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4. Each of these statements contains a democratic and an undemocratic element. Write out the two separately for each statement.

(a) A minister said that some laws have to be passed by the parliament in order to conform to the regulations decided by the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

(b) The Election Commission ordered re-polling in a constituency where large-scale rigging was reported.

(c) Women's representation in the parliament has barely reached 10 per cent. This led women's organisations to demand one-third seats for women.

Answer:

(a) Democratic: Passing of the laws by the Parliament.

Undemocratic: Conforming to the regulations decided by the World Trade Organisation.

(b) Democratic: The order to re-poll by the Election Commission.

Undemocratic: large scale rigging was reported

(c) Democratic: Demand by Women's Organisation to reserve one-third seats for women.

Undemocratic: Women's representation in the parliament is less than 10 per cent.

5. Which of these is not a valid reason for arguing that there is a lesser possibility of famine in a democratic country?

(a) Opposition parties can draw attention to hunger and starvation.

(b) Free press can report suffering from famine in different parts of the country.

(c) Government fears its defeat in the next elections.

(d) People are free to believe in and practice any religion.

Answer:

(d) "People are free to believe in and practise any religion" is not a valid reason because there are lesser chances for famine to take place in a democratic country. This is because practicing of a religion is not at all related to famine.

6. There are 40 villages in a district where the government has made no provision for drinking water. These villagers met and considered many methods of forcing the government to respond to their need. Which of these is not a democratic method?

(a) Filing a case in the courts claiming that water is part of right to life.

(b) Boycotting the next elections to give a message to all parties.

(c) Organising public meetings against government's policies.

(d) Paying money to government officials to get water.

Answer:

(d) Paying money to government officials to get water is an undemocratic method.

7. Write a response to the following arguments against democracy.

(a) Army is the most disciplined and corruption-free organisation in the country. Therefore army should rule the country.

(b) Rule of the majority means the rule of ignorant people. What we need is the rule of the wise, even if they are in small numbers.

(c) If we want religious leaders to guide us in spiritual matters, why

not invite them to guide us in politics as well. The country should be ruled by religious leaders.

Answer:

- (a) Though army the most disciplined and corruption-free organisation in the country, however, it cannot be justified that they should rule the country. Primarily, because they do not form a democratic government i.e. are not elected by the people. Secondly, people will not be allowed to voice their opinion or expression as all their fundamentals rights would be curtailed. Also, there would be no assurance that the army cannot turn into a ruthless dictator at any point of their rule, making the life of the people difficult. For example: people of Chile suffered under the rule of General Augusto Pinochet.
- (b) Such a thing would be against the principle of the Universal Adult Franchise, wherein every person above the age of 18 yrs in our country irrespective of religion, caste, sex, socio-economic background etc. has the right to vote. Everyone has the right to participate equally in the formation of the government. Therefore ignoring some sections of the society would be unfair. Moreover, wise men need not be necessarily good administrators.
- (c) Those who say that the country should be ruled by religious leaders are making a very risky statement. Because in a multi-religious country bringing religion into politics can cause serious conflict among the people. Moreover, religious leaders can bring trouble to the country due to their mutual conflicts of ideologies. Besides, many even do not have any experience in administration. Thus, it is very necessary for them to run their own religious institutions and need not meddle in the political affairs of the country.

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