

CHAPTER -1 WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY?

POLITICAL SCIENCE

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Q1. What is Democracy?

Ans. *Democracy is a form of government in which:*

1. Rulers elected by the people take all the major decisions.
2. Elections offer a choice and fair opportunity to the people to change the current rulers.
3. This choice and opportunity is available to all the people on an equal basis
4. The exercise of this choice leads to a government limited by basic rules of the constitution and citizens' rights.

Q2. Is India a democratic country? Write any three arguments in favour of your answer.

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

Three arguments in favour are :

1. In India people have right to criticize the government and express their views freely.
2. People choose their own government.
3. The real and final power is in the hands of people.
4. There are free and fair elections.

Q3. Write any five arguments against democracy.

Ans.

Following are the arguments against Democracy:

- 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.
- 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.

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Q4. 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.

- In China, elections are regularly held after every five years for electing the country's Parliament, called National People's Congress.
- Nearly 3000 members elected from all over China. Some members are elected by the army.
- This National People's Congress has the power to appoint the President of the country.
- Before contesting elections, a 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 are allowed to contest elections in China.
- The government is always formed by the Communist Party.

Thus, we cannot say that the elections in China are free and fair. It is always restricted by the Communist Party and hence, the elections do not represent people verdict in China.

Q5. Why is representative democracy necessary?

Ans. A representative democracy is a type of democracy in which all the adults(of or after the age of 18) can vote and elect representative.

It is needed because-

1. It is used to protect the rights of the people.
2. This form of democracy is necessary because the population of modern democratic states is very large .
3. It is physically impossible for each member to participate in decision making process.
4. It puts an limit to the rights of the representatives of the government.

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Q6. How did Pervez Musharraf establish his rule in Pakistan?

Ans. General Pervez Musharraf established his rule in the following way:

1. General Musharraf led a military coup in October 1999.
2. He overthrew a democratically elected government and declared himself the 'Chief Executive' of the country.
3. Later, he changed his designation to that of a President and in 2002, held a referendum in the country that granted him a five-year extension.
4. People may have elected their representatives to the national and provincial assemblies but those elected representatives are not really the rulers. They cannot take the final decisions.
5. The power to take the final decision rests with the army officials and with General Musharraf and none of them are elected by the people.
6. Pakistani media, human right organisations and democracy activists said that referendum held by General Musharraf was based on malpractices and fraud.

Q7. Giving an example of Zimbabwe, show how laws were made by one single ruler.

Ans. Since Zimbabwe got independence in 1980, it is being ruled by ZANU-PF a which led the freedom struggle.

1. It's leader, Robert Mugabe has been ruling the country since independence.
2. ZANU-PF won due to unfair practices in elections.
3. His government has made changes in the constitution several times to increase the power of the President and make him less accountable.
4. The opposition party workers were harassed and their meetings were disrupted.
5. Public protests demonstrations are declared illegal.

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6. Laws are made to limit the right to criticise the President.
7. The media has been forced to write and speak in favour of the ruling party. There are independent newspapers but the government harasses those journalists who go against it.

This example of Zimbabwe shows that popular government can be undemocratic.

Q8. What was PRI? What dirty tricks did it play to win elections in Mexico?

Ans.

- PRI was a party called Institutional Revolutionary Party of Mexico. Since 1930 it won every election held until 2000.
- Opposition parties did contest elections, but never managed to win.
- The PRI was known to use many dirty tricks to win elections.
- The teachers of government schools used to force parents to vote the PRI.
- Media largely ignored the activities of opposition political party except to criticise them.
- Sometimes the polling booths were shifted one place to another in the last minute, which made it difficult for people cast their votes.
- The PRI spent a large sum of money in the campaign for its candidates.