



NOTES

SOCIAL SCIENCE

(POLITICAL SCIENCE)

**WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY
DEMOCRACY?**



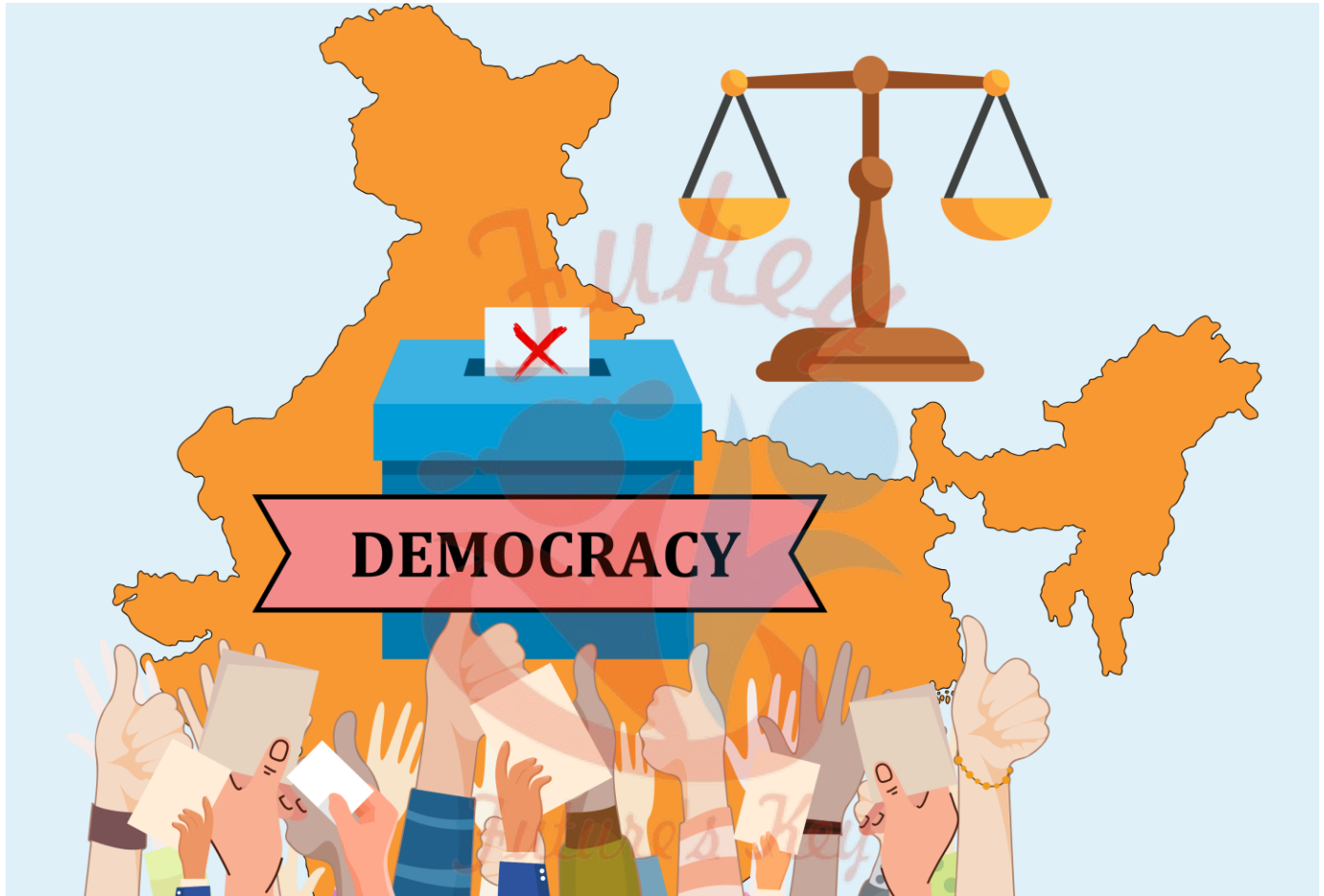
**REVISION NOTES
CHAPTERWISE &
TOPICWISE**

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY**INDEX****Chapter 1: What is Democracy? Why Democracy****Concepts Covered:**

- 1. What is Democracy**
 - Definition
 - Points to Remember
 - 2. Features of Democracy**
 - Major decision by elected leaders
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 - Case study of China
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 - One person, One vote, One value
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 - 4. Broader meaning of Democracy**
 - Reasons for having representative democracy
 - Democracy as an organisation other than the government.
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 - 5. Conclusion and Way Forward**
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(Colourful & Interactive/ Complete All Concept Covered)
- Practice Questions (All Topics Available)**

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY**WHAT IS DEMOCRACY****WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?****Definition**

“DEMOCRACY is a form of government in which the rulers are elected by the people.”

**Points to Remember**

- It reminds us that democracy is people's rule.
- But if we use this definition in an unthinking manner, we will end up calling almost every government that holds an election a democracy.
- We need to carefully distinguish between a government that is a democracy and one that pretends to be one.
- We can do so by understanding each word in this definition carefully and spelling out the features of a democratic government.



WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY

FEATURES OF DEMOCRACY

FEATURES OF DEMOCRACY

Major decision by elected leaders

1. Case study of Pakistan

In October 1999, Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf Lead a military coup.

- He overthrew a democratically elected government and declared himself 'the chief executive' of the country.
- Later he changed his resignation to President and in 2002 held a referendum in the country that granted him a five-year extension.
- There was Protest against referendum.
- Later on, Legal framework order, 2002 Amended the Constitution of Pakistan.
- According to this Order, the President can dismiss the national and provincial assemblies.
- The work of the civilian cabinet is supervised by a National Security Council which is dominated by military officers.
- Elections were held in Pakistan, but the final power rested with military officers and General Musharraf himself.

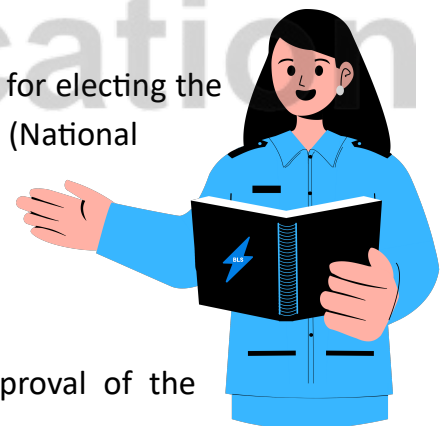


In a democracy the final decision-making power must rest with those elected by the people

Free and Fair Electoral Competition

1. Case study of China

- In China elections are regularly held after every five years for electing the country's parliament. Quanguo Renmin Daibiao Dahui (National People's Congress)
- The National People's Congress has the power to appoint the President of the country.
- It has nearly 3,000 members elected from all over China.
- Before contesting elections, a candidate needs the approval of the Chinese Communist Party.
- Only those who are members of the Chinese Communist Party, or eight smaller parties allied to it were allowed to contest elections held in 2002-03.
- The government is always formed by the Communist Party.



WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY

FEATURES OF DEMOCRACY

2. Case study of Mexico

- Since its independence in 1930, Mexico holds elections after every six years to elect its President.
- The country has never been under a military or dictator's rule.
- But until 2000 every election was won by a party called PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party).
- The PRI was known to use many dirty tricks to win elections.

China's case

Mexico's case

A democracy must be based on a free and fair election where those currently in power have a fair chance of losing.

One person, One vote, One value

1. Case study of Saudi Arabia, Fiji, and Estonia



- This principle has now come to be accepted almost all over the world. Yet there are many instances of denial of equal right to vote.
- Until 2015, in Saudi Arabia women did not have the right to vote.
- Estonia has made its citizenship rules in such a way that people belonging to Russian minority find it difficult to get the right to vote.
- In Fiji, the electoral system is such that the vote of an indigenous Fiji has more value than that of an Indian Fijian.
- Democracy is based on a fundamental principle of political equality.

In a democracy, each adult citizen must have one vote and each vote must have one value.

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY

FEATURES OF DEMOCRACY

Rule of Law and Respect for rights

1. Case study of Zimbabwe

- Zimbabwe attained independence from White minority rule in 1980.
- ZANU-PF, the party that led the freedom struggle. Its leader, Robert Mugabe, ruled the country since independence.
- Elections were held regularly and always won by ZANU-PF.
- His government changed the constitution several times to increase the powers of the President and make him less accountable.
- Opposition party workers were harassed, and their meeting disrupted.
- Public protests and demonstrations against the government were declared illegal.
- Television and radio were controlled by the government and gave only the ruling party's version.
- The government ignored some court judgments that went against it and pressurised judges. Robert Mugabe was forced out of office in 2017.



The Example of Zimbabwe

- Popular governments can be undemocratic.
- Popular leaders can be autocratic.
- It is important to look at the elections. But it is equally important to look before and after the elections.

A democratic government rules within limits set by constitutional law and citizens' rights.

Features of Democracy: Summary

- Democracy is a form of government in which the rulers are elected by the people."
- Rulers elected by the people take all the major decisions.
- Elections offer a choice and fair opportunity to the people to change the current rulers.
- This choice and opportunity are available to all the people on an equal basis.
- The exercise of this choice leads to a government limited by basic rules of the constitution and citizens' rights.



WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY**WHY DEMOCRACY****WHY DEMOCRACY****Demerits of Democracy**

- Leaders keep changing in a democracy. This leads to instability.
- Democracy is all about political competition and power play. There is no scope for morality.
- So many people have to be consulted in a democracy that it leads to delays.
- Elected leaders do not know the best interest of the people. It leads to bad decisions.
- Democracy leads to corruption for it is based on electoral competition.
- Ordinary people don't know what is good for them, they should not decide anything.
- The democracy may not be the ideal form of government, but the question we face in the real life is different.

**Merits of Democracy**

- A democratic government is a better government because it is a more accountable form of government.
- Democracy improves the quality of decision-making.
- Democracy provides a method to deal with differences and conflicts.
- Democracy enhances the dignity of citizens.
- Democracy is better than other forms of government because it allows us to correct its own mistakes.



WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY

BROADER MEANING OF DEMOCRACY

BROADER MEANING OF DEMOCRACY

Reasons for having representative democracy

- Modern democracies involve such a large number of people that it is physically impossible for them to sit together and take a collective decision.
- Even if they could, the citizen does not have the time, the desire, or the skills to take part in all the decisions.
- Therefore, representative democracy is ideal in such conditions.



Democracy as an organisation other than the government

- A democratic decision involves consultation with and consent of all those who are affected by that decision.
- This can apply to a government or a family or any other organisation.
- Thus, democracy is also a principle that can be applied to any sphere of life.

Democracy as an Ideal standard

- "True democracy will come to this country only when no one goes hungry to bed."
- It enables us to judge an existing democracy and identify its weaknesses.
- It helps us to distinguish between a minimal democracy and a good democracy.

Celebrity

Housewife

Consultant

Government
OfficerMedia
Person

Unemployed

Engineer



WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY**CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD****CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD****No country Is a perfect Democracy**

- Democracy provides only the minimum conditions.
- It requires a constant effort to save and strengthen democratic forms of decision-making.
- Citizens can make a difference to making our country more or less democratic.
- The fate of the country depends not just on what the rulers do, but mainly on what we, as citizens, do.
- This is what distinguishes democracy from other forms of governments.



Fukey Education

01

What is Democracy? Why Democracy?

MIND MAP

