

CHAPTER -2

Freedom

Q1.“Democratic government is legitimate government?” Support the statement with arguments. (2016 D)

Ans.

Democratic government is a legitimate government. It may be slow, less efficient, not always very responsive or clean. But a democratic government is peoples’ own government. That is why there is an overwhelming support for the idea of democracy all over the world. People’s wish to be ruled by representatives elected by them. As a democratic government is peoples’ own government, they believe that democracy is suitable for their country as it is a legitimate government. Democracy’s ability to generate its own support is itself an outcome that cannot be ignored.

Q2.“Democracy accommodates social diversities.” Support the statement with examples. (2016 OD)

Ans.

“Democracy accommodates social diversities” in the following ways:

1. Democracies develop a procedure to conduct their competition. This reduces the possibility of these tensions becoming explosive or violent.
2. No society can fully and permanently resolve conflicts among different groups. But we can certainly learn to respect these differences and can evolve mechanism to negotiate these differences.
Example, Belgium has successfully negotiated differences among ethnic population. This reduces the possibility of tensions.
3. Ability to handle social differences, divisions and conflicts is thus a definite plus point of democratic regimes.

Q3. Analyze any three values that make democracy better. (2017 D)

Ans: We feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form of government because Democracy promotes equality among citizens.

1. It enhances dignity of individual. It promotes dignity of women and strengthens the claims of the disadvantaged.
2. It improves the quality of decision making. There is transparency in a democracy.
3. It provides methods to resolve conflicts.
4. Democracy allows room to correct mistakes.

Q3. On the basis of which values will it be a fair expectation that democracy should produce a harmonious social life? Explain. (2017 OD)

Ans.

No society can fully and permanently resolve conflicts among different groups. But we can certainly learn to respect these differences and evolve a mechanism to negotiate the differences. Belgium is an example of how successfully differences were negotiated among ethnic groups. Therefore, democracy is best suited to accommodate various social divisions as it usually develops a procedure to conduct their competition. But the example of Sri Lanka shows how distrust between two communities turned into widespread conflict. Thus, a democracy must fulfil the following conditions and be based on these values in order to achieve a harmonious social life—

1. Majority and minority opinions are not permanent. Democracy is not simply rule by majority opinion. The majority needs to work with minority so that government may function to represent the general view.
2. Rule by majority does not become rule by majority community in terms of religion or race or linguistic groups, etc.
3. Democracy remains democracy so long as every citizen has a chance of being in majority at some point of time. No individual should be debarred from participating in a democracy on the basis of religion, caste, community, creed and other such factors.

Q4. Why do we feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form? Explain. 2015OD Answer: Democracy is a better form of government than any other form because:

It is based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation. Thus the necessary delay in implementation.

1. Decisions are acceptable to people and are more effective.
2. A citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making. There is transparency in a democracy.
3. Democratic government is a legitimate government, people's own government.
4. Ability to handle differences, decisions and conflicts is a positive point of democratic regimes.
5. Democracy has strengthened the claims of the disadvantaged and discriminated castes for equal status and equal opportunity.

Q5. Why do we feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form of government? Explain. (2012 OD)

Or

How do you feel that democracy is better than any other form of government? Explain. (2013 OD)

Or

“Democracy is more effective than its other alternatives.” Justify the statement. (2015 D)

Answer:

We feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form of government because:

1. Democracy promotes equality among citizens.
2. It enhances dignity of individual. It promotes dignity of women and strengthens the claims of the disadvantaged.
3. It improves the quality of decision making. There is transparency in a democracy.
4. It provides methods to resolve conflicts.
5. Democracy allows room to correct mistakes.

Q6 .How do democracies accommodate social diversity? Explain with examples. (2011 OD, 2014 OD)

Or

Explain the conditions in which democracies are able to accommodate social diversities. (2012 D)

Or

“Democracies lead to peaceful and harmonious life among citizens”. Support the statement with suitable examples. (2013 OD)

Answer:

No society can fully and permanently resolve conflicts among different groups. But we can certainly learn to respect these differences and evolve a mechanism to negotiate the differences. Belgium is an example of how successfully differences were negotiated among ethnic groups. Therefore, democracy is best suited to accommodate various social divisions as it usually develops a procedure to conduct their competition. But the example of Sri Lanka shows how distrust between two communities turned into widespread conflict, and thus a democracy must fulfil the following two conditions in order to achieve a harmonious social life:

1. Majority and minority opinions are not permanent. Democracy is not simply rule by majority opinion. The majority needs to work with minority so that government may function to represent the general view.
2. Rule by majority does not become rule by majority community in terms of religion or race or linguistic groups, etc.
3. Democracy remains democracy so long as every citizen has a chance of being in majority at some point of time. No individual should be debarred from participating in a democracy on the basis of religion, caste, community, creed and other such factors.

Q7 .Explain the ways in which democracy has succeeded in maintaining dignity and freedom of citizens. (2012 D)

Or, “Democracy stands much superior to any other form of government in promoting dignity and freedom of the individual.” Support the statement with suitable examples. 2013OD

Ans.

The passion of respect and freedom are the basis of democracy:

1. Economic disparity in society has been minimized to a great extent.
2. In many democracies women were deprived of their right to vote for a long period of time. After long struggle they achieved their right, respect and equal treatment.
3. Democracy in India has strengthened the claims of the disadvantaged and discriminated castes for equal states and opportunities, for example, SCs and STs.
4. In democracy all adult citizens have the right to vote.

5. Democracy evolves a mechanism that takes into account the differences and intrinsic attributes of various ethnic groups. In a democracy majority always needs to work taking into account the interest of the minority so that the minority do not feel alienated.

Q8. How is democracy a better form of government in comparison with other forms of governments? Explain. (2016 D, 2014 D)

Or, “There is an overwhelming support for the idea of democracy all over the world.” Support the statement. (2015 OD)

Answer:

Over a hundred countries of the world today claim and practice some kind of democratic politics.

- They have formal constitutions, hold elections, have parties and they guarantee rights of citizens.
Thus, in most countries, the democracy produces a government that is accountable to the citizens and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens.
- No society can fully and permanently resolve conflict among different groups. But we can learn to respect these differences and evolve mechanisms to negotiate them. Democracy is best suited as it develops a procedure to conduct competitions. Belgium is a successful example of negotiating difference among ethnic population.
- Passion for respect and freedom is the basis of democracy and has been achieved in various degrees in various democracies.
- The support for democracy is overwhelming all over the world and is evident from South Asia, where the support exists in countries with democratic as well as undemocratic regimes.
- People wish to be ruled by representatives elected by them as a democratic government is people’s own government and makes them believe that it is suitable for their country as it is a legitimate government.

Q9. “Democracy is seen to be good in principle but felt to be not so good in practice.” Justify the statement. (2013 D)

Ans.

If we look at some of the democratic policies being implemented in more than one hundred countries of the world, democracy seems to be good. For example, having a formal Constitution, holding regular elections, guaranteeing the citizens certain rights, working for the welfare of the people etc. make us advocate that democracy is good.

But if we look in terms of social situations, their economic achievements and varied cultures, we find a very big difference in most of the democracies. The vast economic disparities, social injustice based on discrimination, standard of life, sex discrimination, etc. create many doubts about the merits of democracy. Whenever some of our expectations are not met, we start blaming the idea of democracy. Since democracy is a form of government, it can only create conditions for achieving our goals if they are reasonable.

Q10. “Democracy stands much superior in promoting dignity and freedom of the citizens”. Justify the statement. (2016 OD)

Ans.

Examples to illustrate that dignity and freedom of citizens are best guaranteed in a democracy:

(i) Dignity of women. Democracy recognizes dignity of women as a necessary ingredient of society. The one way to ensure that women related problems get adequate attention is to have more women as elected representatives. To achieve this, it is legally binding to have a fair proportion of women in the elected bodies. Panchayati Raj in India has reserved one-third seats in local government bodies for women. In March 2010, the Women's Reservation Bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha ensuring 33% reservation for women in Parliament and State legislative bodies.

(ii) Democracy has strengthened the claims of disadvantaged and discriminated castes. When governments are formed, political parties usually take care that representatives of different castes and tribes find a place in it. Some political parties are known to favour some castes. Democracy provides for equal status and opportunities for all castes.

(iii) Democracy transforms people from the status of a subject into that of a citizen. A democracy is concerned with ensuring that people will have the right to choose their rulers and people will have control over the rulers. Whenever possible and necessary, citizens should be able to participate in decision-making that affects them all.

(iv) A citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making. There is transparency in a democracy like India. In October 2005, the Right to Information (RTI) law was passed which ensures all its citizens the right to get all the information about the functions of the government departments. In a democracy, people also have the right to complain about its functioning

Q11 . What is meant by freedom? Is there a relationship between freedom for the individual and freedom for the nation?

Ans. Freedom is the ability to carry out all of the actions necessary for one's own growth while also doing no harm to others. The freedom of the individual and the nation are closely related for the following reasons:

- (a) Every person in a free country will be able to develop their creativity and abilities.
- (b) The capacity of individuals to cooperate, be creative, and use their strengths in the absence of external restraints is what drives a nation's development.
- (c) With the fewest societal restrictions possible, everyone can fulfil their potential in a free society.
- (d) However, no society can be envisioned without limitations, thus it is important to decide whether they are acceptable or reasonable.
- (e) Debates and conversations between individuals and the society are essential for examining social restrictions.

Q12.What is the difference between the negative and positive conception of liberty?

Ans. Negative conception of liberty:

- (a) It signifies a lack of limitations and the freedom to act however one pleases.
- (b) This perspective can give the powerful person greater authority so they can control the weaker people.

The following problems exist with this interpretation of liberty:

- (a) It is not required to have democracy in order to have freedom because liberty is concerned with area control rather than its source.
- (b) The state should only restrict an individual's freedom up to the point that he impinges on the freedom of others.

Positive conception of liberty:

- (a) It refers to a society where each and every segment of the population has access to the necessary resources to exercise their legal rights.
- (b) This holds that no person or group should impede the advancement of others.
- (c) People are allowed to exercise all legal freedoms.
- (d) It also ensures the development of those who are weak, destitute, and oppressed.
- (e) It implies that removing obstacles is the key to achieving liberty.\

Q13. What is meant by freedom of expression? What in your view would be a reasonable restriction on this freedom? Give examples.

Ans. Freedom of expression means the freedom to express one's views through speech, expression, writing form, etc. If it belongs to the minimum area of 'non-interference', that is, negative liberty.

As per the provisions of the Indian Constitution, freedom of expression is a fundamental right.

Society may bear some inconvenience due to freedom of speech, this right protects them from people who want to restrict it. Society cannot restrict people from expressing themselves freely whether it agrees with their views or not.

A reasonable restriction of freedom of expression is one that allows society to function smoothly and curbs interference in privacy.

These restrictions are reasonable as they are necessary to function the society smoothly. Freedom of speech cannot interfere in someone's privacy. Such as putting restriction on freedom of speech is of film censor board. Censor board of films bans some portion of film to prevent adverse effect on society or disturbance of peace.