

FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES

COURSE: B.A.LL.B. 1st Semester

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Lecture-8



Democracy: Definition

(1) Democracy, according to the Greeks, is the Government in which people rule over themselves. Aristotle considered it as a perverted form of government. Herodotus says, the democracy denotes that form of government in which the ruling power of the state is largely vested in the members of the community as a whole.

(2) In the words of President Abraham Lincoln, it is a government of the people, by the people and for the people.

(3) According to Bryce, "Democracy is that form of Government in which the ruling power of a state is legally vested, not in any particular class or classes but in the members of the community as a whole".

(4) "Democracy", writes Mazzini, "is the government of the best and wisest, for the progress of all and through all".

(5) Prof. Seeley says, "Democracy is a government in which everybody has a share".

(6) According to Dicey, "Democracy is a form of government in which the governing body is a comparatively large fraction of the entire nation".

(7) Professor A.B. Hall, in his work on "Popular Government", defines democracy as "popular government in the last analysis and for all practical purposes as being that form of political organisation in which public opinion has control".

(8) According to Gettell, "Democracy is that form of government in which the mass of the population possesses the right to share in the exercise of sovereign power"

However, all the definitions have been found to contain the following Elements:

1. Democracy is a form of government in which people's participation is of primary importance.

2. People may participate either directly or indirectly.

3. It is a form of government in which people have equal opportunity and this type of government is based on individual merit and no place of hereditary privilege is to be found in democracy.

4. Distribution of opportunities is adopted for reduction or removal of inequalities.

5. Democracy recognises that all the sections of the community will receive their due shares.
6. Interests of the minorities will be duly protected and state makes arrangements for that.
7. All the public offices and opportunities are opened to everyone and to fill the posts public examinations are held. There is also open competition on in which every eligible citizen has the right to participate.
8. It is a system of government which does not make any discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, sex, birth etc.
9. In democracy all must have the scope to govern or to be a member of government.
10. Rulers are to be accountable to the ruled and forms of accountability are many.
11. Rules are to be chosen by the ruled.
12. People shall have the right to decide who would rule them.

MCQ

1. Social difference arise due to difference in
 - (a) Race
 - (b) Religion
 - (c) Language
 - (d) All of the above
2. Which three elements show the basic unity in India?
 - (i) Cultural unity
 - (ii) Discrimination
 - (iii) Unity in language
 - (iv) Religious equality
 - (a) (i), (iii) and (iv)
 - (b) (i), (ii) and (iv)
 - (c) (i) and (iii) only
 - (d) (i) and (iv) only

3. Society is fairly homogenous i.e., there are no significant ethnic difference in

- (a) Germany
- (b) Belgium
- (c) Sri Lanka
- (d) China

4. To show his support to the protesting. American athletes during the award ceremony of Mexico Olympics, Peter Norman

- (a) wore no socks
- (b) wore a human right badge
- (c) wore a black scarf
- (d) wore a string of beads

5. A society that has similar kinds of people, especially where there are no significant ethnic differences is called a

- (a) Secular society
- (b) Communal society
- (c) Homogenous society
- (d) Socially divided