



## Grade 10 – Political Science

### NOTES ON - OUTCOMES AND CHALLENGES OF DEMOCRACY

#### CHAPTER - OUTCOMES OF DEMOCRACY

##### **Merits of democracy**

- ❖ Promotes equality among citizens;
- ❖ Enhances the dignity of the individual;
- ❖ Improves the quality of decision making;
- ❖ Provides a method to resolve conflicts; and
- ❖ Allows room to correct mistakes

##### **Common practices in democratic countries**

- Formal constitutions
- They hold elections
- They have parties
- They guarantee rights of citizens

While these features are common to most of them, these democracies are very much different from each other in terms of their social situations, their economic achievements and their cultures.

Democracy is to recognize that democracy is just a form of government. It can only create conditions for achieving something. The citizens have to take advantage of those conditions and achieve those goals

##### **A. Political Outcome - Accountable, responsive and legitimate government –**

###### **1. Accountable -**

###### Expected outcome -

- ★ Non-democratic governments take quick decisions as compared to democratic governments. But as due to deliberations and negotiations, the decisions of democratic government are acceptable to citizens
- ★ Democratic government follows rules and procedures
- ★ People have the rights and means to examine the process of decision making, as it is transparent. It develops mechanisms for citizens to take part in decision making whenever they think fit.

**Mechanism** - To measure democracies on the basis of this expected outcome– regular free and fair elections, public debate on major policies and legislation, citizens' right to information about the government

###### Actual performance –

- ❖ It has greater success in holding regular and free elections and setting up conditions for open public debate.
- ❖ But does not provide fair chance to everyone and in subjecting every decision to public debate..

- ❖ Democratic governments do not have a very good record when it comes to sharing information with citizens.
- ❖ But still compared to non-democracies they are better in this respect

## 2. **Responsive –**

Expected outcome - is attentive to the needs and demands of the people and is largely free of corruption.

Actual Performance –

- Democracies often frustrate the needs of the people and often ignore the demands of a majority of its population.
- They ignore the needs and demands of a majority of its population. They are corrupted also but even non democracies are not less corrupt

## 3. **Legitimate government**

Expected Outcome - Democratic government is people's own government.

Actual Performance –

- ♣ There is an overwhelming support for the idea of democracy all over the world. The accompanying evidence from South Asia shows, the support exists in countries with democratic regimes as well as countries without democratic regimes.
- ♣ People wish to be ruled by representatives elected by them.
- ♣ They also believe that democracy is suitable for their country.
- ♣ Democracy's ability to generate its own support is itself an outcome that cannot be ignored

## **B. Economic growth and development (Economic outcome)**

- ⊗ Dictatorships have slightly higher rate of economic growth
- ⊗ Economic development depends upon several other factors – population, global situation, cooperation from other countries, economic policies.
- ⊗ Differences in the rates of economic development between less developed countries with dictatorships and democracies are negligible.

**Conclusion** - Democracy is not a guarantee of economic development. But we can expect democracy not to lag behind dictatorships in this respect. When we find such significant difference in the rates of economic growth between countries under dictatorship and democracy, it is better to prefer democracy as it has several other positive outcomes

## **C. Reduction of inequality and poverty (Economic outcome)**

- ♣ Democracy is based on political equality. But along with this we can see economic inequality growing.
- ♣ A small number of ultra-rich enjoy a highly disproportionate share of wealth and incomes and their share in total income of the country is increasing..
- ♣ On the other hand the income of poor is declining. Sometimes they find it difficult to meet their basic needs of life, such as food, clothing, house, education and health.
- ♣ Though poor constitute a large proportion of voters, yet the democratic governments are not keen to take up the question of poverty
- ♣ The situation is much worse in some other countries.

## **D. Accommodation of social diversity (Social outcome)**

How democracy accommodate diversities

- # Democracies develop a procedure to conduct their competition which reduces tension among them
- # The social differences are respected in democracies and some mechanism is evolved to negotiate the differences

#### Conditions to achieve the above outcome

- Democracy is not just rule by majority but also takes minority's view. The majority always needs to work with the minority
- Rule by majority should not be rule by majority community in terms of religion or caste or linguistic group. Democracy allows every citizen to be in majority at some point of time

### **E. Dignity and freedom of the citizens**

Democracy respects all the individuals equally. The passion for respect and freedom are the basis of democracy

#### Instances

##### **Dignity of women –**

- π Long struggles against male dominated societies have created some sensitivity to respect and treat women equally.
- π It becomes easier for women now to wage a struggle against what is now unacceptable legally and morally.
- π In a non-democratic set up, this unacceptability would not have legal basis because the principle of individual freedom and dignity would not have the legal and moral force there.

##### **Caste discrimination –**

- π The claims of disadvantaged and discriminated castes for equal status and dignity have been strengthened.
- π Caste based inequalities are still practiced in our society but it lacks legal and moral foundations.
- π It is the recognition that makes ordinary citizens value their democratic right

##### **People's demand for more benefits –**

- π Most distinctive about democracy is that its examination never gets over. As democracy passes one test, it produces another test. As people get some benefits of democracy, they ask for more and want to make democracy even better
- π The fact that people are complaining is itself a testimony to the success of democracy. This shows people's awareness and ability to expect and look at power holders and high and mighty.
- π It shows the transformation of people from the status of subject into that of citizen.
- π The citizens believe that their votes make a difference to the way the government is run and to their own self interest.

## **CHAPTER - CHALLENGES OF DEMOCRACY**

### **A. Foundational challenge –**

1. This involves transition to democracy and then instituting democratic government.
2. This involves bringing down the existing non-democratic regimes, keeping military away from controlling government and establishing sovereign and functional state

### **B. Challenge of expansion –**

1. This involves applying basic principle of democratic government across all the regions, different social groups and various institutions.
2. Ensuring great power to local governments, extension of federal principle to all the units of the federation, inclusion of women and minority groups.
3. Less and less decisions should remain outside the arena of democratic control.
4. USA, India and other democracies face this challenge

### **C. Deepening of democracy -**

1. This involves strengthening of the institutions and practices of democracy that help people's participation and control.
2. This must happen in such a way that people will realize their expectations which differ from people to people.
3. It means strengthening those institutions that help people's participation and control.
4. This requires an attempt to bring down the control and influence of the rich and powerful people in making governmental decision.

### **Guidelines**

- ◆ Only legal-constitutional changes cannot overcome challenges.  
For eg – the rules of cricket . A change in rules for LBW decisions helped to reduce negative batting tactics. But the quality of cricket could be improved only through changes in rules but should be done mainly by the players, coaches and administrators.  
Similarly in politics the actual reform should be carried out by political activists, parties, movements and citizens.
- ◆ Any legal change must carefully look at what results it will have on politics. Generally laws that seek to ban something are not very successful in politics. Laws must empower the people to carry out reforms.  
For eg: The Right to Information Act - it empowers the people to find out what is happening in government and act as watchdogs of democracy. Such a law helps to control corruption and supplements the existing laws that banned corruption and imposed strict penalties
- ◆ Main focus of political reforms should be on ways to strengthen democratic practice. Quality of political participation must be increased and improved.
- ◆ Not only a good solution but who will implement and how, should also be considered. The political parties and MPs may not pass legislations which will go against them. In such cases democratic movements, citizen's organizations and media can be more successful.