

CBSE Class 09 Social Science

Revision Notes

Chapter - 2

Political Science - WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY?

DEMOCRACY

1. Democracy is a form of government in which the rulers are elected by the people.
 - Myanmar where the army rules, Dictator Pinochet's rule in Chile, or President N.krumah's rule in Ghana was not democratic. They were not chosen by the people.
 - Hereditary kings, like the king of Nepal or Saudi Arabia, are also not democratic rulers.They rule because they were born into noble families.
2. In a democracy final decision making power must rest with those elected by the people.
 - In Pakistan, President Musharraf has the power to dismiss national and state assemblies;so the final powers rest with the army and the General himself. We cannot call it a democracy.
3. A democracy must be based on a free and fair election where those currently in power have a fair chance of losing.
 - In China elections are held for its Parliament.. But all the candidates are either members of Chinese communist Party or eight smaller allies of the party.
 - In Mexico elections have been held every six years since 1980. But the same party, PRI, has won the elections. Obviously there has been rigging and mal-practices, with freedom denied to opposition.
 - In both the examples elections are held but one can not claim that they are free and fair.
4. In a democracy people's will is ascertained by each adult citizen having one vote and each vote has one value. Democracy is based on the fundamental principle of political equality.
 - Countries like Saudi Arabia, Estonia and Fiji in some or other way deny voting rights to certain sections of its population.

5. A democratic government rules within limits set by constitutional and citizens' rights.

- A democratic government cannot do what it likes after winning the elections. It has to respect certain basic rules and is accountable not only to the people but also to other independent officials.
- Robert Mugabe is President of Zimbabwe. He is ruling there for last 38 years. But in many incidences he has behaved in an undemocratic way and even above the law.

WHY DEMOCRACY?

Points Against

There has been criticism of democracy by various people. The charges are that :

- It creates instability by changing its leaders frequently.
- Democracy is about power play and political competition. There is no scope for morality.
- So many people have to be consulted before any issue is solved. It leads to delay.
- Elected leaders do not know the best interest of the people.
- It leads to corruption for it is based on electoral corruption.
- Ordinary people do not know what is good for them, so decision making should not be left to them.

Arguments for Democracy:

- Democratic government is a more accountable form of government.
- Democracy improves the quality of decision making.
- Democracy provides a method to deal with differences and conflicts.
- Democracy enhances the dignity of citizens.
- It allows us to correct its own mistakes.

Broader meaning of Democracy :

Democratic ideas can be practised in various decision making processes. In broader sense no country can be completely democratic, The features of democracy are only minimum conditions. A lot can be done towards achieving real democracy.

CBSE Class 9 Social Science
Important Questions
Civics Chapter-2
What is Democracy? Why Democracy

3 marks Questions

1. What amendments did Prvez Musharraf bring in the constitution of Pakistan by issuing a legal framework order?

Ans. In August 2002 he issued a legal framework order that amended the constitution of Pakistan.

According to this order, the president can dismiss the national or provincial assemblies. The work of the civilians' cabinet is supervised by a National Security Council which is dominated by military officers.

2. Pakistan under General Pervez Musharaff was a democratic country or non democratic. Give reasons.

Ans. Pakistan under General Pervez Musharaff was a non democratic country. He amended constitution according to his own will and for his personal benefits. He dismissed the national and provincial assemblies. Final power was rests with military officers.

3. 'Some countries are not ready to give voting rights to its citizens'. Explain.

Ans. In Saudi Arabia women do not have the right to vote. Estonia had made its citizenship rules in such a way that people belonging to Russian minority find it difficult to get the right to vote. In Fiji the electoral system was is such that the vote of an indigenious Fiji has more value than that of an Indian Fijian.

4. What dirty practices were used by IRP to win the elections in Mexico?

Ans. The PRI was known to use many dirty tricks to win elections.

All those who were employed in government offices had to attend its party meetings.

Teachers of government schools used to force parents to vote for the PRI.

Media largely ignored the activities of opposition political parties except to criticize them.

5. Name any two countries where elections are held regularly but they cannot be considered as democratic countries. Explain.

Ans. Mexico and China are two countries where elections are held regularly but they cannot be considered as democratic countries.

In china before contesting elections a candidate need the approval of the Chinese Communist Party. People have no choice. The government is always formed by the communist party. This is against the democratic system of elections.

In Mexico, PRI was known to use many dirty tricks to win elections. All those who were employed in government offices had to attend its party meetings. Teachers of government schools used to force parents to vote for the PRI. Media largely ignored the activities of opposition political parties except to criticize them. This is against the democratic system of elections.

6. How is the dignity of citizens enhanced in democracy?

Ans. Democracy enhances the dignity of citizens.

Democracy is based on the principle of political equality, on recognizing that the poorest and the least educated have the same status as the rich and the educated.

People are not subjected of a ruler, they are the rulers themselves. All the citizens are equal before law.

7. How do democracy provide platform to deal with differences and conflict?

Ans. Democracy provides the method to deal with differences and conflict.

In any society people are bound to have differences of opinion and interests. These differences are particularly sharp in country like ours which has an amazing social diversity. Democracy provides the only peaceful solution to this problem. In democracy no one is the permanent winner. No one is the permanent loser. Different groups can live with one

another peacefully.

8. Why is democracy considered the best form of government?

Ans. Democracy provides the method to deal with differences and conflict.

Democracy allows us to correct its own mistakes.

Democracy improves the quality of decision making.

Democracy enhances the dignity of citizens.

9. How does democracy allow us to correct its own mistakes?

Ans. There is no guarantee that mistakes cannot be made in democracy.

No form of government can guarantee that. The advantage in a democracy that such mistakes cannot be hidden for long.

There is a space for public discussion on these mistakes. And there is a room for correction.

Either the rulers have to change their decisions, or the rulers can be changed.

10. How does democracy improve the quality of decision making?

Ans. Democracy is based on consultations and discussion.

A democratic decision always involves many persons, discussions and meetings.

When a number of people put their heads together, they are able to point out possible mistakes in any decision.

This takes time. But there is a big advantage in taking time over important decisions.

11. Under what conditions government run after the elections?

Ans. A democratic government cannot do whatever it likes, simply because it has won an election.

It has to respect some basic rules. In particular it has to respect some guarantees to the minorities.

Every major decision has to go through a series of consultations. Every office bearer has certain rights and responsibilities assigned by the constitution and the law.

12. Who was Robert Mugabe?

Ans. Robert Mugabe was the leader of ZANU-PH.

Robert Mugabe has been ruling the country since independence. Elections have been held regularly and always won by ZANU-PH.

President Mugabe is popular but also uses unfair practices in elections.

Over the years his government has changed the constitutional several times to increase the powers of the President and make him less accountable.

Opposition party workers are harassed and their meeting disrupted.

13. Write any three features of democratic elections.

Ans. All citizens have a political right to vote with equal value.

Elections were held regularly after every five or four years.

Elections are conducted in a free and fair manner where people can choose as they really wish.

14. Write any three drawbacks of non democratic elections.

Ans. All citizens are not given right to vote.

Elections are not held regularly.

Elections are held in a free and fair manner.

People face many restrictions.

People don't have choice.

15. Is India a democratic country? Write any three arguments in favour of your answer.

Ans. Yes, India is a democratic country. It is the largest democracy of the world.

In India people have the right to criticize the government and express their views freely.

People choose their own government.

The real and final power is in the hands of people.

There are free and fair elections.

16. Assess any three conditions that applied to the way a democratic government is run

after the elections.

Ans. People should have the freedom to express their views.

They should have freedom to form associations and to protest also.

Country is governed by the constitutional law.

Everyone should be equal in the eye of law.

People's rights should be respected and it must be protected by law.

17. Write any three basic principles of democracy.

Ans. (i) Sovereignty of the people. People are free from outside powers.

(ii) Rulers are elected by the people.

(iii) Free and fair elections.

18. Explain the difficulties faced by the people in a non democratic country.

Ans. People cannot change their rulers according to their own wish.

People cannot choose their rulers also.

People cannot question the authority of the dictator.

People cannot criticize the government.

19. How far is it correct to say that respect for citizen's rights were not followed in Zimbabwe. Explain.

Ans. Yes, it is correct to say that respect for citizen's rights were not followed in Zimbabwe

Opposition party workers were harassed and their meetings disrupted.

Public demonstrations and protests were declared illegal.

There is a law that limits the right to criticize the President.

20. How far is it correct to say that respect for citizen's rights were not followed in Pakistan. Explain.

Ans. Yes, it is correct to say that respect for citizen's rights were not followed in Pakistan.

In August 2002 he issued legal framework order that amended the constitution of Pakistan.

According to this order, the President can dismiss the national and provincial assemblies.

The work of the civilian cabinet is supervised by the National Security Council which is dominated by military officers.

21. How far is it correct to say that respect for citizen's rights were not followed in China. Explain.

Ans. Yes, it is correct to say that respect for citizen's rights were not followed in China. Elections procedure is not democratic in china.

The national People's Congress has the power to appoint the President of country.

Before contesting elections, candidate needs the approval of the Chinese Communist Party.

Only those who are members of the Chinese Communist Party or eight smaller parties allied to it were allowed to contest elections held in 2001-03.

The government is always formed by communist party.

22. How far is it correct to say that respect for citizen's rights were not followed in Mexico. Explain.

Ans. Yes, it is correct to say that respect for citizen's rights were not followed in Mexico. Elections procedure is not democratic.

The PRI was known to use many dirty tricks to win the elections.

All those who are employed in government offices had to attend its party meetings.

Teachers of government schools used to force parents to vote for PRI.

Opposition parties did contest elections but never manage to win.

23. Why is representative democracy necessary?

Ans. Representative democracy is the most common form of democracy.

This form of democracy is necessary because the population of modern democratic states is very large and it is physically impossible for each member to participate in decision making process.

Even they could sit together, do not have the time, desire, experience for participating in decision making process.

24. What are the features of a good democracy?

Ans. Every citizen must be able to play equal role in decision making.

An equal right to vote is not enough; people need to have equal information, basic education, and equal resources.

Good democracy will come only when no one goes hungry to bed.

When every person has employment and accessibility of basic needs.

25. Are elections sufficient to guarantee the existence of democratic government?

Ans. Only elections are not sufficient to guarantee the existence of democratic government.

There should be choice before the voters to elect the representatives. Election system should not be like China.

One vote one Person and one value. Elections should be based on this principle.

26. “Rulers and the rules, both are responsible for making of an ideal democracy”.

Explain.

Ans. It depends upon on the citizens that what type of representative they are elected.

It depends on the awareness and participation of people.

In a democracy every citizen must be able to play equal role in decision making.

Both the rulers and the ruled should try to realize the ideals of democratic decisions.

27. The army is the most disciplined and corruption free organization in the country.

There for the army should rule the country. Give reason.

Ans. No the army should not rule the country.

The army officials are not elected by the people.

Whereas the in democracy the rulers are elected by the people.

28. What is responsible government?

Ans. Democratic government is a responsible government.

The representatives elected by the people so it remains responsible towards people.

In case they do not remain responsible before the people can change them during the next elections.

29. What do understand by political equality?

Ans. Democracy is based on political equality which ensures equal rights.

Both the rich and poor the educated and uneducated get equal rights.

Democracy enhances the dignity of the people.

30. What do you understand by room for correction?

Ans. It is only in democracy that mistakes are admitted and all attempts are made to correct these mistakes.

If mistakes are made it is only in democracy that they are admitted and then corrected.

In democracy thus there is a room for correction.

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Important Questions
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5 marks Questions

1. Write any five features of Democratic government.

Ans. People have political rights. They take part in an election process on the basis of Universal Adult Franchise.

Democratic government is accountable and responsive to the needs of people.

There are free and fair elections. People participate in them without any restriction.

People also participate in the functioning of decision making.

Representatives are elected for the fixed tenure of time.

People are not subjects of the ruler, they are rulers themselves.

2. Write any five features of Non Democratic government.

Ans. (i) People do not enjoy political rights or they have every limited right.

(ii) Elections are not held in a free and fair manner. People face many restrictions.

(iii) People are not allowed to participate in the functioning of decision making.

(iv) Government is not accountable and responsive to the needs of people.

(v) People are never considered rulers or dignified citizens. They are treated as subjects.

3. Describe any five features of non-democratic Pakistan under General Musharraf.

Ans. In Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf led a military coup in October 1999. He overthrew a democratically elected government and declared himself the Chief Executive of the country.

He changed the designation to President and 2002 held a referendum in the country that granted him a five year extension.

Pakistani media human rights organizations and democracy activities said that the referendum was based on malpractices and fraud.

In August 2002 he issued legal framework order that amended the constitution of Pakistan. According to this order, the President can dismiss the national and provincial assemblies. The work of the civilian cabinet is supervised by the National Security Council which is dominated by military officers.

4. How far it is correct to say that the government of PRI in Mexico was a non democratic government? Give arguments.

Ans. The government made by International Revolutionary Party in Mexico was not a democratic government. It works against the principles of democracy. The PRI was known to use many dirty tricks to win the elections. All those who are employed in government offices had to attend its party meetings. Teachers of government schools used to force parents to vote for PRI. Opposition parties did contest elections but never manage to win. Media largely ignored the activities of opposition political parties except to criticize them. Sometimes the polling booths were shifted from one place to another in the last minute, which made it difficult for people to cast their vote.

5. How far the rule of law and respect for citizen's rights are followed in Zimbabwe although Robert Mugabe has been democratically elected?

Ans. Zimbabwe attained independence from 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. Elections were held regularly and always won by ZANU-PF. President Robert Mugabe is popular but also use unfair means 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 were harassed and their meetings disrupted. Public demonstrations and protests were declared illegal. There is a law that limits the right to criticize the President.

6. "Elections in china do not offer people a real choice." Explain.

Ans. In China elections are held regularly after every five years for electing the country's parliament, called Quanguo Renmin Daibiao Dahu (National People's Congress). The national People's Congress has the power to appoint the President of country. Before contesting elections, candidate needs the approval of the Chinese Communist Party. Only those who are members of the Chinese Communist Party or eight smaller parties allied to it were allowed to contest elections held in 2001-03. The government is always formed by communist party.

7. Write any five arguments against democracy.

Ans. Leaders keep changing in a democracy. This leads to instability. Democracy is all about political competition and power play. There is no scope for morality. So many people have to be consulted in a democracy that it leads to delays. Elected leaders do not know the best interest of the people. It leads to bad decisions. Democracy leads to corruption for it is based on electoral competition. Ordinary people don't know what is good for them; they should not decide anything.

8. "Democracy improves the quality of decision making" .Explain.

Ans. Democracy is based on consultation and discussion. A democratic decision always involves many persons, discussion and meeting. When a number of people put together they are able to point out possible mistakes in any decision. This reduces the chances of rash or irresponsible decision. Thus democracy improves the quality of decision making.

9. "Democracy enhances the dignity of citizens."Explain.

Ans. Democracy enhances the dignity of citizens. Democracy is based on the principle of political equality, on recognizing that the poorest and the least educated have the same status as the rich and the educated. People are not subjected of a ruler, they are the rulers themselves. All the citizens are equal before law. Democracies have provided opportunities to women to get equal treatment.

10. Is it good to elect a President for life or is it better to hold regular elections after every five years? Give reasons.

Ans. No, it is not good to elect a President for life. But it is certainly better to hold regular elections after a fixed tenure, which should be of five years.

Rulers elected by the people can take final decision on all the major issues.

Such elections offer a choice and fair opportunity to the people to change the current rulers.

This choice and opportunity is available to all the people on an equal basis.

The exercise of this choice leads to a government limited by basic rules of the constitution and citizens' right.