

CHAPTER – 4

KEY ELEMENTS OF A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

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

Answer:

Maya's life would be different in South Africa today because:

- a. South Africa is an **independent nation** as the practice of apartheid is abolished today.
- b. Maya would have enjoyed **equal rights** before the law.
- c. She would have faced **no discrimination** on the basis of caste, color, creed and religion.
- d. She would have been given the **right to vote** and even **participate in the elections**.
- e. She is **free to learn any language**.

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

Answer:

Through voting in elections, people elect their leaders to represent them. The representatives take decisions on behalf of the people. All governments are elected for a fixed period. Besides voting there are other ways of participating in the process of government.

- (i) People participate by taking an interest in the working of the government and by **criticizing it** when required.

(ii) People express their views through **dharnas, rallies, strikes, signature campaigns** and make governments understand what action they should take.

(iii) Another way for people to participate is by organising themselves into **social movements** that seek to challenge the government and its functioning.

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

Answer:

Conflicts occur when people of different cultures, religions, regions or economic backgrounds do not get along with each other, or when some among them feel they are being discriminated against. Conflicts can lead to violence and deaths when one group decides that it has all the rights to prevent the other group from protesting.

The Indian Constitution lays down the basic rules or laws that have to be followed by everyone to resolve or prevent conflicts. During conflicts there is fear that violence may erupt with people throwing stones or trying to disrupt the procession. This is why we need the government to find solutions to many disputes or conflicts.

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

Answer:

One of the ideas of a democratic government is its commitment to equality and justice. Equality and justice are inseparable. Government should take the following actions to ensure that all people are treated equally.

- (i) The government should make special provisions for groups within the society that are unequal.
- (ii) Equality should be given to all the citizens irrespective of their caste, color, race, gender etc.
- (iii) The poor should be allowed to represent themselves before the law.
- (iv) The government should also take measures so that no one is denied education, transport or medical facilities.

Q. 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 are given below:

- a. Equal rights and opportunities to all the people
- b. Government should take accountability of its actions.
- c. Every community should be allowed representation in the society.
- d. No discrimination should be tolerable against people belonging to any minority community.
- e. Citizens should be allowed to express themselves and organize rallies and protest March etc.
- f. Citizens should be allowed to practice any religion as per their choice.