

Class 9

What is Democracy? Why Democracy?

Q.1. The word 'Democracy' comes from the Greek word –

- (a) Democracia (b) Demokratia (c) Demos (d) Kratia

Q.2. What kind of government is there in Myanmar?

- (a) Government elected by the people (b) Communist government (c) Army rule (d) Monarchy

Q.3. The head of the government in Nepal is the:

- (a) President (b) Prime Minister (c) King (d) Vice President

Q.4. Who led a military coup in Pakistan in 1999?

- (a) Benazir Bhutto (b) Nawaz Sharif (c) Pervez Musharraf (d) None of the above

Q.5. In which case was the real power with external powers and not with the locally elected representatives?

- (a) India in Sri Lanka (b) US in Iraq (c) USSR in Communist Poland (d) Both (b) and (c)

Q.6. 'One person, one vote' means

- (a) One person is to be voted by all (b) One person has one vote and each vote has one value
(c) A person can vote only once in his life (d) both (a) and (c)

Q.7. How many members are elected to the National People's Congress from all over China?

- (a) 3050 (b) 3000 (c) 4000 (d) 2000

Q.8. Why can the Chinese government not be called a democratic government even though elections are held there?

- (a) Army participates in election (b) Government is not accountable to the people
(c) Some parts of China are not represented at all (d) Government is always formed by the Communist Party

Q.9. Which party always won elections in Mexico since its independence in 1930 until 2000?

- (a) Revolutionary Party (b) Mexican Revolutionary Party
(c) Institutional Revolutionary Party (d) Institutional Party

Q.10. Democracy must be based on

- (a) One-party system (b) Free and fair election (c) Choice from only the ruling party (d) All the above

Q.11. When did Zimbabwe attain independence and from whom?

- (a) 1970, from Black minority rule (b) 1880, from White minority rule
(c) 1980, from Americans (d) 1980, from White minority rule

Q.12. Which party has ruled Zimbabwe since its independence and who is its ruler?

- (a) ZANU-PF, Robert Mugabe (b) ZANU-PF, Kenneth Kaunda
(c) Zimbabwe Freedom Party, Nelson Mandela (d) Zimbabwe Party, P Johnson

Q.13 which of these features is/are necessary to provide the basic rights to the citizens?

- (a) Citizens should be free to think (b) should be free to form associations
(c) Should be free to raise protest (d) All the above

Q.14. Which organ of the government is required to protect the rights of the citizens?

- (a) Executive (b) Legislature (c) Independent judiciary (d) Police

Q.15 What is Constitutional Law?

- (a) Provisions given in the Constitution (b) Law to make Constitution
(c) Law to set up Constituent Assembly (d) none of the above

Q.16. Which of these is permitted under the Rule of Law?

- (a) Prime Minister can be punished for violating the Constitution. (b) Police has a right to kill anybody.
(c) Women can be paid lesser salaries (d) President can rule for as long as he wants.

Q.17. Some of the drawbacks of democracy is

- (a) Instability and delays (b) corruption and hypocrisy
(c) Politicians fighting among themselves (d) all the above

Q.18. In which of these cases can democracy not provides a complete solution?

- (a) Removing poverty completely (b) Providing education to all
(c) Giving jobs to all (d) All the above

Q.19. In which period did China face one of the worst famines that have occurred in the world?

- (a) 1932-36 (b) 1958-61 (c) 2001-2002 (d) 2004-2007

Q.20 A democratic government is better than a non-democratic government because

- (a) It may or may not be accountable (b) It always responds to the needs of the people
(c) It is a more accountable form of government (d) None of the above

Q.21. Democracy improves the quality of decision-making because

- (a) Decisions are taken by educated people (b) Decisions are taken by consultation and discussion
(c) Decisions are taken over a long period of time (d) All decisions are approved by judiciary

Q.22. How does democracy allows us to correct its own mistakes?

- (a) Mistakes are hidden and cannot be corrected
(b) Re-electing the same government to enable it to correct its mistakes
(c) The rulers can be changed (d) none of the above

Q.23. The most common form that democracy takes in our time is that of

- (a) Limited democracy (b) representative democracy
(c) Maximum democracy (d) none of the above

Q.24. Which body in Indian political system is an example of direct democracy?

- (a) Zila Parishad (b) Panchayat Samiti (c) Gram Sabha (d) Vidhan Sabha

Q.25. Which of these is an example of perfect democracy?

- (a) USA (b) UK (c) India (d) None of the above

Q.26 Which of these is not a feature of monarchy, dictatorship or one-party rule?

- (a) Censorship of press (b) No opposition party or parties
(c) Citizens taking part in politics (d) One-man rule

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS [1 MARK]

1 (b) 2 (c) 3 (a) 4 (c) 5 (d) 6 (b) 7 (b) 8 (d) 9 (c) 10 (b) 11 (d) 12 (a) 13 (d) 14 (c) 15 (a) 16 (a) 17 (d) 18 (d) 19 (b) 20 (c) 21 (b) 22 (c) 23 (b) 24 (c) 25 (d) 26 (c)

Very Short Answer Type Questions

Question 1.

What does a candidate need before contesting elections in China?

Answer: Approval of the Chinese Communist Party.

Question 2.

In a democracy, the final decision must rest with those leaders or representatives who are _____ .

Answer: Elected by the people

Question 3.

What is peculiar with ZANU-PF?

Answer: It has always won elections

Question 4.

The one of the main features of a democratic government is that it rules within the limits set by the constitutional law above _____ .

Answer: Citizen's rights

Question 5.

Why does a democratic government is a better government?

Answer: Because it is more accountable form of government

Question 6.

Democracy offers _____ .

Answer: Dignity of citizens and principle of political equality

Question 7.

Democracy cannot provide solution to all the problems, it is also a difficult form of government to implement. It is _____ .

Answer: One of the weaknesses of democracy

Question 8.

The major challenges to democracy are _____ .

Answer: Economic equality among people and abolition of casteism from society.

Question 9.

It is a system in which only those who are in power and their supporters are benefited, and excludes minorities and weaker sections.

Answer: Dictatorship

Question 10.

It is a system under which military chief enjoys all the powers and suppresses all the protests against him by the people.

Answer: Military

Question 11.

The strength of democracy is its ability to uphold the values for which it stands for. These values are _____ .

Answer: Freedom, Equality and Justice

Question 12.

Who led a military coup in Pakistan in 1999?

Answer: Pervez Musharraf

Question 13.

When did Zimbabwe attain independence and from whom?

Answer: In 1980 from white minority rule

Question 14.

In which period did China face one of the worst famines that have occurred in the world?

Answer: China's famine of 1958-1961 was the worst recorded famine in the world history.

Question 15.

Democracy improves the quality of decision-making because

Answer: Decisions are taken by consultation and discussion.

Question 16.

What is the most common form of democracy in the modern world?

Answer: Representative Democracy

Question 17.

Which body in the Indian political system is an example of direct democracy?

Answer: Gram Sabha

Question 18.

What is ZANU-PF?

Answer: Political party of Zimbabwe

Question 19.

Name the Chinese Parliament.

Answer: The National People's Congress

Question 20.

Give a definition of democracy.

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

Question 21.

What was the 'Legal Framework Order' passed by Pervez Musharraf in 1 August 2002?

Answer: In August 2002, Musharraf issued a 'Legal Framework Order' that amended the Constitution of Pakistan. According to this Order, the President can dismiss the national and provincial assemblies.

Question 22.

Name the country where women do not have the right to vote till 2015.

Answer: Saudi Arabia

Question 23.

Media is not independent in Zimbabwe. How?

Answer: Television and radio are controlled by the government and give only the ruling party's version. There are independent newspapers, but the government harasses those journalists who went against it.

Question 24.

How can you say that China is not a democratic country?

Answer: In China, the elections do not offer the people any serious choice. They must choose the ruling party and the candidates approved by it. That is why, we cannot say that China is a democratic country.

Question 25.

What is the role of citizen in promoting democracy?

Answer: In a democracy, every citizen should be able to play equal role in decision-making. For this the citizen not only needs an equal right to vote but also equal information, basic education, equal resources and a lot of commitment.

Short Answer Type Questions

Question 1.

What are three features of democracy?

Answer: Features of democracy are :

- Rulers elected by the people take all the major decisions;
- 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' rights.

Question 2.

Explain any three major political changes that took place recently in India's neighbourhood.

Answer:

- Pakistan-General Musharraf led a military coup.
- Nepal-In 2005, the new king dismissed the elected government.
- Iraq-Saddam Hussein's regime was overthrown.

Question 3.

How does democracy improve the quality of decision making?

Answer: Democracy is based on consultation 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. This reduces the chances of rash or irresponsible decisions. Thus, democracy improves the quality of decision-making.

Question 4.

How does democracy enhance the dignity of citizens?

Answer: Even if democracy does not bring about better decisions and accountable government, it is still better than other forms of government. Democracy enhances the dignity of citizens. Democracy is based on the principle of political equality, on recognising that the poorest and the least educated has the same status as the rich and the educated. People are not subjects of a ruler, they are the rulers themselves. Even when they make mistakes, they are responsible for their conduct.

Question 5.

How is democracy better than other forms of government?

Answer:

- It is correct that democracy is better than other forms of government because it allows us to correct its own mistakes. There is no guarantee that mistakes cannot be made in democracy.
- No form of government can guarantee that. The advantage in a democracy is 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. This cannot happen in a non-democratic government.

Question 6.

Democracy cannot get us everything and is not the solution to all problems.

Then why are we interested in democracy?

Answer:

- It is clearly better than any other alternative form that we know. It offers better chances of a good decision and it is likely to respect people's own wishes and allows different kinds of people to live together.
- Even when it fails to do some of these things, it allows a way of correcting its mistakes and offers more dignity to all citizens. That is why, democracy is considered the best form of government.

Question 7.

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

Answer: 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.

Question 8.

Is it correct that a democratic government cannot do whatever it likes? Explain.

Answer:

- A democratic government cannot do whatever it likes 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. Each of these is accountable not only to the people but also to other independent officials.
- A democratic government rules within limits set by constitutional law and citizens' rights.

Question 9.

Pakistan under the General Pervez Musharraf is not called a democracy. Why?

Answer:

Pakistan under the General Pervez Musharraf is not called a democracy because :

- The rulers are not elected by the people in Pakistan. 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.
- The power to take final excision rests with army officials and with General Musharraf, and none of them are elected by the people.

Question 10.

How popular governments can be undemocratic? Explain with an example.

Answer: In Zimbabwe, since it attained independence in 1980, elections have been held regularly and always won by ZANU-Ph the party that led the freedom struggle. Its leader, President Robert Mugabe, is popular but also uses unfair practices in elections. His government has changed the constitution several times to increase the powers of the President and make him less accountable. Opposition party workers are harassed. Public protests and demonstrations against the government are declared illegal. There is a law that limits the right to criticise the President. Television and radio are controlled by the government and give only the ruling party's version.

Question 11.

Till 2000, Mexico was not a democratic country. Explain.

Answer: In Mexico, people seemed to really have a choice but in practice they had no choice. There was no way the ruling party could be defeated, even if people were against it. These are not fair elections. But until 2000 every election was won by a party called PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party). 'Opposition parties did contest elections, but never managed to win. The PRI was known to use many dirty tricks to win elections.

Question 12.

What is the significance of the rule of law and respect for rights in democratic country?

Answer: A democratic government cannot do whatever it likes, simply because it has won an election. It must respect some basic rules. It must 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. Each of these is accountable not only to the people but also to other independent officials.

Question 13.

Explain any three differences between democratic country and non-democratic country.

Answer:

In a Democratic Country :

- Each adult citizen has a right to vote.
- Each vote has one value.
- Free and fair elections are held.

In a Non-democratic Country :

- Elections do not offer a choice and fair opportunity.
- Rulers are not elected by the people.
- The rulers have unlimited power.

Long Answer Type Questions

Question 1.

“Democracy provides a method to deal with differences and conflicts”. Discuss.

Answer: Democracy provides a method to deal with differences and conflicts. In any society, people are bound to have differences of opinions and interests. These differences are particularly sharp in a country like ours which has an amazing social diversity. People belong to different regions, and have different languages, practise different religions and have different castes. They look at the world very differently and have different preferences. The preferences of one group can clash with those of other groups. Democracy provides the only peaceful solution to this problem. In democracy, no one is a permanent winner. No one is a permanent loser. Different groups can live with one another peacefully. In a diverse country like India, democracy keeps our country together.

Question 2.

What are the various aspects of democracy?

Answer:

We may refer to three aspects of democracy—political, social and economic.

- **Political Aspect:** Political democracy requires “government by consent and political equality.” Democracy, as a form of government, implies that elections must be held with reasonable frequency. Moreover, there should be more than one political party competing for political power.
- **Social Aspect:** A democratic society is one in which an atmosphere of equality prevails. There should be no discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex. Every one should have equal access to shops, restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment. Our Constitution guarantees equality to every person before law.
- **Economic Aspect:** Political democracy will be a reality only when it is supported by economic democracy. The most stable democracies of the world are those which have extensive welfare schemes for the poor people.

Question 3.

What are the merits of a democratic government?

Answer:

The merits of a democratic government are :

- A democratic government is a better government because it 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 is better than other forms of government because it allows us to correct its own mistakes.

Question 4.

Why has India not experienced a famine as severe as that of China in 1958-61?

Answer: China's famine of 1958-1961 was the worst recorded famine in the 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. Economists think that this was a result of different government policies in the two countries.

The existence of democracy in India made the Indian government respond to food scarcity in a way that the Chinese government did not. They point out that no large-scale famine has ever taken place in an independent and democratic country. If China too had multiparty elections, an opposition party and a press free to criticise the government, then so many people may not have died in the famine.

Question 5.

What are the drawbacks of a democracy.

Answer:

The following are the drawbacks of a 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.
- 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.

Question 6.

How far is it correct that no country has a perfect democracy?

Answer:

No country has a perfect democracy because :

- Every democracy has to try to realise the ideals of a democratic decision-making. This cannot be achieved once and for all. This requires a constant effort to save and strengthen democratic forms of decision-making. What we do as citizens can make a difference to making our country more or less democratic. This is the strength and the weakness of democracy: the fate of the country depends not just on what the rulers do, but mainly on what we, as citizens, do.
- This is what distinguished democracy from other governments. Other forms of government like monarchy, dictatorship or one party rule do not require all citizens to take part in politics.
- In fact, most non-democratic governments would like citizens not to take part in politics. But democracy depends on active political participation by all the citizens. That is why, a study of democracy must focus on democratic politics.

Question 7.

Why did the Institutional Revolutionary Party in Mexico never lose any election till 2000?

Answer:

The Institutional Revolutionary Party in Mexico was very strong till 2000. There are many reasons behind it:

- Until 2000, every election was won by Institutional Revolutionary Party in Mexico. Opposition parties did contest elections, but never managed to win.
- 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 criticise 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 votes.
- The PRI spent a large sum of money in the campaign for its candidates.

Question 8

What were the steps taken by Musharraf in Pakistan to empower himself?

Answer:

The following steps were taken by Musharraf in Pakistan to empower himself:

- 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.
- Later, he changed his designation to President and in 2002, held a referendum in the country that granted him a five-year extension.
- In 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 power to take final decision rested with army officials and with General Musharraf.
- The work of the civilian cabinet was supervised by a National Security Council which was dominated by military officers.

Question 1:

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

ANSWER:

- (a) undemocratic
- (b) not sure
- (c) democratic
- (d) undemocratic

Question 2:

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.

ANSWER:

- (a) undemocratic
- (b) democratic
- (c) undemocratic
- (d) undemocratic

Question 3:

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

ANSWER:

The argument 'd', which states that "Democracies are more prosperous than others", is not a good argument in favour of democracy. This is because some democracies like India are still developing economically, while monarchies like the states of UAE are economically strong.

Question 4:

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.
- (b) The Election Commission ordered re-polling in a constituency where large scale rigging was reported.
- (c) Women's representation in the parliament has never reached 10 per cent. This led women's organisations to demand one-third seats for women.

ANSWER:

(a) **Democratic element** – some laws have to be passed by the parliament

Undemocratic element – conform to the regulations decided by the World Trade Organisation

(b) **Democratic element** – the Election Commission ordered re-polling

Undemocratic element – large scale rigging was reported

(c) **Democratic element** – this led to women's organisations to demand one third seats for women

Undemocratic element – women's representation in the parliament has never reached 10 per cent

Question 5:

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 practise any religion.

ANSWER:

Option 'd' is not a valid reason for arguing that there is a lesser possibility of famine in a democratic country. This is because practising a religion has nothing to do with preventing famine.

Question 6:

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.

ANSWER:

Option 'd', which advocates paying the government officials money, is an undemocratic method.

Question 7:

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.

ANSWER:

A democracy is the government elected by the people, from among the people themselves. The Army is integral in protecting the country, but it is not elected by the people; hence, it cannot form a democratic government. The second statement is not true as all people are intelligent to some extent. The third statement is dangerous because bringing religion into politics can cause serious conflict.

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Question 8:

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.

ANSWER:

The first two statements are undemocratic as the girl is denied any opportunity to voice her opinion about her own marriage and the student is denied the right to clear his doubts by asking questions. The third statement is democratic as it calls for a rule of law which is beneficial for the employees.

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Question 9:

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 nation wide 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.

ANSWER:

The country is not a democracy. The people have the right to vote but they do not have the right to free speech and demonstrations. The country is also under economic sanctions, which means that the people cannot take their own economic decisions. The government's censorship of the media prevents the public from voicing its opinion.