

Chapter 4

Question 1:

How would Maya's life be different in South Africa today?

Answer:

South Africa is no longer under the rule of Apartheid. As a result, Maya's life would be different in the following ways:

- (i) People are no longer separated or discriminated on the basis of race. All have a right to equality and equal treatment.
- (ii) Everyone can access the basic amenities of life without fear.
- (iii) Every adult has the right to vote. Voting rights are not reserved for the white people.
- (iv) The people have a right to organise peaceful protests.
- (v) The people are free to learn whichever language they prefer.

Question 2:

What are the various ways in which people participate in the process of government?

Answer:

The ways in which people participate in the process of government are as follows:

- (i) Electing their representatives by voting in periodic elections
- (ii) Taking an interest in the working of their elected representatives and criticising them when required
- (iii) Expressing views and organising social movements to make the government understand its responsibilities and the actions that it needs to take

Question 3:

Why do you think we need the government to find solutions to many disputes or conflicts?

Answer:

The Indian Constitution lays down the basic rules that have to be followed by everyone—be it the government or the citizens. The government is entrusted with the power and responsibility to see to it that the laws of the Constitution are followed by all the various individuals and groups present within the social, political and economic spheres.

A conflict arises when there is a clash of interests. In such a case, the government steps in, in any of its various forms (courts, Panchayats, police, etc.), to bring about a peaceful and best possible resolution to the conflict. It could be a conflict between two individuals, religious sects, between organisations, between an organisation and its workers, or even between states.

Question 4:

What actions does the government take to ensure that all people are treated equally?

Answer:

A truly democratic government ensures equality and justice for all its citizens. Some of the ways by which a government can seek to address the twin issues of equality and justice are as follows:

- (i) Implementing laws that ban discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, religion, region, gender, wealth, language, etc.
- (ii) Providing provisions for groups that are at a disadvantage in the society. For example, the scheduled castes and tribes, the backward classes, women and the girl child, certain religious minorities, small farmers, labourers and the poor
- (iii) Making available the basic requirements for proper food, clothing, shelter, education and employment

Question 5:

Read through the chapter and discuss some of the key ideas of a democratic government. Make a list. For example, all people are equal.

Answer:

Key ideas of a democratic government:

Regular elections

Active participation by the people

Resolution of conflicts and tensions

Maintaining peace and calm

Right to express opinions

Equality

Justice