

Chapter 4: Key Elements of a Democratic Government

Intext Questions:

Question 1. What were Hector and his classmates protesting about?

Answer: Hector and his classmates protested against learning the Afrikans language in school. This was the language that white spoke. They were forced to learn this language, but they wanted to learn their own language, Zulu.

Question 2. List five ways in which the non-whites were discriminated against.

Answer: The five ways in which non-whites were discriminated against were:

- In South Africa, the government practiced apartheid laws, i.e., separation on the basis of race.
- The different races were not allowed to mingle with each other or live near each other or even to use common facilities.
- Hospitals and ambulances were separate. Ambulances meant for the whites had more facilities and were well equipped.
- The ones meant for black people were not.
- Non-whites were not allowed to vote.
- The best land in the country was reserved for the white people, and non-whites had to live on the worst available land.

Question 3. Do you think it is important for all persons to be treated equally? Why?

Answer: All people are born equal and enjoy the right to life, liberty, and property. If a section of the people is denied these rights, it will create conflicts in society. No one has the right to suppress others.

Question 4. Look at some newspapers and discuss some elections that you may have read about. Why do you think elections are required after a fixed period?

Answer: All governments are elected for fixed periods. In India, the elections are held after every five years. Once elected, the government can stay in power for that period only. If they want to continue to be in power, they have to be re-elected. This is the moment when people think that they have an important role to play. In this way, the powers of the government get limited by regular elections.

Question 5. What approval or disapproval is being expressed here?

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Letters to the editor

Ban posters

POSTERS ON walls spoil the city's looks. Further, many times posters are pasted on important sign boards and even road maps. All political parties should arrive at a consensus on banning posters on walls.

MAHESH KAPASI
Delhi

Take Action

It is worrying to know that the tiger population in India is falling. Tigers are being hunted and killed by poachers for their skins. The government has not taken the issue of poaching seriously enough. It must take action immediately, arrest the poachers and implement the laws protecting the tiger. If this does not happen the tiger will become an extinct animal in the next ten years.

Sohan Pal
Gurwahati, Assam

'Government must give compensation to flood victims'

New Delhi: Petroleum Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar has called for involvement of panchayati raj institutions in compensation of flood victims.

industries across eight industrial sectors — fertilizer, power, sponge iron, glass, petrochemicals, LPG fractionators, and compressor stations and

Not bad! One of the taps in the nearby village must be getting water!

Answer:

A. Ban Posters:

Posters on walls are damaging city looks and if they are pasted on important sign boards and traffic signals, it would definitely become the social security issue. So Government should ban this practice immediately for the common good.

B. Take an action:

Tigers are being killed by poachers for their skin and ecological system disturbs if it continues. So Government should take an action by strictly punishing them.

C. Not bad:

Water is the basic need for a human being. All people should get free water for basic health so Government should intervene to end the barbaric situation of the innocent people.

D. Government must give compensation to the flood victims:

Opposition party is supporting the victims and pressurizing the Government for giving compensation for their economic loss.

Question 6. Read the story again: Do you think the police shooting of Hector could have been avoided? How?

Answer: If the government and the people who were protesting had come together and discussed the problem, then the police shooting of Hector could have avoided.

Question 7. In Maya's story did the government support the idea that people are equal?

Answer: No, the government did not think that all people are equal. The black people were discriminated against and denied all basic human rights.

Question 8. In Dr. Ambedkar's story did the practice of untouchability support the idea that people are equal?

Answer: Untouchability means that a section of the people is denied basic human rights. Untouchability denies basic rights, so untouchability cannot be equated with democracy.

Question 9. How do you think lowering the school fees would help girls attend school?

Answer: Very often the parents do not send their daughters to school because they cannot afford to give fees and if the fees are lowered more people will send their daughters to school.

Question 10. Can you think of any experience from your life in which you have helped someone out of a situation that you thought was unfair? Did everyone else see it the same? What did you have to say to convince others that what you did was fair?

Answer: While traveling on a train, I heard some people shouting and fighting. I heard that the main cause of the fight was that some people had occupied the seats which belonged to other passengers. The seats were reserved seats. The people who had occupied the seats that 'first come first serve' is the motto they came earlier and occupied the seats. The other passengers argued that the reserved seats mean that every person carrying the ticket will have the seat. It was an unfair situation.

At this point, I decided to stop the shouting and fighting. I asked the passenger who had taken the seat, that why reserved tickets are issued. It means everyone has a right to take a seat. The seat was vacated, when the realization dawned on one of them that motto is not 'first come first serve' but to respect the rights of others.

Questions:

Question 1. How would Maya's life be different in South Africa today?

Answer: Maya's life would be different in South Africa today due to following reasons:

- Practice of apartheid is abolished today.

- She would have enjoyed equal rights before the law.
- No discrimination on the basis of caste, color, creed and religion.
- She would have the right to choose and participate in the government.

Question 2. What are the various ways in which people participate in the process of government?

Answer: Various ways in which people participate in the process of government:

- By participating in the election.
- By casting their vote to choose their government.
- By mass protest like rallies, strikes, signature campaigns etc.
- Limiting the power by regular election.
- By expressing their view and criticizing the government on social media, televisions, newspapers etc.
- Keep on track and informed with government works and decisions.

Question 3. Why do you think we need the government to find solutions to many disputes or conflicts?

Answer: We need the government to find solutions to many disputes or conflicts:

- It can turn into outrageous or violent movement in future if not solved.
- Government is accountable to its people and thus take care of them.
- It is necessary to maintain peace and laws in the nation.
- To maintain the trust of its people for the maintenance of laws and justice.

Question 4. What actions does the government take to ensure that all people are treated equally?

Answer: Steps the government should take to ensure that all people are treated equally:

- Everybody should be treated equally before the law and in the constitution.
- All should be given equal rights to enjoy their freedom.
- There should be no discrimination in providing justice on the basis of caste, colour, creed or religion.
- Special protection should be provided to the underprivileged classes.
- Ensuring basic facilities of food, shelter, health and clothes to all.

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:

- Rights to participate in the formation of government.
- Justice should be provided to all.
- Re election should be held after a fixed period.
- Government should be accountable to its people.
- No discrimination on the basis of caste, colour, creed or religion.

Right to organise mass movements, rallies, protests etc.