

Democracy

DEFINITION OF DEMOCRACY:

Democracy is a form of government, where people participate in the decision-making process directly or indirectly. In case of indirect participation, they select their representatives, who take decision on people's behalf. It can be further explained as a governmental process where the government is elected by the people with majority and the highest power resides in the people of the nation.

It is also important to highlight here that democracy stands opposite to other kinds of governments such as monarchy or power enjoyed by one or a few. It is also a fact that in today's world, democracy is mixed with monarchic and oligarchic characteristics.

Occasionally, democracy is used as a part of liberal democracy or representative democracy, which includes political pluralism, right to fight elections, equality before law, due process of law, human rights, civil rights, and so on.

TYPES OF DEMOCRACY:

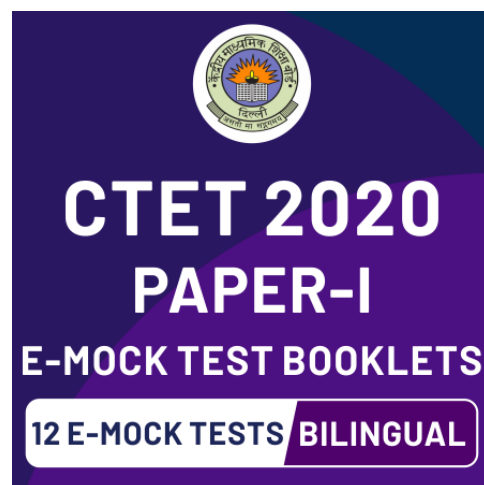
It is important to keep in mind that all forms of democracy are completely different and exclusive from another; rather they share different characteristic under a larger umbrella called democracy. It is very clear that the two forms of democracy—direct democracy and representative democracy, also known as indirect democracy—work behind all other kinds of democracy.

1. Direct Democracy

A political system where every person participates in decision-making personally is known as direct democracy. The Athenian democracy can be considered one of the examples of direct democracy. In direct democracy, people have voting rights for many decisions such as constitutional changes, reforms, laws, change in rights, and so on. There are still few ways used and can be called a part of direct democracy. These include initiatives taken by citizens, referendum, recall, etc.

2. Representative Democracy

Representative democracy is a form of government where representatives are elected by the people. In India, we have representative democracy. Along with this, it is also a republic as it has the elected head of the state and not the nominated head as in Britain. This means that it is not necessary that democracy will always come with a republic system. These representatives are elected and represent a specific constituency or area. Even after declaring one representative democracy, it carries some feature of direct democracy such as referendum, and so on.



3. Parliamentary Democracy

Parliamentary democracy is a form of representative democracy and can be appointed and dismissed; it is different from the presidential system. The power of the government is used by an executive body, which itself is subject to continuous review. The Legislature keeps a check on the work of the executive body. In a parliamentary system, the Prime Minister can be removed from his/her office by the Parliament on proving that the Prime Minister is not discharging his/her duties appropriately. This is done with a 'No Confidence' motion in the legislature through vote. This decision will be taken with majority. There must be a loyal opposition in every parliamentary democracy. The political party who gets the second highest vote will sit in opposition.

4. Presidential Democracy

A democratic system where the President is the head of the state and elected through fair election is known as a presidential democracy. The President is also the head of all the executive powers. The President can be on his/her post for a fixed period of time and the election will also be conducted on a pre-decided date. Cabinet ministers are also appointed by the President. It is important to know that the President is a very powerful person and cannot be easily removed from his/her position. Similarly, the President also cannot easily remove the members of the Parliament. Here, one controls the others.

5. Other kinds of Democracy

Today, it is difficult to simply label any governing system as purely democratic, as there are various aspects that work together to run a system. These combined forms are called hybrid democracies such as governing system of Switzerland. Inclusive democracy is another kind of democracy which argues to incorporate democracy in the dimension of life and not only in political processes. Such democracy will work towards a more liberal and egalitarian society.

Today, in the globalised world, the idea of cosmopolitan democracy is advocated by many political theorists. It is also known as global or world democracy.

TEACHERS

