

# **St. Aloysius Sr. Sec. School, Cantt Jabalpur**

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### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**Class: IX**  
**Subject: Social Science**  
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**Chapter: 1**  
**Title: What is Democracy? Why Democracy?**

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#### **CBSE Class 09 Social Science**

#### **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.
- 2) 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.
- 3) In a democracy final decision making power must rest with those elected by the people. In Pakistan, President Musharraf had 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.
- 4) 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, had 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 cannot claim that they are free and fair.
- 5) 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.

- 6) 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.

## **NCERT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**Q1) Here is some information about four countries. Based on this information, how would you classify each of these countries. Write 'democratic', 'undemocratic' or 'not sure' against each of these.**

- a) Country A: People who do not accept the country's official religion do not have a right to vote.**
- b) Country B: The same party has been winning elections for the last twenty years.**
- c) Country C: Ruling party has lost in the last three elections.**
- d) Country D: There is no independent election commission.**

**Ans.**

- (a) Undemocratic
- (b) Not sure
- (c) Democratic
- (d) Undemocratic

**Q2) Here is some information about four countries. Based on this information, how would you classify each of these countries. Write 'democratic', 'undemocratic' or 'not sure' against each of these.**

- a) Country P: The parliament cannot pass a law about the army without the consent of the Chief of Army.**
- b) Country Q: The parliament cannot pass a law reducing the powers of the judiciary.**
- c) Country R: The country's leaders cannot sign any treaty with another country without taking permission from its neighbouring country.**
- d) Country S: All the major economic decisions about the country are taken by officials of the central bank which the ministers cannot change.**

**Ans.**

- (a) Undemocratic
- (b) Democratic
- (c) Undemocratic
- (d) Undemocratic

**Q3) Which of these is not a good argument in favour of democracy? Why?**

- a) People feel free and equal in a democracy.**
- b) Democracies resolve conflict in a better way than others.**
- c) Democratic government is more accountable to the people.**
- d) Democracies are more prosperous than others.**

**Ans.** (d) Democracies are more prosperous than others.

This is not a good agreement as the prosperity of a country cannot be determined through its form of government but through its economic condition. For example, a democratic country like India is still a developing country, while a country following monarchy rule is economically strong.

**Q4) Each of these statements contains a democratic and an undemocratic element. Write out the two separately for each statement.**

- a) A minister said that some laws have to be passed by the parliament in order to conform to the regulations decided by the World Trade Organisation (WTO).**
- b) The Election Commission ordered re-polling in a constituency where large-scale rigging was reported.**
- c) Women's representation in the parliament has barely reached 10 per cent. This led women's organisations to demand one-third seats for women.**

**Ans.**

- a) Democratic: Passing of the laws by the Parliament. Undemocratic: Conforming to the regulations decided by the World Trade Organisation.
- b) Democratic: The order to re-poll by the Election Commission. Undemocratic: large scale rigging was reported
- c) Democratic: Demand by Women's Organisation to reserve one-third seats for women.
- d) Undemocratic: Women's representation in the parliament is less than 10 per cent.

**Q5) Which of these is not a valid reason for arguing that there is a lesser possibility of famine in a democratic country?**

- a) Opposition parties can draw attention to hunger and starvation.**
- b) Free press can report suffering from famine in different parts of the country.**
- c) Government fears its defeat in the next elections.**
- d) People are free to believe in and practice any religion.**

**Ans.** (d) "People are free to believe in and practise any religion" is not a valid reason because there are lesser chances for famine to take place in a democratic country. This is because practicing of a religion is not at all related to famine.

**Q6) There are 40 villages in a district where the government has made no provision for drinking water. These villagers met and considered many methods of forcing the government to respond to their need. Which of these is not a democratic method?**

- a) Filing a case in the courts claiming that water is part of right to life.**
- b) Boycotting the next elections to give a message to all parties.**
- c) Organising public meetings against government's policies.**
- d) Paying money to government officials to get water.**

**Ans.** (d) Paying money to government officials to get water is an undemocratic method.

**Q7) 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.**
- b) Rule of the majority means the rule of ignorant people. What we need is the rule of the wise, even if they are in small numbers.**
- c) If we want religious leaders to guide us in spiritual matters, why not invite them to guide us in politics as well. The country should be ruled by religious leaders.**

**Ans.** (a) Though army the most disciplined and corruption-free organisation in the country, however, it cannot be justified that they should rule the country. Primarily, because they do not form a democratic government i.e. are not elected by the people. Secondly, people will not be allowed to voice their opinion or expression as all their fundamental rights would be curtailed. Also, there would be no assurance that the army cannot turn into a ruthless dictator at any point of their rule, making the life of the people difficult. For example: people of Chile suffered under the rule of General Augusto Pinochet. (b) Such a thing would be against the principle of the Universal Adult Franchise, wherein every person above the age of 18 yrs in our country

irrespective of religion, caste, sex, socio-economic background etc. has the right to vote. Everyone has the right to participate equally in the formation of the government. Therefore ignoring some sections of the society would be unfair. Moreover, wise men need not be necessarily good administrators.

(c) Those who say that the country should be ruled by religious leaders are making a very risky statement. Because in a multi-religious country bringing religion into politics can cause serious conflict among the people. Moreover, religious leaders can bring trouble to the country due to their mutual conflicts of ideologies. Besides, many even do not have any experience in administration. Thus, it is very necessary for them to run their own religious institutions and need not meddle in the political affairs of the country.

**Q8) Are the following statements in keeping with democracy as a value? Why?**

**a) Father to daughter: I don't want to hear your opinion about your marriage. In our family children marry where the parents tell them to.**

**b) Teacher to student: Don't disturb my concentration by asking me questions in the classroom.**

**c) Employee to the officer: Our working hours must be reduced according to the law.**

**Ans.** (a) The statement made is an undemocratic statement as the girl is being denied as opportunity to voice her opinion and choose her partner. As per our Constitution, every citizen who is 18 or above has the right to marry according to his/her choice.

(b) The statement made is undemocratic as the student is being denied the right to ask questions/clear his doubts. The best the teacher can do is to ask the student to ask his query at the end of the lecture; however, stopping him from doing so is incorrect.

(c) The statement made is a democratic statement because here the employees are asking for their fundamental right. Within the norms of the company, the employees are always entitled to ask or request their office for something.

**Q9) Consider the following facts about a country and decide if you would call it a democracy. Give reasons to support your decision.**

**a) All the citizens of the country have right to vote Elections are held regularly.**

**b) The country took loan from international agencies. One of the conditions for given loan was that the government would reduce its expenses on education and health.**

**c) People speak more than seven languages but education is available only in one language, the language spoken by 52 percent people of the country.**

**d) Several organisations have given a call for peaceful demonstrations and nationwide strikes in the country to oppose these policies. Government has arrested these leaders.**

**e) The government owns the radio and television in the country. All the newspapers have to get permission from the government to publish any news about government's policies and protests.**

- Ans.** a) This statement tells that it is a democratic country where citizens are allowed to vote and choose their government.
- b) While taking a loan from international agencies, the country is compromising on the welfare of the people by reducing their expenditure on education and health which is totally undemocratic.
- c) The provision of making education accessible in only one language is undemocratic. It is the fundamental right for people to have an education and it is the government's duties to provide them in the language they know.
- d) Right to assemble and peacefully demonstrate is a basic right of an individual. Hence, arresting the protestors is undemocratic.
- e) When government owns the radio and television, it is debarring people from availing their right to free press. It is undemocratic.

### EXTRA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Q1) Explain the main features of democracy.**

- Ans.** 1) In a democracy the final decision-making power must rest with those elected by the people.
- 2) It is based on free and fair elections, where those currently in power have fair chance of losing.
- 3) Each citizen has one vote and each vote must have one value.
- 4) It is a rule within limits set by constitutional laws and citizen's rights.
- 5) Democracy provides a method to deal with differences and conflicts. It enhances the dignity of the citizens.

**Q2) "Elections in China do not represent people's verdict." Explain.**

- Ans.** In China elections are held regularly for electing the country's parliament. The 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. The government is always formed by Communist Party. The people do not have much choice. They have to choose the ruling party and the candidate approved by it. So, we can say that 'Elections in China do not represent people's verdict'.

**Q3) How would you analyse China's famine of 1958-61 in context to argument for democracy?**

- Ans.** China's famine of 1958-61 was the worst recorded famine in world history. Nearly three crore people died in this famine. During those days, India's economic condition was not much better than China, yet India did not have a famine of the kind China had, Economist think that this was a result of different policies in two countries. The Indian democratic govt. Responds to food security and Chinese government did not. If China had multiparty election, an opposition party and a press to criticise the government then so many people may not have died in the famine.

**Q4) Why is democracy better than any other form of government? Write five arguments to support your answer.**

- Ans.** A democratic government is better government because of following reasons:
- 1) **Accountability** : Democratic government is more accountable form of government. Accountability encourages government officials to act in the public best interest. It requires that the rulers have to attend to the needs of the people.
- 2) **Quality of decision making** : Democracy leads to better decisions because it is based on consultation and discussion. Decision always involves many persons.

They are able to point out possible mistakes. This process reduces chances of rash or irresponsible decisions.

- 3) **Better Conflict Management** : Democracy provides a method to deal with differences and conflicts. In any society people are bound to have difference of opinions and interests. People belong to different regions, speak different languages, practise different religions and have different caste. The preference of one group can clash with those of other groups. In democracy, no one is a permanent winner. No one is permanent loser. Different group can live with one another peacefully.
- 4) **Dignity of Citizens** : Democracy is based on the principle of political equality. Poorest and the least educated has the same status as the rich and the educated. People are their own rulers. Even if they make mistake they are responsible for their conduct.
- 5) **Provides Opportunities for Corrective Measures** : It allows us to correct its own mistakes. There is no guarantee that mistakes can't be made in democracy. No form of government can guarantee that. The advantage in democracy is that such mistake cannot be hidden for long. There is a space for public discussion on these mistake. And there is room for correction.

**Q5) “Democracy is the most popular form of government emerging in modern times, still the shortcomings cannot be ruled off”. Justify the statement by assessing any five shortcomings of democracy.**

Ans. Arguments Against Democracy are:

- 1) **Political Instability** : Leaders keep on changing in a democracy which leads to instability in government.
- 2) **Lack of morality** : Democracy leads to competition among political parties. Leaders take it as an opportunity to grab power for their own selfish needs. There is hardly any scope for morality.
- 3) **Unnecessary Delay** : Since it requires a lot of people to be consulted in decision-making it leads to delay.
- 4) **Wrong Decisions** : Political leaders are usually unaware about the interest of people which leads to bad decision.
- 5) **Corruption** : As a democratic system based on electoral competition, it leads to corruption among political parties. Political parties use money power and ‘muscle power’ to win elections.
- 6) **People’s Ignorance** : Lack of education and knowledge makes the working of democracy difficult. Ordinary people do not know what is good for them and thus incapable of taking decisions.

**Q6) Which party was ruling in Maxico since 1930 to 2000? Does it go against the principle of democracy? Give reasons.**

Ans. PRI was a party called **Institutional Revolutionary Party of Mexico**. This party ruled in Mexico.

- a) Since 1930 to 2000
- b) Yes, this party goes against the principle of democracy because of following reasons:

**Dirty Tricks:**

- 1) All government employees had to attend party meetings.
- 2) Teachers of government schools forced parents to vote for PRI.

- 3) Media largely ignored the activities of opposition.
- 4) PRI spent a large sum of money in campaigning.
- 5) Polling booths were shifted from one place to another in the last minute, which made it difficult for people to cast their votes.

**Q7) Why Pakistan under General Musharraf should not be called a democracy? Mention the reasons.**

- Ans.
- 1) In Pakistan, General Musharraf led a military coup in October 1999.
  - 2) He overthrew a democracy and declared himself the 'Chief Executive' of the country.
  - 3) Later changed the designation to President in 2002. Held a referendum in the country that granted him a five year extension.
  - 4) Referendum was based on malpractices and fraud.
  - 5) In August 2002, Musharraf issued a 'Legal Framework Order' which gave him power to dismiss the national or provincial assemblies.
  - 6) After passing this law, elections were to be held to the national and state assemblies, but they could not take final decision.
  - 7) Final decision powers rested with Musharraf.

So, Pakistan should not be called a democratic country because the elected representative were not really the rulers. In a democracy the final decision-making power must rest with those elected by the people.

**Q8) Why can't Zimbabwe be considered a truly democratic country under Robert Mugabe? Mention the reasons.**

**OR**

**'Popular governments can be undemocratic and popular leaders can be autocratic'. Explain the statement giving reference to Zimbabwe.**

- Ans.
- Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980. Since then the country has been ruled by ZANU - PF party. Election have been held regularly but always won by ZANU – PF. President Robert Mugabe was popular but also used unfair practices in election.

**Reason for undemocratic:**

- 1) President is powerful and less accountable.
- 2) Opposition party workers are harassed.
- 3) Public protest and demonstrations are declared illegal.
- 4) Television and radio are controlled by the government.
- 5) The government pressurise judges and had ignored some court judgements.

This shows that popular approval of the rulers is necessary in a democracy, but it is not sufficient. Popular governments can be undemocratic and popular leaders can be autocratic.

**Q9) Distinguish between the democratic government and non-democratic government.**

Ans. Following are the differences between democratic and non-democratic government:

1 In democratic government people elect their rulers.	1 In non-democratic government people do not elect their rulers.
2 In a democracy the final decision-making power must rest with those elected by people.	2 In a non-democratic government the final power rests with Army or dictator.
3 A democratic government is more accountable form of government.	3 Non-democratic government may and can respond to the people's needs. It all depends on the wishes of the rulers.
4 There is a freedom of expression and people enjoy their fundamental rights.	4 There is no freedom of expression and people do not enjoy their fundamental right.
5 In a democracy, each adult citizen must have one vote and each vote must have one value.	5 In non-democratic only few groups have the right to vote. For example, in Saudi Arabia women do not have right to vote.
6 Democratic countries are India, U.S.A., U.K. etc.	6 Non-democratic countries are Zimbabwe, China, Saudi Arabia, Fiji etc.

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