

Short Answer Questions

Q.1. What are the three qualities of rights?

Ans. (i) They are reasonable claims of persons.

(ii) They are recognised by society.

(iii) They are sanctioned by law.

Q.2. Why are rights necessary for the very sustenance of a democracy?

Ans. In a democracy, every citizen has to have the right to vote and the right to be elected to government. For democratic elections to take place it is necessary that citizens should have the right to express their opinion, form political parties and take part in political activities.

Q.3. What does 'rule of law' mean?

Ans. (i) The constitution says that the government shall not deny to any person in India equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws.

(ii) It means that the laws apply in the same manner to all, regardless of a person's status. This is called the 'Rule of Law'.

Q.4. Is it true that every citizen from the Prime Minister to a small farmer, is subjected to the same laws?

Ans. Yes, this is true because the Constitution of India provides a provision of 'rule of law' which means that no person is above the law. The laws apply in the same manner to all, regardless of person's status (whether he is a Prime Minister or a farmer).

Q.5. How is right to equality exercised?

Ans. The government shall not discriminate against any citizen on the grounds of religion, caste, ethnicity, sex or place of birth. Every citizen shall have access to public places like shops, restaurants, hotels and cinema halls. All citizens have equality in the matters relating to employment also.

Q.6. What is RTI?

Ans. RTI is Right to Information. Parliament has enacted a law giving the right to information to the citizens. This Act was made under the Fundamental Right to freedom of thought and expression. We have a right to seek information from government offices.

Q.7. What are Human Rights?

Ans. Human Rights are universal moral claims that may or may not have been recognised by law. But then rights give you a right to be treated as equal by law. Every human being who is born anywhere has the right to live and enjoy his life and should not be tortured by any means.

Q.8. How were prisoners tortured by the US army in Guantanamo Bay prison?

Ans. (i) The prisoners were being tortured in ways that violated the US laws.

(ii) They were being denied the treatment that even prisoners of war must get as per the international treaties.

(iii) Prisoners were not released even after they were officially declared 'not guilty'.

Q.9. What was the background in which the ethnic massacre took place in Kosovo?

Ans. (i) Kosovo was a province of Yugoslavia before it split. In this province, the Serbs were in minority and Albanians were in majority, while it was the other way round in the rest of the country.

(ii) A narrow-minded Serb nationalist Milosevic had won the elections. His government was hostile to the Kosovo Albanians.

(iii) He wanted the Serbs to dominate the country.

Many Serb leaders thought that ethnic minorities like the Albanians should either leave the country or accept the dominance of the Serbs.

Q.10. How does society affect the implementation of rights?

Ans.

- Every society makes certain rules to regulate one's conduct. They tell us what is right and what is wrong. What is recognised by the society as rightful becomes the basis of rights.
- The notion of 'right' changes from time to time and society to society.
- When the socially recognised claims are written into law, they acquire real force. Otherwise, they remain merely as natural or moral rights.
- When law recognises some claims, they become enforceable. We can then demand their application. When fellow citizens or the government do not respect these rights, we call it violation of our rights.

Q.11. Which three qualities are required for calling any claim, a right?

Ans. (i) Rights are reasonable claims of persons.

(ii) Rights are recognised by the society.

(iii) Rights are sanctioned by law.

Q.12. How or why is the 'Right to Freedom' called a cluster of several rights?

Ans. Under the Indian Constitution, all citizens exercise a number of freedoms which are all covered in the right to freedom. So every citizen has the right to all of the following freedoms:

(i) Freedom of speech and expression

(ii) Freedom of assembly in a peaceful manner

(iii) Freedom to form associations and unions

(iv) Freedom to move freely throughout the country

(v) Freedom to reside in any part of the country

(vi) Freedom to practise any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade or business.

Q.13. How can you say that freedom of speech and expression is one of the essential features of any democracy?

Ans. (i) Our ideas and personality develop only when we are able to freely communicate with others. Even if hundred people think in one way, you should have the freedom to think differently and express your views accordingly.

(ii) You may disagree with a policy of the government or activities of an association. You are free to criticise the government in your conversation with parents, friends and relatives.

(iii) You may publicise your views through a pamphlet, magazine or newspaper. You can do the same through paintings, poetry or songs.

Q.14. How can citizens exercise their freedom to hold rallies and demonstrations?

Ans.

- Citizens have the freedom to hold rallies and demonstrations in our country guaranteed by the constitution.
- But such meetings have to be peaceful.
- They should not lead to public disorder or breach of peace in society.

- Those who participate in these activities and meetings should not carry weapons with them.
- Citizens can also form associations like workers in a factory can form a workers' union to promote their interests.

Q.15. Can an Indian citizen enjoy the freedom to travel in any part of the country?

Ans.

- Citizens are free to reside and settle in any part of India.
- This right allows lakhs of people to migrate from villages to towns and from poorer regions of the country to prosperous regions and big cities.
- For example, a person who belongs to Assam wants to start a business in Hyderabad. He may not have any connections with that place or people there, he may have not seen it ever. Yet as a citizen of India, he has the right to set up base there.

Q.16. Which three evils are tackled by right against exploitation?

Ans. The Constitution mentions three specific evils and declares them illegal.

(i) Traffic in human beings: Traffic here means selling and buying of human beings, usually women, for immoral purposes.

(ii) Begar: Our constitution also prohibits forced labour or begar in any form. It is a practice where the worker is forced to render service to the 'master', free of charge or at a nominal salary. When this practice takes place on a lifelong basis, it is called 'bonded labour'.

(iii) Child labour: The Constitution also prohibits child labour. No one can employ a child below the age of 14 years to work in any factory or mine or in any other hazardous work such as in the railways and at ports.

Many laws have been made to prohibit children from working in industries such as beedi making, firecrackers and matchbox, printing and dyeing.

Q.17. How does a person exercise his right to freedom of religion?

Ans.

- Every person has a right to profess, practise and propagate the religion he or she believes in.
- Every religious group or sect is free to manage its religious affairs.
- A right to propagate one's religion, however, does not mean that a person has the right to compel another person to convert into his religion by means of force, fraud, inducement or allurement.

Q.18. What are the provisions of cultural and educational rights?

Ans. The Constitution specifies the cultural and educational rights of the minorities.

(i) Any section of citizens with a distinct language or culture have a right to conserve it.

(ii) Admission to any educational institution maintained by the government or receiving government aid cannot be denied to any citizen on the grounds of religion or language.

(iii) All minorities have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. Here, minority does not mean only religious minority at the national level.

Q.19. Why did Dr. Ambedkar call the Right to Constitutional Remedies 'the heart and soul' of our constitution?

OR

What does Right to Constitutional Remedies imply?

Ans. (i) Right to Constitutional Remedies is a fundamental right. This right makes other rights effective.

(ii) It is possible that sometimes our rights may be violated by fellow citizens, private bodies or by the government. When any of our rights is violated, we can seek remedy through courts.

(iii) If it is a Fundamental Right, we can directly approach the Supreme Court or the High Court of a state.

That is why, Dr. Ambedkar called the Right to Constitutional Remedies 'the heart and soul' of our constitution.

Q.20. What is PIL? How does it work?

Ans. PIL is Public Interest Litigation.

(i) In case of any violation of a Fundamental Right, the aggrieved person can go to a court for remedy.

(ii) But now, any person can go to court against the violation of a Fundamental Right, if it is of social or public interest. This is called Public Interest Litigation (PIL).

(iii) Under the PIL, any citizen or group of citizens can approach the Supreme Court or the High Court for the protection of public interest against a particular law or action of the government.

Q.21. How were prisoners treated in Guantanamo Bay? Write three main features of the prison.

Ans. Treatment of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay was very humiliating.

(i) There was no trial before any magistrate and US law was completely violated.

(ii) This place was not located in US but an area near Cuba, controlled by American Navy, so nobody knew the location of the prison.

(iii) Families of prisoners, media or even UN representatives were not allowed to meet the prisoners.

Q.22. What did Amnesty International do to get Guantanamo Bay prison closed?

Ans. (i) Amnesty International, an international human rights organisation, collected information on the condition of the prisoners in Guantanamo Bay and reported that prisoners were being tortured in ways that violated the US laws.

(ii) They were being denied the treatment that even prisoners of war must get as per international treaties. Prisoners were not released even after they were officially declared not guilty.

(iii) The UN Secretary General said that the prison in Guantanamo Bay should be closed down. The US government refused to accept these pleas.

Q.23. What happened in Kosovo (Albania) in 1999?

Ans. (i) A massacre was being carried out by the army of their own country, working under the directions of a leader, Milosevic, who came to power through democratic election.

(ii) This was one of the worst instances of killings based on ethnic lines in recent time.

(iii) Finally, several other countries intervened to stop the massacre. Milosevic lost power and was tried by an International Court of Justice for crimes against humanity.

Q.24. Why do some rights need to be placed higher than the government?

Ans. (i) Things may go wrong when some citizens may wish to take away the rights of others. This usually happens when those in majority want to dominate in the minority.

(ii) The government should protect the citizens' rights in such a situation. But sometimes elected governments may not protect or may even attack the rights of their own citizens.

(iii) That is why, some rights need to be placed higher than the government, so that the government cannot violate them.

Q.25. Why has constitution made untouchability a punishable offence?

Ans. (i) The constitution mentions an extreme form of social discrimination, the practice of untouchability and clearly directs the government to put an end to it.

(ii) The practice of untouchability has been forbidden in any form.

(iii) Untouchability, here does not only mean refusal to touch people belonging to certain castes. It refers to any belief or social practice which looks down upon people on account of their birth with certain caste labels.

(iv) Such practice denies them interaction with others or access to public places as equal citizens. So, the constitution made untouchability a punishable offence.

Q.26. Women are subjected to many public restrictions. What values are neglected in this conduct?

Ans. (i) Right to Freedom

(ii) Right to Equality

(iii) Cultural & Educational Right

(iv) Right against Exploitation.

Q.27. On what grounds are 'rights' morally justified to citizens?

Ans. (i) To promote democracy

(ii) To promote right to live

(iii) To promote rights of minorities

(iv) To give people right to freedom of conscience

(v) To give people right to express.

Q.28. What rights would you enjoy and not enjoy if you are granted freedom of speech and expression?

Ans. Enjoyments

- (i) To elect the government
- (ii) To develop personality
- (iii) To communicate freely.

Limitations

- (i) Cannot instigate violence
- (ii) Cannot rebel against government
- (iii) Cannot damage a person's reputation.

Q.29. The Indian Constitution under right against exploitation highlights certain values. What are these?

- Ans. (i)** To prohibit selling and buying of human beings
- (ii) To prohibit forced labour
 - (iii) To ban bonded labour
 - (iv) To ban child labour in hazardous industries.