



8. Are the following statements in keeping with democracy as a value? Why?

- (a) Father to daughter: I don't want to hear your opinion about your marriage. In our family children marry where the parents tell them to.
- (b) Teacher to student: Don't disturb my concentration by asking me questions in the classroom.
- (c) Employee to the officer: Our working hours must be reduced according to the law.

Answer:

- (a) The statement made is an undemocratic statement as the girl is being denied as opportunity to voice her opinion and choose her partner. As per our Constitution, every citizen who is 18 or above has the right to marry according to his/her choice.
- (b) The statement made is undemocratic as the student is being denied the right to ask questions/clear his doubts. The best the teacher can do is to ask the student to ask his query at the end of the lecture; however, stopping him from doing so is incorrect.
- (c) The statement made is a democratic statement because here the employees are asking for their fundamental right. Within the norms of the company, the employees are always entitled to ask or request their office for something.

9. Consider the following facts about a country and decide if you would call it a democracy. Give reasons to support your decision.

- (a) All the citizens of the country have right to vote Elections are held regularly.
- (b) The country took loan from international agencies. One of the conditions for given loan was that the government would reduce its expenses on education and health.
- (c) People speak more than seven languages but education is available only in one language, the language spoken by 52 percent people of the country.
- (d) Several organisations have given a call for peaceful demonstrations and nation wide strikes in the country to oppose these policies. Government has arrested these leaders.
- (e) The government owns the radio and television in the country. All the newspapers have to get permission from the government to publish any news about government's policies and protests.

Answer:

- (a) Two important features of democracy are regular elections and universal adult franchise.
- (b) A democratic government works for the welfare of the country and enhances dignity of the citizens. Therefore, it cannot perform any functions which go against the welfare of the country and its people. Moreover, it does not allow an international agency to interfere in the internal matters of a country.
- (c) The national language can be a single language because such a concept will bring about national integrity but other languages also should be encouraged to cultivate in their respective regions.
- (d) Democracy provides people the right to strike or the right to free speech and demonstrations.
- (e) A very important part of democracy is the freedom of the press. Therefore, the total control of media shows that there is no freedom of speech and expression and right to speak against the

government.

Thus, though the country is democratic in some manners, it is also undemocratic in some ways.

10. Write an essay on 'Democracy and Poverty' using the information given in this report but using examples from India.

Answer:

Democracy and poverty have been inextricably linked in India ever since her birth. Political independence of our country had been achieved through mass participation of the rural poor in the national movement. However, and unfortunately, since then this rural poor mass of the Indian population has seen its influence shrink in national politics. As decade by decade India has cultivated its resources and added to its national financial wealth, the rich have grown richer, and the poor have grown abysmally poorer. We have the distinction of being the largest democracy in the world, but we are also one of the world's poorest countries, with gaping economic cleavages within our society.

The inequality of income is a concern that gets reflected directly in the operation of the democratic process of our republic. Research has firmly established the fact that though the majority of Indian voters come from the rural Indian hinterland, their influence on their elected representatives and on the whole, on the process of national policy making is shrinking with each passing year. On the other hand, the richer sections of our society, though they do not necessarily vote or have any discernible concern for their civic responsibilities, exercise leverage on the policymaking in this country grossly disproportionate to their actual size in the population.

Moreover, the culture of corporate funding of political parties has fast spawned its offspring in the realms of the government establishment. It has made political parties and their leaders less dependent on their actual electorate and has allowed them to ignore the real concerns of the public like agrarian reforms, fine tuning of the Public Distribution System, agricultural subsidies and educational reforms.

To encapsulate, as we take pride in us being the largest democracy in the world, it is also necessary to recognise and act on the fact that the phenomenon of gross economic inequalities is putting a major limitation on its workability.

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