

# 2

## WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY ?

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The stories and the analysis in the previous chapter gave us a sense of what democracy is like. There we described some governments as democratic and some as non-democratic. We saw how governments in some of those countries changed from one form to the other. Let us now draw general lessons from those stories and ask the more basic question: What is democracy? What are its features? This chapter builds on a simple definition of democracy. Step by step, we work out the meaning of the terms involved in this definition. The aim here is to understand clearly the bare minimum features of a democratic form of government. After going through this chapter we should be able to distinguish a democratic form of government from a non-democratic government. Towards the end of this chapter, we step beyond this minimal objective and introduce a broader idea of democracy.

#### Knowledge Based Questions :

- Which of the following country can be called non democratic?  
(A) India (B) Myanmar (C) USA (D) Britain
- Who was responsible for the military coup in Chile?  
(A) Augusto Pinochet (B) Michealle Bachelet (C) Alberto Bachalet (D) None of these
- In which country the idea of democracy developed first?  
(A) Rome (B) Greece (C) Italy (D) Spain
- To which country did Saddam Hussain belong?  
(A) Iraq (B) Iran (C) Russia (D) Japan
- Which party in Myanmar contested and won the election in 1990 with heavy majority?  
(A) People party (B) National people's party  
(C) National league for Democracy (D) National labour party
- Which organ of UN is responsible for keeping peace and security?  
(A) General Assembly (B) Secretariat  
(C) Security Council (D) International Court of Justice
- Which of the following is nominated as the treasurer of world bank?  
(A) US citizen (B) Indian citizen (C) French citizen (D) Chinese citizen
- How many members are there in IMF?  
(A) 178 (B) 179 (C) 175 (D) 173

9. Who declared himself president of Ghana for life time?  
(A) Salvador Allende (B) Kofi Annan (C) Kwame Nkrumah (D) Pervez Mushshraf
10. How many countries have veto power in UN security council?  
(A) 4 (B) 5 (C) 8 (D) 7

---

**IMPORTANT TERMS**

- ▶ **Chaos:** Complete disorder or confusion.
- ▶ **Direct Democracy:** A democracy in which all citizens directly participate in discussions and decisions in the Assembly.
- ▶ **Fraud:** An instance of deceiving somebody in order to make money or obtain goods illegally.
- ▶ **Hypocrisy:** The practice of pretending to be different from what one really is.
- ▶ **Legislature:** The body having primary power to make written laws.
- ▶ **Malpractice:** Illegal or unacceptable behaviour by somebody in official position.
- ▶ **Monarchy:** A system of government by monarch (a supreme ruler such as king or queen).
- ▶ **Participatory democracy:** A democracy in which a person or group of people taking part in it.
- ▶ **Political freedom:** Right to express one's political opinions.
- ▶ **Principle of majority:** In democracy, decisions are arrived on the principle of majority of great number. In it majority view prevails.
- ▶ **Rule of law:** The condition in which all members of society, including its rules, accept the authority of law ; i.e. the supremacy of law.

---

In the last chapter we identified one simple factor common to all democracies: the government is chosen by the people. We could thus start with a simple definition:

**democracy is a form of government in which the rulers are elected by the people.**

Now this simple definition can be used by us to separate democracy from other forms of government that are clearly non-democratic. The military ruler of Pakistan and Myanmar are not elected by the people. The king of Nepal and Saudi Arabia are also not chosen by the people. So that means all these are non-democratic countries.

The simple definition of democracy given above is not adequate. This simple definition helps us to conclude that every government that holds an election is a democracy. But this is not true in the real sense. There are many countries which hold this we will have to examine the whole definition carefully and will have to learn and study about the features of democratic government.

**Illustration 1 :** This cartoon was drawn when elections were held in Iraq with the presence of US and other foreign powers.

- (i) What do you think this cartoon is saying?
- (ii) Why is 'democracy' written the way it is?

**Solution :**



- (i) Democracy did not take birth and evolve in this land; instead it is being transplanted in an alien land using force and power of gun.  
The transplantation of democracy is not so much about ensuring the welfare of the people; it is more about promoting the interests of multinational corporations.
- (ii) This way the letter 'M' is written, it is the global logo of the MNC McDonald's the leading food chain

**Try yourself :**

1. What is democracy?
2. Why can't we call Saudi Arabia a democratic country?

## 2.2 FEATURES OF DEMOCRACY

### Major Decisions by Elected Leaders :

Democracy is based on the will of the people and it functions according to their consent. The fact is that democratic government cannot ignore the interests of the people. To run administration the government makes policies and plans keeping in mind public interests and the representatives elected by the people pay due respect to the wishes of the people. All the decisions regarding administration and various policies

are taken by the elected leaders.

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. Pakistani media, human right organisations and democracy activists said that the referendum was based on malpractices and fraud. In August 2002 he issued a '**Legal Framework Order**' that amended the constitution of Pakistan.

- (i) According to this Order, the President can dismiss the national or provincial assemblies.
- (ii) The work of the civilian cabinet is supervised by a National Security Council which is dominated by military officers. After passing this law, elections were held to the national and state assemblies. So Pakistan has had elections, elected representatives have some powers. But the final power rests with military officers and General Musharraf himself.

There are many reasons **why Pakistan under General Musharraf should not be called a democracy**. But let us focus on one of these. Can we say that the rulers are elected by the people in Pakistan? Not quite. 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 decision rests with army officials and with General Musharraf, and none of them are elected by the people.

This gives us the first feature. **In a democracy the final decision making power must rest with those elected by the people.**

### **Free and Fair Electoral Competition :**

**Free and Fair elections:** Holding elections at a regular interval of time is not a sufficient condition for a country to be called as democratic. The elections should be free and fair. To understand this let us take examples of China and Mexico.

#### **China :**

In **China**, elections are regularly held after every five years for electing the country's parliament, called Quanguo Renmin Daibiao Dahui (National People's Congress). The National People's Congress has the power to appoint the President of the country. It has nearly 3,000 members elected from all over China. Some members are elected by the army. 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 were allowed to contest elections held in 2002-03. The government is always formed by the Communist Party.

#### **Mexico :**

Since its independence in 1930, Mexico holds elections after every six years to elect its President. The country has never been under a military or dictator's rule. 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.

- (i) All those who were employed in government offices had to attend its party meetings.
- (ii) Teachers of government schools used to force parents to vote for the PRI.
- (iii) Media largely ignored the activities of opposition political parties except to criticise them.
- (iv) 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.

(v) The PRI spent a large sum of money in the campaign for its candidates.

Reading these examples we get a sense that we cannot call these countries democratic. There are many problems here. In China the elections do not offer the people any serious choice. They have to choose the ruling party and the candidates approved by it. Can we call this a choice? In the Mexican example, 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.

We can thus add a second feature to our understanding of democracy. Holding elections of any kind is not sufficient. The elections must offer a real choice between political alternatives. And it should be possible for people to use this choice to remove the existing rulers, if they wish so. So, **a democracy must be based on a free and fair election where those currently in power have a fair chance of losing.**

#### **One Person, One vote, one value :**

In the last chapter we read about how the struggle for democracy was linked to the demand for universal adult franchise. This principle has now come to be accepted almost all over the world. Yet there are many instances of denial of equal right to vote:

- (a) In Saudi Arabia women do not have the right to vote
- (b) 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
- (c) In Fiji, the electoral system is such that the vote of an indigenous Fijian has more value than that of an Indian-Fijian.

Democracy is based on a fundamental principle of political equality. That gives us the third feature of democracy: **in a democracy, each adult citizen must have one vote and each vote must have one value.**

#### **Rule of Law and Respect for Rights :**

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 have been held regularly and always won by ZANU-PF. President Mugabe is popular but also uses unfair practices in elections. Over the years 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 and their meeting disrupted. 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. There are independent newspapers but the government harasses those journalists who go against it. The government has ignored some court judgments that went against it and has pressurised judges.

If we wish to assess a democracy, it is important to look at the elections. But it is equally important to look before and after the elections. There should be sufficient room for normal political activity, including political opposition, in the period before elections. This requires that the state should respect some basic rights of the citizen. They should be free to think, to have opinions, to express these in public, to form associations, to protest and take other political actions. Everyone should be equal in the eyes of law. These rights must be protected by an independent

Similarly, there are some conditions that apply to the way a government is run after the elections. 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. Each of these is accountable not only to the people but also to other independent officials.

Both these aspects give us the fourth and final feature of democracy: **a democratic government rules within limits set by constitutional law and citizens' rights.**

**democracy is a form of government in which the rulers are elected by the people.**

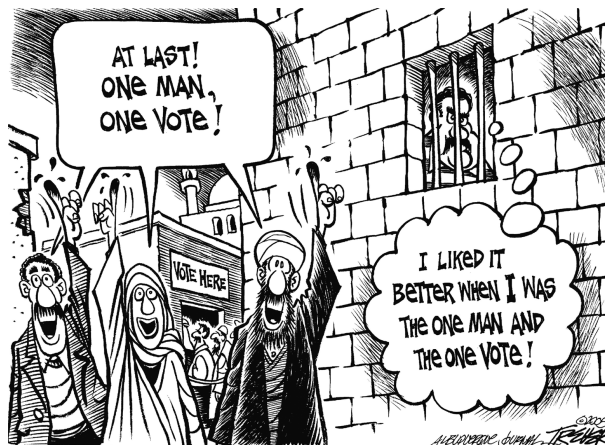
Through a series of examples we worked out four features of democracy as a form of government. Accordingly, democracy is a form of government in which:

- (a) Rulers elected by the people take all the major decisions;
- (b) Elections offer a choice and fair opportunity to the people to change the current rulers;
- (c) This choice and opportunity is available to all the people on an equal basis; and
- (d) The exercise of this choice leads to a government limited by basic rules of the constitution and citizens' rights.

**Illustration 2 : (i) Read these live examples of working or denial of democracy. Match each of these with the relevant feature of democracy discussed above**

<i>Example</i>	<i>Feature</i>
(A) King of Bhutan has declared that in future he will be guided by the advice given to him by elected representatives	(P) Rule of law
(B) Many Tamil workers who migrated from India were not given a right to vote in Sri Lanka	(Q) Respect for Rights
(C) The king of Nepal imposed a ban on political gatherings demonstrations and rallies	(R) One person one vote one value
(D) The Indian Supreme Court held that the dissolution of Bihar assembly was unconstitutional	(S) Free and fair electoral completion
(E) Political parties in Bangladesh have agreed that a neutral government should rule the country at the time of elections	(T) Major decisions by elected leaders

- (ii) *This cartoon is about the Iraqi election held after Saddam Hussein's regime was overthrown. He is shown behind the bars. What is the cartoonist saying here? Compare the message of this cartoon with the first cartoon in this chapter.*

**Solution :**

- (i) (A)-(T), (B)-(R), (C)-(Q), (D)-(P), (E)-(S)
- (ii) The cartoon shows the end of dictatorship in Iraq where Saddam ruled unchecked. People rejoice at elections being held. But the first cartoon shows that people do not have a real choice. They are forced to vote, by the powerful US and its allies.

**Try yourself :**

3. What was the Legal Framework order?
4. What is Chinese Parliament called?
5. Which party was ruling Mexico in 1930?

## 2.3 WHY DEMOCRACY?

### Arguments against Democracy :

- (a) Leaders keep changing in a democracy. This leads to instability.
- (c) Democracy is all about political competition and power play. There is no scope for morality.
- (c) So many people have to be consulted in a democracy that it leads to delays.
- (d) Elected leaders do not know the best interest of the people. It leads to bad decisions.
- (e) Democracy leads to corruption for it is based on electoral competition.
- (f) Ordinary people don't know what is good for them; they should not decide anything. Democracy is not a magical solution for all the problems. It has not ended poverty in our country and in other parts of the world. Democracy as a form of government only ensures that people take their own decisions. This does not guarantee that their decisions will be good. People can make mistakes. Involving the people in these decisions does lead to delays in decision making. It is also true that democracy leads to frequent changes in leadership. Sometimes this can set back big decisions and effect the government's efficiency.

### Arguments For Democracy :

- (i) China's famine of 1958-1961 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. 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 multi party elections, an opposition party and a press free to criticise the government, then so many people may not have died in the famine.

This example brings out one of the reason why democracy is considered the best form of government. Democracy is better than any other form of government in responding to the needs of the people. A nondemocratic government may and can respond to the peoples needs, but it all depends on the wishes of the people who rule. If the rulers don't want to, they don't have to act according to the wishes of the people. A democracy requires that the rulers have to attend to the needs of the people. **A democratic government is a better government because it is a more accountable form of government.**

- (ii) Democracy is based on consultation and discussion. A democratic decision always involves many persons, discussions and meetings. When a number of people put their head 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.**
- (iii) **Democracy provides a method to deal with differences and conflicts.** In any society people are bound to have differences of opinions and interests. People belong to different regions, speak different languages, practise different religions and have different castes. They look at the world very differently and have different preferences. The preference of one group can clash with those of other groups. Different groups may not be able to live together for long in such a way. 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.
- (iv) **Democracy enhances the dignity of citizens.** As we discussed above, 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. The rulers have to change their decisions, or the rulers can be changed. This cannot happen in a non-democratic government.
- (v) Democracy cannot get us everything and is not the solution to all problems. But it is clearly better than any other alternative that we know. It offers better chances of a good decision, 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.



## 2.4 BROADER MEANINGS OF DEMOCRACY

The most common form that democracy takes in our times is that of a **representative democracy**. In the countries we call democracy, all the people do not rule. A majority is allowed to take decisions on behalf of all the people. Even the majority does not rule directly. The majority of people rule a large number of people that it is physically impossible for them to sit together and take a collective decision.

Even if they could, the citizen does not have the time, the desire or the skills to take part in all the decisions. This gives us a clear but minimal of democracy. This clarity helps us to distinguish democracies from non-democracies. But it does not allow us to distinguish between a democracy and a good democracy. It does not allow us to see the operation of democracy beyond government. For this we need to turn to broader meanings of democracy.

Sometimes we use democracy for organisations other than the government. Just read these statements: “*We are a very democratic family*”.

A democratic decision involves consultation with and consent of all those who are affected by that decision. Those who are not powerful have the same say in taking the decision as those who are powerful. This can apply to a government or a family or any other organisation. Thus democracy is also a principle that can be applied to any sphere of life.

Sometimes we use the word democracy not to describe any existing government but to set up an ideal standard that all democracies must aim to become:

If we take these ideals seriously, then no country in the world is a democracy. Yet an understanding of democracy as an ideal reminds us of why we value democracy. It enables us to judge an existing democracy and identify its weaknesses. It helps us to distinguish between a minimal democracy and a good democracy.

In this we do not deal much with this expanded notion of democracy. Our focus here is with some core institutional features of democracy as a form of government. Democracy can apply to many spheres of life and that democracy can take many forms. There can be various ways of taking decisions in a democratic manner, as long as the basic principle of consultation on an equal basis is accepted. The most common form of democracy in today’s world is rule through people’s elected representatives. But if the community is small, there can be other ways of taking democratic decisions. All the people can sit together and take decisions directly. This is how Gram Sabha should work in a village.

---

**Illustration 3 : (i)** *This cartoon was published in Canada just before its parliamentary elections of 2005. Everyone, including the cartoonist, expected the Liberal Party to win once again. When the results came, the Liberal Party lost the elections. Is this cartoon an argument against democracy or for democracy?*

---



- (ii) *This cartoon is from Brazil, a country that has long experience of dictatorship. It is entitled “The Hidden side of Dictatorship” to have a hidden side? Find this out about the dictators discussed in the first chapter and if possible, about Abacha in Nigeria and Marcos in Philippines.*



- Solution :** (i) This is an argument for democracy. When people are disappointed and disgusted with the government of day, and fair and free elections may come up with totally unexpected results
- (ii) The hidden side of dictatorship is massacre or killing of innocent people. Anybody who opposes the policies of a dictator is killed. Since the dictators control the media, the public never comes to know the number of people killed.

**Try yourself :**

6. Give any two arguments against democracy?
7. Why do we have representative democracies?

---

**SOLVED EXAMPLES**

---

**Example 1**

*What is the common feature in Pinochet's rule in Chile, later part of Nkrumah's rule and the military rule in Myanmar?*

**Solution**

They were all non-democratic governments which denied freedom of speech and expression to their people and the right to elect their leaders.

**Example 2**

*How did General Pervez Musharraf become the President of Pakistan?*

**Solution**

General Musharraf seized power in 1999 by a military coup. In 2002 he held a referendum, which gave him power to call himself President for the next five years.

**Example 3**

*Explain "Legal Framework order" issued by President Musharraf in 2002.*

**Solution**

This order amended the Consitution of Pakistan and gave the President powers to dismiss the national or provincial assemblies. The final power rest with the military and the President.

**Example 4**

*Why could we not call Pakistan a real democracy during Pervej Mussharafs regime ?*

**Solution**

The power to make the final decision rests with army officers and the President. In a democracy the final decision must rest with those elected by the people

**Example 5**

*What is the government in China always formed by the Communist Party?*

**Solution**

Only those who are members of the Chinese Communist Party or eight smaller parties allied to it are allowed to contest elections in China.

**Example 6**

*Which feature of democracy had been absent in the elections in Mexico?*

**Solution**

The elections were not fair and free and thus the ruling party never lost.

**Example 7**

*State two features of democracy which go against it.*

**Solution**

- (i) Leaders keep changing in a democracy and this leads to instability.
- (ii) So many people have to be consulted in a democracy that it leads to delays.

**Example 8**

*Why are quality decisions a possibility in a democracy ?*

**Solution**

A democratic decision always involves many person discussions and meetings.

**Example 9**

*In spite of having a vast social diversity, what keeps the people of India together ?*

**Solution**

Democracy.

**Example 10**

*Give one reason to show that a democratic government is a better government?*

**Solution**

In democracy the government is more accountable to the people and the rulers have to attend to the needs to the people.

***Example 11***

***When do we say that elections are fair ?***

***Solution***

The elections must offer a real choice between political alternatives.

***Example 12***

***Beofore contesting elections in China, whose approval does a candidate need to have ?***

***Solution***

The Chinese communist Party.

## ASSIGNMENT - I

**Q.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.**

**Ans.** (a) Undemocratic: Because in a democratic country people cannot be denied the right to vote on the basis of religion.

(b) Not sure: Because if the party is winning free and fair elections, then the country is a true democratic country. If it is winning unfairly, then it is not a democracy.

(c) Democratic : Because in a democratic country, the ruling party can lose.

(d) Undemocratic: Because to conduct free and fair elections, an independent body is a must.

**Q.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.**

**Ans.** (a) Undemocratic: Because in a democracy even the army works according to the wishes of the parliament.

(b) Undemocratic: Because in a democracy, the parliament should remain supreme.

(c) Undemocratic: Because sovereignty is one of the important features of democracy.

(d) Undemocratic: Because though the Central Bank can take some economic decisions but in a democracy, the parliament has the power to change these decisions.

**Q.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**

**Ans.** (i) (d) Democracies are more prosperous than others or other forms of government, because: Non-democratic countries like China and Mexico are more prosperous than the democratic countries like India.

- Q.4** Each of these statements contains a democratic and an undemocratic element. Write out the two separately for each statement.
- 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.**
  - The Election Commission ordered re-polling in a constituency where large-scale rigging was reported.**
  - Women's representation in the parliament has never reached 10 percent. This led women organisations to demand one-third seats for women.**
- Ans.**
- Democratic Element: Some laws have to be passed by the parliament.  
Undemocratic Element: The Minister takes decision under the pressure of WTO.
  - Democratic: The Election Commission ordered re-polling in a constituency.  
Undemocratic: A large scale rigging in the constituency.
  - Democratic: Women's organisation demanded one-third seats for women.  
Undemocratic: Women's representation in the parliament has never reached 10 percent.
- Q.5** Which of these is not a valid reason for arguing that there is a lesser possibility of famine in a democratic country?
- Opposition parties can draw attention to hunger and starvation.**
  - Free press can report suffering from famine in different parts of the country.**
  - Government fears its defeat in the next elections.**
  - People are free to believe in and practice any religion.**
- Ans.** (d) People are free to believe in and practice any religion.
- Q.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?
- Filing a case in the courts claiming that water is part of right to life.**
  - Boycotting the next elections to give a message to all parties**
  - Organising public meeting against government's policies.**
  - Paying money to government officials to get water.**
- Ans.** (d) Paying money to government officials to get water.
- Q.7** Write a responsible to the following arguments against democracy?
- Army is the most disciplined and corruption-free organisation in the country. Therefore army should rule the country.**
  - 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.**
  - 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.**
- This argument is not valid. Under the army rule, all the fundamental rights of the citizens would have no meaning. Moreover, there is more possibility that army may behave like the dictator and the life of the people may be more miserable.
  - This argument is also not valid. This goes against the basic principle of democracy i.e., equality in all respects. History has proved that even the less educated ruler have been the good administrators.
  - This argument is also baseless. The country cannot be run on the basis of religious ethics. Especially, in a multi-religious country like India, this idea has no meaning.



8. 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 giving loan want that the government would reduce its expenses on education and health.
  - (c) People speak more than seven languages but education is available only one language, the language spoken by 52 percent people of that country.
  - (d) Several organisation have given a call for peaceful demonstrations and nationwide strikes 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 is not a democratic way. The daughter has to spend whole life with her husband, her opinion should be given proper weightage.
  - (b) This is also not a democratic way-This is against the teaching methods. The teacher must satisfy his students whether it is in the classroom or outside.
  - (c) This is certainly a democratic way

## ASSIGNMENT - II

**Q.1 'In a democracy, the majority of the people rule through their elected representatives' Give reasons.**

- Ans.** (i) Modern democracies involve such a large number of people that it is physically impossible for them to sit together, and take a collective decision.
- (ii) Even if they could, the citizen does not have the time, the desire or the skills to take part in all the decisions.

**Q.2 Why Zimbabwe cannot be called a democratic? Given reasons.**

- Ans.** (i) In Zimbabwe, elections are held regularly, but are won by only one party, i.e. ZANU-PF. The Party uses unfair practices in elections which is against the principles of democracy.
- (ii) In a democracy, the people and the opposition can criticise the government, but this is not allowed in Zimbabwe.
- (iii) The government has ignored some court judgements which is also against the principles of democracy.
- (iv) The television, radio and the press is controlled by the government.

**Q.3 Explain the major features of democracy.**

- Ans.** (i) Final authority with the people's representatives: In a democracy the final decision making power must rest with, those elected by the people.
- (ii) Free and fair elections: A democracy must be based on a free and fair elections where those currently in power have a fair chance of losing.
- (iii) One person, vote, one value: In a democracy, each adult citizen must have one vote and each vote must have one value.
- (iv) Rule of law and respect for rights: A democratic government rules within limits set by constitutional law and citizen's rights.

**Q.4 Distinguish between democratic and non-democratic countries.**

**Or**

**Why do we prefer democracy over any other form of government ?**

**Or**

**Why is democratic government a better government ? Mention four reasons.**

<b>And</b>	<b>Democratic government</b>	<b>Non-democratic government</b>
1.	People have political rights. They takes part in an election process on the basis of Universal Adult Franchise	People do not enjoy political rights or they have very limited rights. Universal Adult Franchise is a dream.
2.	There are free and fair elections. People participate in them without any restrictions.	Elections are not held in a free and fair manner. People face many restriction
3.	It is accountable and responsible to the need of the people.	It is not accountable to the people and less responsive to their needs
4.	People participate in the functioning of the government and decision-making process directly or indirectly.	People are not allowed to participate in decision-making process. They have no say in the running of the government.

- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 5. | It enhances the dignity of an individual and it is based on the principle of political equality.                | People enjoy no individual liberty, dignity and political equality. They are suppressed.                                 |
| 6. | People are not subjects of a ruler, they are the rulers themselves.   | People are never considered ruler or dignified citizens. They are treated as subjects                                    |
| 7. | It allows us to correct its own mistake. Even when people make mistakes, they are responsible for their conduct | There is no chance of correction of its own mistakes. The rulers never feed responsible to the people for their conduct. |

**Q.5 ‘Democracy improves the quality of decision making.’ Explain.**

- Ans.**
- (i) Democratic is based on consultation and discussion.
  - (ii) A democratic decision always involves many persons, discussions and meetings. When a number of people put their head together, they are able to point out possible mistakes in any decision.
  - (iii) As most of the decisions are taken by discussions, this reduces the chances of rash or irresponsible decisions.
  - (iv) If the decision is not according to the wishes of the people, they have the right to protest, and even can force the government to withdraw it.

**Q.6 “Democracy provides a method to deal with differences and conflicts.” Explain.**

- Ans.**
- (i) Democracy provides all the citizens some basic rights through which they can give their opinion.
  - (ii) Democracy provides a chance to all the citizens to choose their representatives, and change them, if they do not work according to their wishes.
  - (iii) In the parliament, all the members have the right to give their opinions.
  - (iv) Democracy provides the citizens a right to follow any religion.

**Q.7 “Democracy is better than other forms of government because it allows us to correct its own mistakes.” Explain.**

- Ans.** There is no guarantee that mistakes cannot be made in a 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.

**Q.8 Explain the major arguments against democracy.**

- Ans.**
1. Instability: Under democracy, leaders and political parties keep changing. This leads to political instability.
  2. Low morality: Democracy is all about political competition and power play. There is no scope for morality.
  3. Delays in decision making: All the decisions are to be approved and discussed in the Parliament and many people and institutions are to be consulted. So it leads to delays in decision making.
  4. Bad decisions: As most of the leaders do not know the best interest, of the people, it leads to bad decisions.
  5. Corruption: As the democracy is based on electoral competition, it leads to corruption. Many political parties used muscle and money power to come to power.
  6. Illiterate and politically unconscious voters: In most of the developing countries, voters are illiterate and politically unconscious, so they elect wrong candidates.

**Q.9 Which party was ruling in Mexico since 1930 to 2000? Does it go against the principle of democracy ? Give two reasons.**

- Ans. (1) Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).  
(2) Yes, it goes against the principle of democracy. This has the following reasons :  
(i) The PRI used many dirty tricks. All those who were employed in government offices had to attend its party meetings.  
(ii) Elections did not offer a choice and fair opportunity to the people to change the current rulers. The PRI spent a large sum of money in the campaign for its candidates.

**Q.10 "It is only in a democracy that the dignity of citizens is enhanced." Comment.**

**Or**

**'Democracy enhances the dignity of citizen.' Justify this statement.**

- Ans. (1) Democracy is based on a principle of political equality. Each adult citizen irrespective of caste, creed, status, etc. has one vote and each vote has one value.  
(2) In a democracy, the poorest and the least educated has the same status as the rich and the educated. No one is considered high or low.  
(3) People are not subjects of a ruler. They are the rulers themselves. All political power rests in the people. They elect their representatives who form the government.  
(4) Democracy offers better chances of a good decision. It respects people's own wishes, and allows different kinds of people to live together. It allows a way of correcting its mistakes and offers more dignity to all citizens.  
(5) The fate of a country depends not just on what the rulers do, but mainly on what we, as citizens, do. Democracy requires that all citizens should take part in politics. Politically active and responsible citizens play an important role in making democracy a success.

**Q.11 What is representative democracy ? Discuss its significance in the contemporary world.**

**OR**

**Explain the representative democracy. Why is the representative democracy the most common form of government in modern times ? Explain any four reasons.**

- Ans. (1) When the majority of people rule through their elected representatives, this is called representative democracy.  
(2) (i) The most common form that democracy takes in our times is that of a representative democracy. In a democracy, all the people do not rule. Direct by people is not possible.  
(ii) So, in a democracy, the majority is allowed to take decisions on behalf of all the people. Even the majority does not rule directly. It rules through its elected representatives.  
(iii) A representative democracy becomes necessary. Modern democracies comprise a large number of people. It is physically impossible for them to sit or collect together at a place and take a collective decision.  
(iv) Even if they could collect together, all the citizens do not have the time; the desire or the skills to take part in all the decisions.

**ASSIGNMENT - III****SECTION-A****• Fill in the blanks**

1. In \_\_\_\_\_ women do not have the right to vote
2. Since 1980 Zimbabwe has been ruled by \_\_\_\_\_, the party that Led the freedom struggle.
3. A democratic government rules within the limit set by \_\_\_\_\_ and citizens rights.
4. The most common form of democracy in our times is that of \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is a form of government in which the rulers are elected by the people.

**SECTION-B****• Multiple choice question with one correct answers**

1. Which of the following leader issued legal framework order to amend the constitution?  
(A) Robert mugabe (B) Nkrumah  
(C) Pervez Musharraf (D) Saddam Husain
2. Which political party in china has the power to appoint the president of the country?  
(A) National people's congress (B) National league for democracy  
(C) National workers congress (D) None of these
3. In which country worst recorded famine in the world occurred in 1958–61?  
(A) India (B) Nepal (C) Bhutan (D) China
4. Which of the following form of government improves the quality of decision making?  
(A) Dictatorship (B) Democracy (C) Monarchy (D) Oligarchy
5. When did Zimbabwe attain independence from white minority?  
(A) 1990 (B) 1940 (C) 1970 (D) 1980
6. Women do not have the right to vote in  
(A) Fiji (B) USSR (C) Saudi Arabia (D) Estonia
7. Mexico holds elections to elect its President, after every  
(A) 3 years (B) 5 years (C) 2 years (D) 6 years
8. All the \_\_\_\_\_ of democracy can be cured by more democracy  
(A) Principles (B) Autocracy (C) Dictatorship (D) Monarchy

9. In a country like India, democracy keeps our country \_\_\_\_\_  
(A) Fragmented (B) Integrated (C) united (D) isolated
10. In a democracy, people are not subjected of a ruler, they are the \_\_\_\_\_ themselves  
(A) Executive (B) Planner (C) rulers (D) decision makers
11. Which of the following countries is not a demicracy?  
(A) Great Britain (B) Canada (C) Myanmar (D) India
12. What is the most common from of democracy in today's world?  
(A) Direct democracy (B) Parliamentary democracy  
(C) Representative's democracy (D) Presidential democracy
13. Who passed the 'Legal Framework Order'?  
(A) ZANU (B) Rogert Mergabe (C) General Musharaff (D) None of these
14. Which of the following are the features of a democracy?  
(i) Elections do not offer the people a choice and a fair opportunity  
(ii) The rulers are elected by the people and take all the major decisions  
(iii) Universal Adult Franchise  
(iv) The government rulers under the monarch.  
(A) (i), (iii) and (iv) (B) (i), (ii) and (iii) (C) (ii) and (iv) (D) (ii) and (iii) only
15. Select the demerits of democracy:  
(i) Instability because leaders keep changing  
(ii) Delayed decisions because it involves debilitations and negotiations  
(iii) Absence of corruption  
(iv) Absence of political competition  
(A) (i), (ii) and (iv) (B) (ii), (iii) and (iv) (C) (iv) only (D) (i) and (ii) only

### SECTION-C

• **Multiple choice question with one or more than one correct answers**

1. Which of the following country does not give equal voting rights to its citizens?  
(A) Saudi Arabia (B) Estonia (C) Fiji (D) Japan
2. What tricks were used by PRI in Mexico to win elections?  
(A) Teacher's forced parents to vote for PRI  
(B) Large money was spent in the campaign  
(C) Media ignored the activities of opposition parties

- (D) Polling booths were shifted
3. Why couldn't we call Pakistan a democracy?  
 (A) Elected representatives cannot take final decisions  
 (B) Government is not elected by people  
 (C) General Musharraf took major decisions  
 (D) All of the above
4. In which countries there was no free and fair electoral competition?  
 (A) China (B) Myanmar (C) Mexico (D) Chile
5. Why is democracy considered to be better form of government?  
 (A) It is more accountable form of government  
 (B) Provides methods to deal with differences and conflicts  
 (C) Exchanges the dignity of citizens  
 (D) It leads to instability

### SECTION-D

#### • Match the following (one to one)

**Column-I** and **column-II** contains **four** entries each. Entries of column-I are to be matched with some entries of column-II. Only One entries of column-I may have the matching with the some entries of column-II and one entry of column-II Only one matching with entries of column-I

- | 1. <b>Column I</b>            | <b>Column II</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| (A) Pervez Musharraf          | (P) Zimbabwe     |
| (B) Robert Mugabe             | (Q) Pakistan     |
| (C) Saddam Hussain            | (R) China        |
| (D) National Peoples Congress | (S) Iraq         |

### SECTION-E

#### • Comprehension

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 have been held regularly and always won by ZANU-PF. President Mugabe is popular but also uses unfair practices in elections. Over the years 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 and their meeting disrupted. 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. There are independent newspapers but the government harasses those journalists who go against it. The government has ignored some court judgments that went against it and has pressurised judges.

If we wish to assess a democracy, it is important to look at the elections. But it is equally important to look before and after the elections. There should be sufficient room for normal political activity, including political



opposition, in the period before elections. This requires that the state should respect some basic rights of the citizen. They should be free to think, to have opinions, to express these in public, to form associations, to protest and take other political actions. Everyone should be equal in the eyes of law.

1. Which African country got independence from Foreign rule in 1980?  
 (A) Ghana (B) Egypt (C) Zimbabwe (D) Botswana
2. Who was the leader of ZANU-PF?  
 (A) Robert Mugabe (B) Musharraf (C) Saddam Hussain (D) None of these
3. Which party was ruling Zimbabwe?  
 (A) PRI (B) ZANU-PF  
 (C) National people's congress (D) National league for democracy

### SECTION-F

#### • Match the following (one to many)

**Column-I** and **column-II** contains **four** entries each. Entries of column-I are to be matched with some entries of column-II. One or more than one entries of column-I may have the matching with the some entries of column-II and one entry of column-II may have one or more than one matching with entries of column-I

- | 1. <b>Column I</b> | <b>Column II</b>                   |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| (A) China          | (P) Unaccountable government       |
| (B) Pakistan       | (Q) Ruled by Military leader       |
| (C) Iraq           | (R) No free and fair elections     |
| (D) Zimbabwe       | (S) No respect for citizens rights |

## ANSWER KEY

### Knowledge base questions

- |      |      |       |      |      |      |      |
|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. B | 2. A | 3. B  | 4. A | 5. C | 6. C | 7. A |
| 8. D | 9. C | 10. B |      |      |      |      |

### Try Yourself

1. Democracy is a form of government in which the rulers are elected by the people
2. Because the king of Saudi Arabia rules because the people have chosen them but they rule because they happen to be born into royal family.
3. (i) Legal Framework Order empowered the Pakistani President to dismiss the national and provincial assemblies  
(ii) The work of the civilian cabinet is supervised by a National security council which is dominated by military officers.
4. Quanguo Renmin Diabiao
5. Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)
6. (i) Leader keep on changing  
(ii) Leads to corruption
7. (i) Because physically it is impossible for the large number of people to sit together and take collective decision.  
(ii) The citizen does not have time, the desire and the skill to take part in all the decisions.

### ASSIGNMENT - III

#### SECTION-A

- |                             |              |                       |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Saudi Arabia             | 2. ZANU-PF   | 3. Constitutional law |
| 4. Representative democracy | 5. Democracy |                       |

#### SECTION-B

- |       |      |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. C  | 2. A | 3. D  | 4. B  | 5. D  | 6. C  | 7. D  |
| 8. B  | 9. C | 10. C | 11. C | 12. C | 13. C | 14. D |
| 15. D |      |       |       |       |       |       |

#### SECTION-C

- |          |            |        |        |          |
|----------|------------|--------|--------|----------|
| 1. A,B,C | 2. A,B,C,D | 3. A,C | 4. A,C | 5. A,B,C |
|----------|------------|--------|--------|----------|

#### SECTION-D

1. (A)-Q, (B)-P, (C)-S, (D)-R

#### SECTION-E

- |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|
| 1. C | 2. A | 3. B |
|------|------|------|

#### SECTION-F

1. (A)- P,R, (B)-Q,S, (C)-Q,S, (D)-R,S

**ASSIGNMENT - IV****[SELF APPRAISAL]**

1. 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 other
2. 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 the practice any religion
3. Which party has been ruling Zimbabwe since its independence?  
(A) ZANU-PF                      (B) ZAPF (NU)                      (C) ZAFU-NP                      (D) ZUFA-PN
4. Mexico holds election to elect its President, after every:  
(A) 3 years                      (B) 5 years                      (C) 2 years                      (D) 6 years
5. Why are Nepal and Saudi Arabia not democratic countries?  
(A) Because they are autocratic countries                      (B) Because they are not-democratic countries  
(C) Because they are monarchies and people do not elect their rulers and have no say in decision making  
(D) Because they have military rule
6. By which party is the government always formed in China? How many members are there in National People's Congress of China?
7. Why is democracy considered the best form of government? Explain.
8. Mention four demerits of democracy?
9. Who is General Musharraf? How did the "Legal Frame work Order" passed by General Musharraf amend the Constitution of Pakistan?
10. What distinguishes democracy from other form of government? Explain by giving four valid points.

\*\*\*\*\*