But according to Pakistani media, human rights organisation and democratic activists, it was based on malpractices and fraud.
- iii. In August 2002, he issued legal frame work worder whcih grant him the power to dismiss the national and provincial assemblies.
- iv. The work of the Civilian Cabinet was supervised by a national security council which is dominated by military officers.
- v. Elections were held and elected representatives have some powers but the final power rests with military officers and General Musharraf himself.

6. How did Robert Mugabe establish his dictatorial rule in Zimbabwe after independence?

Ans. Zimbabwe attained independence from the white minority rule in 1980. Since then the country has been ruled by ZANU- PF, the party that led the freedom struggle. Its leader Robert Mugabe has been ruling the country since independence. Mugabe is popular but also uses unfair practices in elections. Over the year his government has changed the constitution several times to increase the power of the President and make him less accountable. Opposition party workers harassed. Public protests and demonstrations against the government are declared illegal. Both the media are controlled by the government. The government even ignored judgements that goes against it. In this way Robert Mugabe established his dictatorial rule in Zimbabwe.

7. Democracy is better than any other form of government because it allows to correct its own mistakes. Justify the statement.

Ans. No form of government is free from mistakes. Democracy also involves many mistakes. But the good thing is that it allows us to correct its own mistakes.

The advantage of democracy is that if there is any mistakes, it can not remain hidden for long. Sooner or later the public comes to know about it and there s a scope for public discussion and a room for correction.

Correction of mistakes, either the rulers to change their decisions or the rulers can be changed through election. This can not happen in any other form of government.

8. Write a response to the following arguments against democracy.

- a. Army is the most disciplined and corruption free organisation in the country. therefore army should rule the country.
- Ans. The army is for the defense of the country. Its primary duty is defense and not governance. Also army officers are not elected by people. So, they should not rule the country.
- b. Rule of the majority means the rule of ignorance people. What we need is the rule of the wise even if they are in small numbers?
- Ans. Rule of majority is democratic as it represents the views of all sections of people. Illiterate and poor people can not be called ignorant. At least they can realise which representative is good for them. Democracy means equal opportunity to all without any discrimination.
- c. If we want religious leaders to guide to us in spiritual matters, why not invite them to guide us to politics as well. The country should be ruled by religious leaders.
- Ans. The statement is wrong because we should not mix religion and politics especially in a multi social, multi religious, multi linguistic country like India. Religious leaders do not have any experience of administration too.