

Chapter - 2

What is Democracy?

Why Democracy?

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⇒ Democracy:

Two Type of Govt ← Democratic
Non Democratic

Abraham Lincoln Said, "Democracy is a form of government by the people for the people and off the people."

- Democracy comes from a Greek word 'Demokratia'. In Greek 'demos' means people and 'Kratia' means rule. So democracy is ruled by the people.

- Simple definition

Democracy is a form of government in which rulers are elected by the people.

- Features of Democracy:

(1) Democracy is a form of government in which the rulers are elected by the people and final decision making power rests with them.

(2) Democracy must be based on free and fair election where those currently in power have a fair chance of losing.

(3) In a democracy, each adult citizen must have one vote and each vote must have one value.

(4) A democratic government rules within limits set by constitutional law and citizens' rights.

→ Why democracy?

- A Democratic government is a better government because it is a more accountable form of government.
- Democracy improves the quality of decision-making.
- Democracy provides a method to deal with differences and conflicts.
- Democracy is a form of government which ensures that people takes their own decision.
- In Democracy no one is a permanent Winner No one is a permanent Loser.
- Democracy enhances the dignity of citizens.
- Democracy is better than other forms of government because it allows us to corrects its own mistakes.

→ Argument against Democracy:

- leaders keep changing this leads to instability in Democracy.
- Democracy is all about political competition and power play. There is no scope for morality.

- So many people have to be consulted in Democracy that it leads to delays.
- Elected leaders do not know the best interest of the people. It leads to bad decisions.
- Democracy leads to corruption for it is based on electoral competition.
- Ordinary people don't know what is good for them; they should not decide anything.

→ Broader Meaning of Democracy:

Let us read these five statements and try to find out the meaning of Democracy in broader sense.

- "We are a very democratic family. Whenever a decision has to be taken. We all sit down, and arrive at a consensus. My opinion matters as much my Father's."
- "I don't like teachers who do not allow students to speak and ask question in the class. I would like to have teacher with Democratic Temperament."
- "One leader and his family decide everything in his party. How can they talk of democracy."

- True democracy will come to a country, when no one goes hungry to bed.
- In a democracy every citizen must be able to play equal role in decision making. For this you don't need just an equal right to vote. Every citizen needs to have equal information, basic education, equal resources and lot of commitment.

→ Rule of law and respects for Rights:

Example.

Zimbabwe → Independence from White Minorities

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Rule of Zanu PF (Political Party) President 1980

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Robert Mugabe → Won election every time, how?

He used unfair practices in election:

- Amended constitution in his favour.
- Opposition Party workers were harassed.
- Protest was declared illegal.
- TV and radio are controlled by Government.
- Judiciary was also ignored by Govt.

