

Outcomes of Democracy

Question 1.

How can you say that democracies are based on political equality? (2015 OD)

Answer:

Democracies are based on political equality as individuals have equal weight in electing representatives.

Question 2.

What is 'transparency' in a democracy? (2014 OD, 2015 OD)

Answer:

Democracy ensures that decision making will be based on norms and procedure. Every citizen has the right and means to examine the process of decision making. This is known as transparency.

Short Answer Questions (SA) 3 Marks

Question 3.

How do democratic governments ensure transparency? Explain any three points. (2011 D)

Answer:

1 Democracy ensures that decision-making will be based on norms and procedures. So a citizen, who wants to know if a decision was taken through the correct procedures, can find out as democracy guarantees to the citizens the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making.

2 In a democracy people have the right to choose their rulers and people will have control over them. Whenever possible and necessary, citizens should be able to participate in decision-making that affects them all. Thus it ensures transparency by producing a government that is accountable to the citizens and is responsive to their needs and expectations.

3 It is right to expect democracy to produce a government that follows procedures and is accountable to people. To do so, the democratic government develops mechanisms for citizens—regular, free and fair elections, open public debate on major policies and legislations and citizens' right to information about the government and its functioning.

Question 5.

"An ideal government would not only keep itself away from corruption but also make fighting corruption and black money a top priority". Justify the statement. (2013 D)

Answer:

The values attached to the above statement signify the following practices and institutions:

- Regular free and fair elections, open public debate on major policies and legislation and citizens' right to information about the government and its functions.
- An ideal government in a democracy follows procedures and is accountable to the people.
- A citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision making. This is known as transparency.
- An ideal government is attentive and responsive to the needs and expectations of the people and is largely free of corruption as it is a legitimate government. It is peoples own government.

Question 8.

How is democracy accountable and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens? Analyse. (2015 OD)

Answer:

A democracy is concerned with ensuring that people have the right to choose their rulers and have control over the rulers:

- Whenever possible and necessary, citizens should be able to participate in decision-making in a democracy.
- Democracy ensures that decision-making is based on norms and procedures. A citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making. Thus democracy entails transparency.
- For a democracy to produce an accountable, responsive and legitimate government, it must ensure the following:
 - Regular, free and fair elections.
 - Open public debate on major policies and legislations.
 - Citizens' right to be informed about government policies.
 - A government free from corruption.

Question 11.

Analyse any three values that make democracy better. (2017 D)

Answer:

We feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form of government because:

- 1 Democracy promotes equality among citizens.
- 2 It enhances dignity of individual. It promotes dignity of women and strengthens the claims of the disadvantaged.
- 3 It improves the quality of decision making. There is transparency in a democracy.
- 4 It provides methods to resolve conflicts.
- 5 Democracy allows room to correct mistakes.

Question 12.

On the basis of which values will it be a fair expectation that democracy should produce a harmonious social life? Explain. (2017 OD)

Answer:

No society can fully and permanently resolve conflicts among different groups. But we can certainly learn to respect these differences and evolve a mechanism to negotiate the differences. Belgium is an example of how successfully differences were negotiated among ethnic groups. Therefore, democracy is best suited to accommodate various social divisions as it usually develops a procedure to conduct their competition. But the example of Sri Lanka shows how distrust between two communities turned into widespread conflict. Thus, a democracy must fulfil the following conditions and be based on these values in order to achieve a harmonious social life—

- 1 Majority and minority opinions are not permanent. Democracy is not simply rule by majority opinion. The majority needs to work with minority so that government may function to represent the general view.
- 2 Rule by majority does not become rule by majority community in terms of religion or race or linguistic groups, etc.
- 3 Democracy remains democracy so long as every citizen has a chance of being in majority at some point of time. No individual should be debarred from participating in a democracy on the basis of religion, caste, community, creed and other such factors.

Question 13.

Why do we feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form? Explain. 2015OD Answer: Democracy is a better form of government than any other form because:

- 1 It is based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation. Thus the necessary delay in implementation.
- 2 Decisions are acceptable to people and are more effective.
- 3 A citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making. There is transparency in a democracy.
- 4 Democratic government is a legitimate government, people's own government.
- 5 Ability to handle differences, decisions and conflicts is a positive point of democratic regimes.
- 6 Democracy has strengthened the claims of the disadvantaged and discriminated castes for equal status and equal opportunity.

Question 14.

Why do we feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form of government? Explain. (2012 OD)

Or

How do you feel that democracy is better than any other form of government? Explain. (2013 OD)

Or

“Democracy is more effective than its other alternatives.” Justify the statement. (2015 D)

Answer:

We feel that democracy is a better form of government than any other form of government because:

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- 2 It enhances dignity of individual. It promotes dignity of women and strengthens the claims of the disadvantaged.
- 3 It improves the quality of decision making. There is transparency in a democracy.
- 4 It provides methods to resolve conflicts.
- 5 Democracy allows room to correct mistakes.