

OUTCOME OF DEMOCRACY

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (4 MARKS)

Previous Years' Questions

Q.1. Why do people prefer democracy ? Explain with four reasons. [Delhi 2008]

Ans. People do prefer democracy because of various reasons like :

- Democracy promotes equality among citizens. In democracy each citizen is given equal rights and freedoms. There is no discrimination on the basis of religion, caste, colour, etc. Democracy aims at equitable distribution of income and products among citizens.
- Democracy enhances dignity of individuals. Democracy permits political equality for all its citizens. No individual is discriminated against on the basis of caste, religion, class or gender. In democracy there is absence of any domination and conflicts. Thus, it implies every citizen enjoys dignity and freedom in democracy.
- Quality involves in decision-making. As democracy is based on deliberation and negotiations it improves the quality of decision making. In democracy every citizen takes part in the decision-making process, either directly or indirectly through the elected representatives.
- Democracy provides acceptable method to resolve conflict. Democracy provides an effective and acceptable method to resolve conflicts. It tries to reduce tension. The majority works with minority. Besides, democracy provides room to correct mistakes through deliberations and discussion in the legislature.

Q.2. How democracy stands much superior to any other form of Government in promoting dignity and freedom of the individual ? Explain with examples. [Delhi 2008]

Ans. Refer to Ans. 1 (4 Marks).

Conclusion

To sum up, we can say that the passion for respect and freedom of individual are the basis of democracy. All the democracies in the world accept this as a principle. Hence, the promotion of dignity and freedom of the individual is the great achievement of democracy.

Q.3. How are complaints treated as testimony to the success of democracy ? Explain with four facts. [Delhi 2008]

Ans. To some extent complaints are treated as testimony to the success of democracy. We can prove the statement by analysing certain facts like :

- (i) **Slow and Inefficient Government :** Some people complain that democracy is a less effective government and it is slow in functioning. There is no doubt that non-democratic governments can be more effective because they are very fast in their decision making. But it is not certain that decisions are right or wrong.
- (ii) **Unsuccessful in Reducing Economic Exploitation :** There is no denying the fact that democracies do not appear to have been successful in reducing economic inequality. But, it is only possible in a democracy that people can raise their voice against not only economic inequalities, but also against all types of inequalities.
- (iii) **Not free from Corruption :** There is no denying the fact that democracies are not free from corruption. But, it is only in a democracy that people can openly expose this evil and ask for its elimination.
- (iv) **Unable to Solve All Economic and Social Problems :** It is true that democracy cannot solve all economic and social problems. But no other form of government can solve all economic and social problems as well.
However, it is democracy alone which creates a situation or conditions that help citizens to solve their social and economic problems.
All these facts show that complaints treated as testimony to the success of democracy.

Q.4. How does democracy lead to peaceful and harmonious life among citizens ? Explain.

[Foreign 2008]

Ans. Democracy leads to peaceful and harmonious life among citizens as it gives to its citizens a sound political system based on social equality. We can prove the statement by citing following instances :

In the Political Sphere

- Democracy provides a conducive political environment to citizens for their popular participation in politics.
- Every citizen has the Right to Vote and Right to Contest Election.

In the Economic Sphere

- Democracy stands for equal economic status to all citizens. There is not a large gap between the rich and the poor.
- In democracy government undertakes extensive social welfare schemes and achieve universal literacy rate.

In the Social Sphere

- In the social sphere democracy tries to help its citizens to lead a peaceful and harmonious life by accommodating various social divisions and providing social equality to its citizens.
- Democratic governments try to resolve differences, respect differences and try mechanisms which can negotiate differences.

In this way, Democracy is not a mere form of government. It is also a form of society as well as a social order which promotes dignity and freedom of the individual. It improves the quality of decision making and allows room for correcting mistakes.

NCERT Questions

Q.5. What are the conditions under which democracies accommodate social diversities ?

Ans. Democracies accommodate various social differences or decisions in following ways :

- (i) Democracy develops competitive attitude: Democracy usually develops a procedure to conduct competition among the social differences. This reduces the possibility of social tensions becoming explosive or violent.
- (ii) Democracy evolves mechanisms to negotiate : No society can fully and permanently resolve conflicts among different groups, but we can certainly learn to respect these differences and we can also evolve mechanisms to negotiate the differences. Democracies are best suited to produce this outcome.
- (iii) Democracy must represent (the general view : The majority always needs to work with the minority so that governments function to represent the general view. Hence, majority and minority opinions are not permanent.
- (iv) Every citizen must have a chance of being in majority : It is also necessary that rule by majority does not become rule by majority community in terms of religion or race or linguistic group etc. Rule by majority means that in case of every decision or in case of election, different persons and groups may and can form a majority.

Q.6. Give arguments to support or oppose the following assertions :

- (i) **Industrialised countries can afford democracy but the poor need dictatorship to become rich.**
- (ii) **Democracy can't reduce inequality of incomes between different citizens.**
- (iii) **Government in poor countries should spend less on poverty reduction, health, education and spend more on industries and infrastructure.**
- (iv) **In democracy all citizens have one vote, which means that there is absence of any domination and conflict.**

Ans. (i) No, we do not agree with the statement, because the nature and scope of democracy is not confined or limited to rich or industrialised countries only. Democracy provides accountable, representative, responsible and legitimate government to the people.

It also tries to accommodate social differences and promote economic growth, which a dictatorship cannot.

Hence, a poor country can also afford democracy for popular government and economic growth.

- (ii) Again we don't agree with the statement that democracy can't reduce inequality of incomes between different citizens. But democracy can reduce the economic inequality by ensuring equal distribution of wealth and equal opportunities to all.

- (iii) No, we don't agree with this statement also, poverty is one of the social challenges which democracy has to accommodate ; so poor countries should spend more to check poverty.

Besides, food clothing health and education are the basic needs of the people and it is the duty of the government to provide these facilities to the people.

- (iv) Yes, we do agree with this statement . because, democracy stands for "political equality and guarantees Universal Adult Franchise" "Universal Adult franchise" gives right to vote to every adult citizen of the country.

Hence, there is no chance of political domination and conflict.

Additional Questions

Q.7. How do we assess democracy's outcome ?

Ans. We assess democracy's outcome on the basis of its comparative outlook and socio-economic and political achievements like :

- (i) Comparative analysis between democracy and dictatorship.
- (ii) It provides accountable, responsible representative and legitimate government.
- (iii) It develops mechanism for the people's participation in the decision making process.
- (iv) It promotes economic development. At the same time democracy has the characteristics of economic inequality and disparity.
- (v) We can also assess its outcome on the basis of the way it accommodates the social diversities.
- (vi) It also promotes dignity and freedom of the citizens.
- (vii) Above all, the best way to assess democracy's outcome is its own judgment for its functioning and success followed by a public expression of dissatisfaction with democracy.

Q.8. What outcome can one reasonably expect of democracies ?

Ans. The following outcome one can reasonably expect of the democracy.

- (i) In the Political Sphere : People should be given popular participation in politics like :
 - Right to vote
 - Right to contest election
 - Right to participate in other political affairs :
- (a) Regarding decentralisation of political democracy the local government of rural as well as urban areas should be given real economic and other powers.
- (b) We can also expect that there should be age limit for the politicians and there should be ban on holding the post of PM, President, Governor, CM, etc. after two terms.
- (ii) In the Economic Sphere : Economic inequality and disparity in society should be minimised as soon as possible.
 - Problems of poverty and unemployment should be checked, In order to have political equality. We expect economic equality as well. Right to employment and to lead a reasonably good life should be guaranteed to every citizen.
- (ii) In the Social Sphere : In the social sphere of life we expect social equality and justice to all.
 - Equal protection should be given to every category of people in societies like woman, OBCs, SCs and STs.
 - "Gender division" should be avoided and society should be free from any form of "untouchability" and discrimination.
- (iv) Justice Arena : In the sphere of justice we can expect "cheap and quick judgment" from our democracy or democratic judiciary. It is very painful in free India that some cases are still pending in courts.

- (v) Practical Expectation : besides, for electoral politics we expect that :
- The presidents and heads of every political party should be elected or appointed by the Election Commission.
 - The influence of money and muscle power should be checked in order to have a free and fair elections.
 - In order to have high literacy level we expect that our democracy should provide education for all and should ban child labour.
 - Facilities for higher, professional and technical education should be provided at the grass-roots level also, e.g..Decentralisation of Education. (Any Four)
- Above all, our expectation regarding the outcome of democracy is mainly to improve the quality of life of our country.

Q.9. Can or should democracy be judged by its outcome ?

- Ans.** Yes, democracy can or should be judged by its outcome because expectations from democracy also function as the criteria for judging and democratic country.
- What is most distinctive about democracy is that its examination never gets over; As democracy passes one test, it produces another tests. As people get some benefits of democracy they ask for more and want to make democracy even better.
- (i) When we ask people about the way democracy functions, they will always come up with more expectations and many complaints.
- (ii) The fact that people are complaining is itself a testimony to the success of democracy, it shows that people have developed awareness and the ability to expect and to look critically at power holders and the high and the mighty.
- Besides, a public expression of dissatisfaction with democracy shows the success of the democratic project.
 - It transforms people from the status of a subject into that of a citizen. Most individuals today believe that their votes make a difference to the way the government is run and to their own self interest.
- All these show that democracy should be judged by its outcome for better prospects.

Q.10. Does democracy in India meet these expectations ?

- Ans.** Democracy in India does not fairly meet these expectations :
- (i) Our democracy has not got a reasonable success in eliminating poverty. More than 22 per cent people are still living under poverty line in India.
- (ii) There are certain areas and regions like Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa where people do not get proper food, clothing and shelter to live a reasonably tolerable social life.
- (iii) The literacy level of our country is still low. About 40 per cent children are not going to school upto middle standard. Only 10 to 15 per cent Indians have opportunities of higher education.
- (iv) Unemployment is still existing, even educated as well as uneducated Indians are facing the problem of unemployment and under employment.

- (v) Problem of "Gender division" is one of the important manifestations of Indian democratic society. Girls or daughters are still not liked by most of the parents. The evil practices of female infanticide and infanticide are not yet checked. Dowry deaths are still prevailing in India. Besides, our democratic government has not got reasonably expected success in crushing the terrorist activities and anti-social elements.

All these show that Indian democracy has not come up to the reasonable expectations. Thus, it has still to go a long way to achieve the reasonable success.

Q.11. Has democracy led to development, security and dignity of the people ?

Ans. Democracy stands much superior to any other form of government in promoting dignity and freedom of the individual. The passion for respect and freedom are the basis of democracy. This has been achieved in various degrees in various democracies.

- (i) For societies which have been built for long on the basis of subordination and domination it is not a simple matter to recognise that all individuals are equal.
- (ii) We can take the case of dignity of women. Most societies across the world were historically male dominated societies. Long struggle by women have created some sensitivity today.
- (iii) On the other hand in a non-democratic set up the Principle of individual freedom and dignity would not have the legal and moral force.
- (iv) Democracy in India has also strengthened the claims of the disadvantaged and discriminated castes for equal status and equal opportunity. Perhaps, it is the recognition that makes ordinary citizens value their democratic rights.

Q.12. What sustains democracy in India ?

Ans. Democracy is the very foundation of Indian political system- It is universally accepted by the people and adopted at every level of Indian politics. The factors which sustain democracy in India are as follows :

- (i) Principles of Democracy as the adopted goals of our Constitution : Democracy is based on the principles of equality, liberty and brotherhood. To achieve the prescribed goals the framers of our Constitution adopted the aims like secularism, socialism democratic republic, national unity and international understanding.
- (ii) Representative Democracy : The framers of our Constitution provided for a representative democracy in a liberal framework in order to sustain democracy.
- (in) Universal Adult Franchise : In our country there are periodic elections for all levels of the government based on secret ballot and universal adult franchise. This is to ensure free, fair and open election.
- (iv) Interest and Pressure Groups : Our Constitution has given complete liberty to pressure and other organised or unorganised groups to operate in the political systems. They also influence government decisions and policies.

However, all these factors primarily refer to the elements of democracy, but in the era of globalisation democracy does not mean merely a form of government, but in a broader sense it constitutes, the practical way of life, an order of society, a way of social and economic relations and above all a belief in system.