

Question:1

What do you understand by the word 'government'? List five ways in which you think the government affects your daily life.

Solution:

An individual or a group of individuals that governs a political unit (such as a state, country or kingdom) is known as a government. The government takes decisions, makes laws, enforces the laws and penalises the individuals or groups that go against the laws.

The functions of the government include:

- (i) Providing various services like the supply of water and electricity, free education, health services, proper roads, etc.
- (ii) Maintaining the internal law and order
- (iii) Protecting the country against external aggression
- (iv) Maintaining peaceful relations with other countries
- (v) Providing aid to the deprived and the underprivileged
- (vi) Securing equality and justice for all sections of society
- (vii) Ensuring and maintaining the economic growth of the country

Five ways in which the government affects one's daily life:

- (i) Supplying water and electricity
- (ii) Laying, maintaining and repairing roads
- (iii) Providing a good public transport system
- (iv) Guaranteeing proper internal security
- (v) Ensuring the proper functioning of its various administrations

Question:2

Why do you think the government needs to make rules for everyone in the form of laws?

Solution:

When human beings live and work together, there needs to be some amount of organisation so that decisions can be made. Also, some rules have to be made that apply to everyone, so that there is a sense of uniformity.

Since the government is a representative of the people, they make rules for everyone on behalf of everyone. Making rules and then enforcing these rules are the only ways in which a government can function properly. In any country, the government is entrusted with the power to make laws. But making laws alone cannot amount to much. For the laws to have any effect, the government needs to have the power to make sure that the laws are followed by every individual and group. This power to enforce the laws made by it includes the power to punish or penalise the individuals and groups that go against these laws.

Question:3

Name two essential features of a democratic government.

Solution:

The two essential features of a democratic government:

- (i) All adult citizens elect their representatives, who make and enforce laws on their behalf.
- (ii) The elected representatives explain their actions and defend their decisions before the people who elected them.

Question:4

What was the suffrage movement? What did it accomplish?

Solution:

The suffrage movement refers to the women's struggle to attain the right to vote. Women's struggle to vote got strengthened during the First World War. As many men were away fighting, women were called upon to do work that was earlier considered to be men's work. This led to the questioning of the many unfair stereotypes about women. Finally, after much struggle, the American women got the right to vote in 1920, while their counterparts in the UK attained this right in 1928.

Question:5

Gandhiji strongly believed that every adult in India should be given the right to vote. However, a few people don't share his views. They feel that illiterate people, who are mainly poor, should not be given the right to vote. What do you think? Do you think this would be a form of discrimination? Give five points to support your view and share these with the class.

Solution:

Yes, not allowing all the adult citizens of a country to vote is a form of discrimination. Every adult citizen of India has the right to vote for the following reasons.

- (i) Being illiterate is not a reason for disallowing someone from exercising his or her right to vote. An illiterate person might not be able to read or write, but he or she may well understand what is good for him or her and for the society.
- (ii) A true democracy is the one which does not discriminate amongst its citizens.
- (iii) Every citizen is responsible towards the country, and voting is one of the ways of being responsible towards the country.
- (iv) The right to vote is the birthright of every individual who has attained the age of eighteen or more.
- (v) It ensures that every section of society has its representative. If the poor and the illiterate are not given the right to vote, then the disparities would only increase. For an inclusive growth, every group in the society (poor or rich, literate or illiterate) must have the right to elect its voice, its representative.