



8. Here are different opinions about what made India a democracy. How much importance would you give to each of these factors?

(a) Democracy in India is a gift of the British rulers. We received training to work with representative legislative institutions under the British rule.

(b) Freedom Struggle challenged the colonial exploitation and denial of different freedoms to Indians. Free India could not be anything but democratic.

(c) We were lucky to have leaders who had democratic convictions. The denial of democracy in several other newly independent countries shows the important role of these leaders.

Answer:

(a) Though I would acknowledge many good things were learnt from the British rulers and democracy being one of them, I wouldn't say that democracy was a gift given by them. Indians had to struggle a lot and make many sacrifices to attain freedom from the British rule. These circumstances helped people to gain the experience and training in working of the legislative institutions.

(b) Yes, Free India could not be anything but democratic because the people had already suffered a lot under the British rule. This made them realise that for people to have a say in ruling the country, it was necessary to make India a democratic country.

(c) It is indeed true that we were lucky to have leaders who had deep democratic values. It is because of these ideals that India's freedom struggle can be considered as the only example of a bloodless freedom struggle in the contemporary history. Therefore, absence of such ideals has made many countries undemocratic.

9. Read the following extract from a conduct book for 'married women', published in 1912. 'God has made the female species delicate and fragile both physically and emotionally, pitifully incapable of self-defence. They are destined thus by God to remain in male protection – of father, husband and son – all their lives. Women should, therefore, not despair, but feel obliged that they can dedicate themselves to the service of men'. Do you think the values expressed in this para reflected the values underlying our constitution? Or does this go against the constitutional values?

Answer:

The given paragraph does not reflect the underlying value in our Constitution. It refers to the patriarchal views and endorses the thought of inequality in genders.

It goes against the constitutional values because in the paragraph women are shown as inferior, unequal as weak and fragile who should serve men. However, the Constitution has provided equal rights to women. They enjoy the right to vote, can take up any job and are paid equal wages for the same work.

10. Read the following statements about a constitution. Give reasons why each of these is true or not true.

(a) The authority of the rules of the constitution is the same as that of any other law.

(b) Constitution lays down how different organs of the government will be formed.

(c) Rights of citizens and limits on the power of the government are laid down in the constitution.

(d) A constitution is about institutions, not about values.

Answer:

(a) Not true. An ordinary law is passed by the Parliament and can be changed by it on its own will. On the other hand, the rules of the Constitution have greater authority and the Parliament has to abide by them. For amending these rules, a special procedure has to be adopted.

(b) True. The Constitution has laid down the framework for the government formation. It has put in place the structure, power and functions of the three organs of the government, i.e. executive, legislative and judiciary.

(c) True. The rights of the citizens are laid down in the Constitution as fundamental rights, which are enforceable by law. The powers and functions of the government are divided into the executive, legislative and judiciary. It is done to keep each organ under check by the other organs to ensure power functioning of the government.

(d) Not True. The Constitution is the supreme law of the country. It lays down the composition powers and functions of the various institutions of government. The Constitution is guided by values which are found in the form of Preamble. Principles and values such as equality, liberty, fraternity, brotherhood, secularism and justice are included in the Preamble of the Constitution.

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