

CBSE CLASS 9 SOCIAL SCIENCE

Democratic Politics – I (Political Science)

CHAPTER 1: WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY?

ULTIMATE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS BANK WITH MODEL ANSWERS

Comprehensive Question Bank Aligned with the Latest NCERT Textbooks & CBSE Syllabi



HIGH-VALUE DELIVERABLES INSIDE THIS EDITION:

- **Exhaustive Question Indices:** Structured 1-Mark, comprehensive 3-Mark, and high-yield 5-Mark long-form evaluative answers.
- **NCERT Landmark Case Critiques:** Explicit situational analysis of Pakistan (Musharraf), China (PRC), Mexico (PRI), Saudi Arabia, Estonia, Fiji, and Zimbabwe (ZANU-PF).
- **Advanced Competency Testing:** Interactive source extracts, situation logic scenarios, and robust Assertion-Reason matrices.
- **Correction Architecture:** Specialized callouts targeted to eliminate systemic student errors regarding absolute definitions versus functional practices.

SECTION 1: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Q1. What are the four defining features of a democracy as described in the NCERT textbook?

FREQUENTLY REPEATED

A democratic government is characterized by four distinct structural features that differentiate it from other political frameworks:

- 1. Major Decisions by Elected Leaders:** Final decision-making authority must rest entirely with representatives elected by the citizens. (e.g., Contradicted by General Musharraf's Legal Framework Order in Pakistan).
- 2. Free and Fair Electoral Competition:** Elections must offer a real choice between competing political entities, and those currently in power must have a fair chance of losing. (e.g., Contradicted by China's one-party system and Mexico's institutional manipulations under the PRI).
- 3. One Person, One Vote, One Value:** Every adult citizen must have exactly one vote, and every vote must carry the same mathematical weight in determining the outcome. (e.g., Contradicted by voting rules in Estonia, Saudi Arabia, and Fiji).
- 4. Rule of Law and Respect for Rights:** The government must operate within strict limits set by a constitutional framework and safeguard the fundamental legal rights of its citizens. (e.g., Contradicted by Zimbabwe's governance under Robert Mugabe).



EXAM BOOSTER: CORE DEFINITIONAL DISTINCTION

The Minimal Definition: Democracy is a form of government in which the rulers are elected by the people. However, this is just a starting point. To score full marks, you must show how a nation can hold regular elections but still fail to function as a true democracy if it violates any of the four defining features listed above.

Q2. Critically evaluate the primary arguments against democracy (demerits) and the major arguments in favor of democracy (merits). ANNUAL EXAM CLASSIC

Political theorists evaluate democracy by looking at both its systemic challenges and its institutional strengths:

Arguments Against Democracy (Demerits):

- **Political Instability:** Because leaders change frequently through regular elections, long-term policy continuity can be disrupted.
- **Delays in Decision-Making:** The democratic process requires extensive consultation across ministries and assemblies, which can delay urgent policy decisions.
- **Risk of Corruption:** Because democracy is built on electoral competition, parties may engage in corrupt practices or use money and muscle power to secure votes.
- **Bad Decisions:** Elected representatives may not always understand the best interests of their voters, leading to poor policy choices.

Arguments In Favor of Democracy (Merits):

- **Accountability:** A democratic government is more accountable to its citizens. (e.g., Demonstrated by the 1958–1961 famine, where India's democratic system and free press helped it respond better than China's one-party system).
- **Better Quality Decisions:** Open discussion and consultation help identify flaws in proposed laws before they are passed, improving the overall quality of decision-making.
- **Enhancing Human Dignity:** Democracy is built on political equality, ensuring that all citizens—regardless of wealth, education, or status—enjoy the same political rights.
- **Correcting Mistakes:** The democratic framework allows for open public debate on government policies, offering an explicit space for the state or voters to correct policy errors.

SECTION 2: PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION COLLECTION

Q3. Why are the elections held in China not considered a fair example of democratic competition? Explain with NCERT case details.

CBSE PAST YEAR FOCUS

Elections in China (National People's Congress / *Quanguo Renmin Daibiao Dahui*) fail to meet the standards of a true democracy due to several institutional restrictions:

- **Lack of Real Choice:** While elections are held regularly every five years to choose the parliament, voters are not offered a genuine political choice.
- **Control by the CCP:** Anyone wishing to stand for election must secure official approval from the **Chinese Communist Party (CCP)** or eight small allied parties.
- **Guaranteed Power:** Because opposition parties are not allowed to compete freely, the government is always formed by the Communist Party, violating the democratic principle that those in power must face a fair chance of losing.

SECTION 3: VERY SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (1 MARK)

Q4. State Abraham Lincoln's famous definition of democracy.

Democracy is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Q5. Which political party ruled Mexico continuously from 1929 to 2000?

The PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party / *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*).

Q6. What was the 'Legal Framework Order' issued by General Pervez Musharraf in August 2002?

An executive decree that amended the Constitution of Pakistan, giving the President the power to dissolve national and provincial assemblies at will.

Q7. Identify the political party that led Zimbabwe's liberation struggle and ruled the country after independence.

ZANU-PF (Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front).

Q8. How does Estonia discriminate against its ethnic Russian minority regarding voting rights?

Estonia's citizenship rules make it difficult for members of its ethnic Russian minority to obtain the right to vote.

Q9. Explain the democratic flaw in Fiji's electoral system.

The electoral system is structured so that the vote of an indigenous Fijian carries more mathematical weight than the vote of an Indian-Fijian.

Q10. Define the principle of 'Universal Adult Franchise'.

The right of all adult citizens, regardless of wealth, gender, race, or social status, to vote in elections.

Q11. Name a country where women did not have the right to vote until 2015.

Saudi Arabia.

Q12. What is a 'Coalition Government'?

A government formed by an alliance of multiple political parties when no single party wins an absolute majority in an election.

Q13. Define a 'Referendum'.

A direct vote in which an entire electorate is invited to accept or reject a specific legislative proposal or constitutional change.

SECTION 4: SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (2–3 MARKS)

Q14. Explain how the PRI maintained its political monopoly in Mexico until 2000. What unfair tactics did it use?

The PRI used several manipulative tactics to ensure it won every election:

- **Coercing Civil Servants:** All government employees were required to attend party political meetings.
- **Using Schools for Propaganda:** Teachers in government schools were pressured to instruct parents to vote exclusively for the PRI.
- **Media Manipulation:** The media largely ignored opposition parties, criticizing them while giving positive coverage only to the ruling party. Polling booths were also moved at the last minute to disrupt voting in opposition strongholds.

Q15. Why is the 'Rule of Law' considered essential for a government to be recognized as truly democratic?

The 'Rule of Law' means that laws apply equally to all citizens, including the rulers, and that no individual is above the law. In a democracy, this ensures that the government cannot act arbitrarily. Rulers must operate within limits set by the constitution and protect the rights of citizens, such as freedom of speech and assembly. This framework prevents a majority winner from turning into an absolute autocracy.



KEY PRINCIPLE COMPARISON

- **Direct Democracy:** Citizens participate directly in day-to-day state decision-making (e.g., Gram Sabhas or Swiss cantons).
- **Representative Democracy:** Citizens elect representatives who vote on laws and manage governance on their behalf (the standard model in modern nations).

SECTION 5: LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS (5 MARKS)

Q16. Using the historical case study of Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe, analyze how a government can enjoy popular electoral support but still be fundamentally undemocratic.

The case of Zimbabwe demonstrates that winning regular elections is not enough for a government to be considered truly democratic if it undermines constitutional principles:

1. **Undermining Constitutional Protections:** After winning independence in 1980, President Robert Mugabe was popular but increasingly used authoritarian methods. His government amended the constitution multiple times to increase his presidential powers and minimize accountability.
2. **Harassment of the Opposition:** Opposition party workers were regularly harassed, and their political meetings were disrupted by state security forces or ruling party loyalists.
3. **Suppression of Public Dissent:** Public demonstrations, strikes, and protests against government policies were declared illegal. The state also passed laws restricting freedom of speech, criminalizing criticism of the President.
4. **State Censorship of Media:** The government controlled national television and radio networks, broadcasting only state propaganda. Independent journalists who reported on corruption or bad policies were harassed and imprisoned.
5. **Attacking Judicial Independence:** The executive branch ignored court rulings that went against the government, putting pressure on judges to rule in favor of the state and breaking down the rule of law.

SECTION 6: CASE-BASED QUESTIONS

SOURCE TEXT: GENERAL MUSHARRAF'S COUP AND THE EXECUTIVE SUPREMACY

"In Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf led a military coup in October 1999. He overthrew a democratically elected government and declared himself the 'Chief Executive' of the country. Later he changed his designation to President and in 2002 held a referendum in the country that granted him a five-year extension. Pakistani media, human rights organisations and democracy activists said that the referendum was based on malpractices and fraud. In August 2002 he issued a 'Legal Framework Order' that amended the Constitution of Pakistan. According to this Order, the President can dissolve the national and provincial assemblies."

Q17. Based on the source text, answer the following questions:

(i) How did General Musharraf gain executive control of Pakistan in October 1999?

He led a military coup that overthrew the legally elected civilian government, taking power by force and appointing himself Chief Executive before transitioning to the Presidency.

(ii) Why did Pakistan fail to qualify as a true democracy even after holding elections for national and provincial assemblies?

Although assemblies were elected, the ****Legal Framework Order**** ensured that final decision-making power rested with General Musharraf and his military council, rather than the elected representatives. This violated the democratic rule that final authority must belong to those chosen by the voters.

SECTION 7: ASSERTION AND REASON QUESTIONS

STANDARD EVALUATION DIRECTIONS

Evaluate the statements and select the correct option:

- A:** Both Assertion and Reason are true, and Reason is the correct explanation of Assertion.
- B:** Both Assertion and Reason are true, but Reason is not the correct explanation of Assertion.
- C:** Assertion is true, but Reason is false.
- D:** Assertion is false, but Reason is true.

Q18. Assertion (A): Democracy improves the overall quality of political and administrative decision-making over time.

Reason (R): Democratic decision-making involves open consultation, public debate, and multiple meetings, which helps identify and fix errors before laws are finalized.

Answer: A

Explanation: Both statements are true, and the reason correctly explains that the democratic process of consultation and debate helps reduce the risk of rash or irresponsible decisions, improving overall policy quality.

SECTION 8: COMPETENCY-BASED QUESTIONS

Q19. Why did the severe famine that struck China between 1958 and 1961 result in far higher casualties than India's economic challenges during the same period? Analyze the institutional reasons.

Economists point to differences in the political systems of the two countries to explain the variation in how they responded to food shortages:

- **India's Democratic Response:** India's multi-party system, regular elections, and free press forced the government to respond quickly to food scarcity. The state prioritized relief programs because accountability to voters made it politically necessary to prevent starvation.
- **China's Monopolistic System:** China operated under a one-party communist system with no opposition parties and a state-controlled press. Because the government did not face criticism or the risk of losing elections, officials could ignore warnings or hide policy failures. This lack of accountability delayed relief efforts, leading to millions of deaths.

SECTION 9: SOURCE AND SITUATION-BASED QUESTIONS

Q20. Imagine a country where a single popular leader wins every election because the government controls all television and radio channels, while the police systematically disrupt opposition rallies. Is this country a true democracy? Explain using democratic principles.

No, this country is not a true democracy because it violates the principle of **free and fair electoral competition**. For an election to be democratic, opposition parties must have the freedom to campaign, hold rallies, and communicate with voters through an independent press. When the ruling party uses state resources, controls the media, and deploys the police to suppress rivals, voters are denied a genuine choice, and the election fails to meet democratic standards.

SECTION 10: MOST IMPORTANT EXAM QUESTIONS

★ **HIGHEST PROBABILITY QUESTION:** Explain how the broader understanding of democracy goes beyond a basic form of government to function as a core method for decision-making in daily life.

The broader understanding of democracy views it as a decision-making principle that can be applied to any area of life, not just state governance:

- **The Democratic Principle:** A democratic decision involves consulting with and securing the consent of everyone affected by that decision. It rejects arbitrary choices made by a single person in authority.
- **Application to Daily Life:** This principle can apply to a family, where decisions are made through open discussion rather than by one parent alone, or to a school classroom or business organization.
- **An Ideal Standard:** This broader view sets an ideal standard. It reminds us that a true democracy is an ongoing process that requires active citizen participation, protection of civil rights, and a commitment to equality in all parts of society.

SECTION 11: CHAPTER QUICK REVISION

INSTANT REVISION SUMMARIES

- **Democracy:** A form of government where rulers are elected by citizens through free and fair competition.
- **The PRI:** The political party that controlled Mexican governance for decades through media manipulation and administrative pressure.
- **Legal Framework Order (2002):** Decreed by General Musharraf to establish military control over Pakistan's elected assemblies.
- **ZANU-PF:** The dominant party in Zimbabwe that used state resources and censorship to suppress political opposition.

SECTION 12: COMMON MISTAKES STUDENTS MAKE

COMMON EXAM ERRORS TO AVOID:

1. **Assuming Elections Equal Democracy:** Students often assume that any country holding regular elections is automatically a democracy. Remember that nations like China, Mexico under the PRI, and Zimbabwe under Mugabe held regular elections but failed to function as true democracies due to manipulation and a lack of genuine choice.
2. **Misunderstanding the Core Concept of Accountability:** When explaining why India handled the 1958-1961 food shortages better than China, clearly connect it to *institutional accountability*. Avoid focusing only on weather differences; explain that India's multi-party system and free press forced its leaders to act quickly to help voters.

SECTION 13: LAST-MINUTE REVISION SHEET

THE ULTIMATE DEMOCRACY CHEAT SHEET

Core Structural Rule: Rulers elected by the people must have the final authority to make decisions. If power rests with an unelected military council or foreign controllers, the system is not a democracy.

The Electoral Rule: Elections must offer a real choice between competing parties, providing those currently in power with a genuine chance of losing if voters choose alternatives.