



SUBJECT:- Political Science

CHAPTER:- What is Democracy?Why Democracy?

Chapter Link: <http://ncert.nic.in/textbook/textbook.htm?iess4=1-5>

TOPIC:- Features of Democracy

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

Characteristics of a democratic government

A democracy is a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system.



Defining Democracy

Democracy

Government by the people, either directly or indirectly, with free and frequent elections

Direct Democracy

Government in which citizens vote on laws and select officials more directly

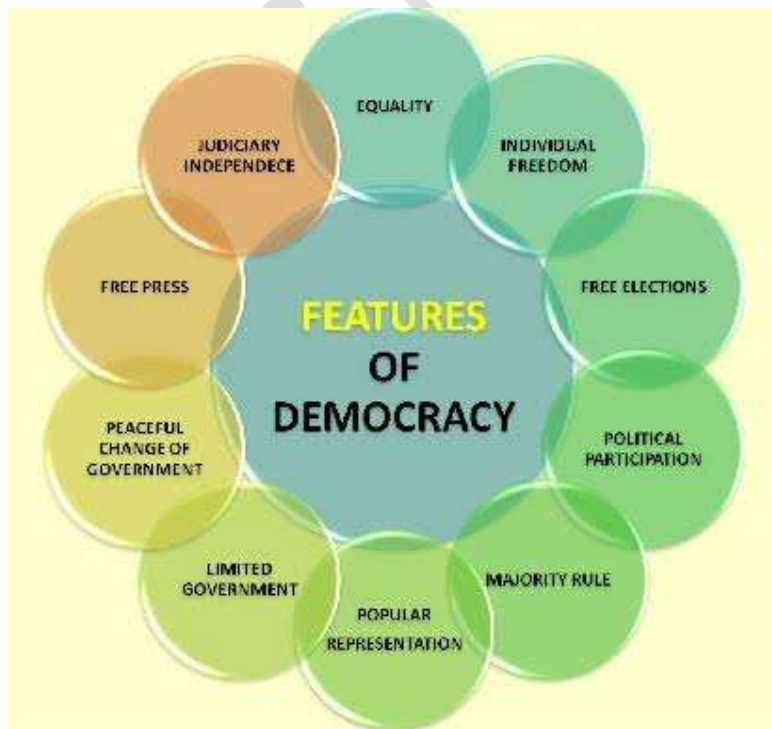
Representative Democracy

Government that derives its powers indirectly from the people, who elect those who will govern

Constitutional Democracy

Government that enforces recognized limits on those who govern and allows the voice of the people to be heard through free, fair, and relatively frequent elections

Features of Democracy



1. Major Decisions by Elected Leaders

Some countries like Pakistan do not follow this rule. In Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf led a military coup in October 1999.

He overthrew the democratically elected government and went on to become the President of the country.

In 2002, he also held a referendum in the country that granted him a five year extension.

After passing of the Legal Framework Order, elections were held in the national and provincial assemblies and elected representatives were chosen and granted some powers.

But the final power rested with the military officers and General Musharraf himself, who became the head of the NSC (National Security Council)

Thus, in order to be a democracy, the final decision making power must rest with those elected by the people.

2. Free and Fair Electoral Competition

In China, elections are held after five years for electing the country's parliament. Before contesting elections, a candidate needs the approval of the Chinese Communist party. The government is always formed by the Communist party.

On the other hand, since its independence in 1930, Mexico holds elections after every six years to elect its president. But until 2000 every election was won by a party called PRI.

We cannot call China and Mexico as examples of Democracy as Democracy must be based on free and fair elections where those currently in power have a fair chance of losing.

3. One Person, One Vote, One Value

Democracy is based on the fundamental principle of political equality. However, 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 designed its citizenship rules in such a way that people belonging to the Russian minority found it difficult to get the right to vote.

In Fiji, the electoral system is such that the vote of an Indigenous Fijian has more value than that of an Indian Fijian.

So, in a democracy, each adult citizen must have one vote and in turn, each vote must have one value.

4.Rule of Law and Respect for Rights

Zimbabwe attained independence from white minority rule in 1980 and from then the country has been ruled by the party that led the freedom struggle, ZANU- PF. Its leader ,Robert Mugabe ruled the country since independence.

Even if elections were held regularly, it was always won by ZANU-PF.

President Mugabe was popular but also used unfair practices in elections.

There was a law that limited the right to criticise the President.

Television and radio were controlled by the government and presented only the ruling party's version.

So, Zimbabwe can't be called a democratic government. A democratic government rules within limits set by constitutional law and citizens' rights.

Watch the YouTube link shared below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6jqWxkbR7A>

ASSIGNMENT :-

Q1.'Media is not independent in Zimbabwe' .Justify the statement.

Q2.How can you say that China is not a democratic country?

Q3.Elaborate any three features of democracy.

Q4.What does "one person, one vote, one value mean"? Name the countries that deny the equal right to vote.

Q.5. Comment on the following image.

