

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY?

1) What is Democracy?

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

2) Features of Democracy?

Ans: i) In a democracy final decision making power must rest with those elected by the people.

ii) A democracy must be based on a free and fair election where those currently in power have a fair chance of losing.

iii) 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.

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

3. Write any five features of Democratic government.

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

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

iii) There are free and fair elections. People participate in them without any restriction. People also participate in the functioning of decision making.

iv) Representatives are elected for the fixed tenure of time.

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

4. 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.

5. “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.

6. “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.

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 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.

9. What does “one person, one vote, one value” mean? Name the countries who deny the equal right to vote ?

Ans. Democracy is based on a fundamental principle of political equality. In a democracy, each adult citizen must have one vote and each vote must have one value. Democracy is linked to the demand for universal Adult Franchise. Yet, there are many instances of denial of equal right to vote.

- Until 2015, in Saudi Arabia, women did not have the right to vote.
- Estonia has 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 is such that the vote of an indigenous Fiji has more value than that of an Indian- Fijian.

10. What are the drawbacks of Democracy ?

Ans. The following are the drawbacks of Democracy.

- 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.
- Ordinary people do not know what is good for them, so decision making should not be left to them.