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Institutional Representation of Democracy

Lesson Plan

Contents

- ▶ An overview of institutions through which democracy is represented
- ▶ Understanding the manner in which democracy becomes operational

Objectives

- ▶ To understand the instruments of democracy – the institutions and their role
- ▶ To learn about the manner in which the instruments are operated
- ▶ To know about the functioning of democracy in India
- ▶ To appreciate the vast and complicated network that functions to ensure the running of the democratic process in India

Teacher's Aids

- ▶ Globe
- ▶ Pictures, charts, atlas and a political wall map of India
- ▶ Blackboard
- ▶ Internet

Tips for Teacher

- ▶ Explain the network of regulations, institutions and activities that go into the running of a dynamic democracy in a large and diverse country like India.
- ▶ Students should be encouraged to know institutions, concepts, places, locations and their placement on the maps.

Background and Reading

- ▶ Read the lesson aloud and explain, sharing the aids, etc., pausing to examine and explain the data in the boxes.
- ▶ Particularly focus on the significance of an active and dynamic democracy being implemented across a country like India.

Universal Adult Franchise in India

- ▶ 19th century–struggle for democracy centred on political equality and the demand for the right of every adult citizen to vote–many countries did not give everyone right to vote–there were conditions–property, education, etc.–women given right to vote in USA in 1920 and in Britain in 1928.
- ▶ India–largest democracy in the world–all adults given right to vote under Constitution enforced in 1950–universal adult franchise regardless of caste, creed, gender, religion.

The Age for Voting

- ▶ Universal Adult Franchise means all adults of age 18 and above can vote–principle of one man, one vote–while electing a representative for the government–process called election.

Elections in India

- ▶ Through elections–citizens elect members of parliament and state legislatures.

Types of Elections

- ▶ Country divided into constituencies–Lok Sabha elections for the parliament–Assembly elections for the state and Panchayat/Municipal elections at the village/city level.

How is an Election Conducted

- ▶ Elections supervised by the Election Commission–independent body headed by an Election Commissioner–he announces date of election and organises smooth conduct of it.
- ▶ Commission prepares a voter’s list–names of all adult citizens in the country.
- ▶ A Photo Identity Card–introduced by Commission–to be produced at polling booth by each citizen.
- ▶ Parties choose their candidates–each one files nomination papers–sent for scrutiny–then candidate given an opportunity to withdraw if he/she wants.
- ▶ Each candidate represents a party–represented by a symbol.
- ▶ Candidates and their parties begin to campaign–persuading voters to vote for them–hold public meetings, explain to public their principles, ideals, and promises–in the election manifesto–party’s commitments on national and international issues.
- ▶ Campaign stops 48 hours before polling starts–polling booths kept in venues chosen for election–voters use their right to vote by casting votes through a secret ballot system–now electronic voting machines used.
- ▶ After election–votes secured by each candidate counted–candidate with maximum votes declared elected–party with the maximum number of victorious candidates forms government in the Lok Sabha or the State Assemblies.

The Role of a Political Party in a Democratic State

- ▶ Significant role—organised group of people having a common goal—contest elections through their representatives.
- ▶ Party with maximum number of elected candidates forms the government—other parties for the opposition, which is equally important in a democratic system—it raises public opinion and safeguards the rights of citizens by keeping a watch on the ruling party—it is described as the alternate government.

The Party System in Democracy

- ▶ One Party System—Chinese Communist Party—some parties allied to it.
- ▶ Two Party System—USA: Democratic and Republican—easy to vote and usually the party lasts the term—biparty scheme.
- ▶ Multiparty System—India—national parties like the Bharatiya Janata Party, Indian National Congress, the Communist Party; regional parties like Bahujan Samajwadi Party, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Asom Gana Parishad, All India Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, etc.—each has a symbol.

Coalition Government

- ▶ Formed by two or more political parties—2019 National Democratic Alliance formed under leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi—NDA defeated the United Progressive Alliance [UPA], its predecessor which was also a coalition with Congress as the largest member.

Advantages

- ▶ Reflects public opinion better—representatives from different parties have different strategies.
- ▶ Avoids politics of confrontation—create a consensus.
- ▶ Coalition saves country from going through elections all over again.

Disadvantages

- ▶ May lead to conflict between allies with different views.
- ▶ Conflict can delay implementation of policies.
- ▶ Minor parties may try to gain importance in return for their support.
- ▶ Ideologically opposing parties may have conflict—may withdraw causing fall of government.

Role of Citizens in Democracy

- ▶ Participation necessary for democracy to succeed—citizens must recognise their role and perform—also respect the law and order of the nation—right and duty of every citizen to elect a suitable representative—listen carefully and understand the views and aims of the representatives and the parties—reject violence—express their opinion—stand united and play their role in nation's progress.

Oral Assignment

- A. Ask for answers at random from the students. Confirm the right answers. Let them write down the correct answers if they like in their books.

Written Assignment

- B–F. The teacher has two options—(i) Either do these exercises orally first and then ask the students to write them down. OR (ii) Ask the students to write the answers on their own. Then the teacher can announce the correct answers from the students and they can ask their partners to cross-check them.

In either case, the answers can be written as homework and the teacher can check them in the class.

Think Tank

- G. **HOTS questions:** Discuss the three questions in the class and let the students write the answers to G and H as homework. Teacher should assess individual work.