CHAPTER 9

THEME-D : GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY

Government and its Different Forms

'A ruler's duties in the internal administration of the country are three-fold: raksha (protection of the state from external aggression), pålana (maintenance of law and order within the state), and yogakshema (safeguarding the welfare of the people).

- Kautilya in Arthashastra



Learning Objectives

To know about :

1. *Introduction to Government*
2. *Different types of Government*
3. *Source of power for the Government*
4. *Introduction of country's Government with the people*
5. *Role of democracy*

What is a Government?

Every country or state needs a group of people to make rules or laws which everyone obeys. This group of people or the agency which runs the country and takes decisions for the country is known as **government**. Without a government, there will be total chaos and disorder.

The word government is taken from a Latin word 'gubernare' meaning 'to guide' or 'to rule'. A government makes policies and legislations applicable to all citizens of the nation and ensures implementation of all laws of land, so that the country can run smoothly. It ensures basic rights of its people, provides security to its people and defends the country against foreign aggression or enemies within the country.

Law and Government

A government not only makes laws, it also enforces laws. It can take action against those who break the rules and can punish them. There is a law that people riding a scooter or motorcycle must wear a helmet. If anyone is found not wearing a helmet, he/she would be fined. Without these punishments, the government's power to make laws is not of much use. For example, if a thief is not caught and punished, he/she will continue to do so.

Activity

Why do you think it is important that people should follow a law?

Think of an example of a law made for protection of children.

FUNCTIONS OF A GOVERNMENT


Roads


Railway


Defence


Health


Disaster Management


Traffic Police


Justice


Education



Post & Telegraph



Banking

It is not just the government; people can also take action if they feel that a particular law is not being followed. For example, if a person feels that he/she did not get admission in a school because of his/her caste or religion, he or she may approach the court. The court can then take action to see that the law is followed.

The creation of rules is called the **legislative function;** these rules serve as the framework for running the country. The implementation of these rules and the administration of the country according to them is known as the **executive function.** Finally, ensuring that the rules are followed is referred to as the **judicial function.**

Functions of Government



Other Functions of The Government

Apart from those shown in the picture on the previous page, there are many other functions performed by the Government.

1. Defence : It defends the country against foreign aggression by maintaining defence forces like army, navy and air force. It protects the territory of a country, so that people can feel secure.

2. Fundamental Rights : It protects the Fundamental Rights of its citizens.

3. Financial functions : It collects taxes. It controls the **prices** of essential goods like food grains, medicines, commodities like onion etc. and keeps them in check so that public does not face hardships. It also decides where the public money should be spent.

4. Administrative functions : It looks after the infrastructure like roads, highways, ports, buildings etc. and provides public services like education, postal services, railways, electricity, clean environment etc.

5. Welfare functions : It looks after the interests of people of weaker sections of society. It takes steps to remove poverty, child labour and so on. It is responsible for ensuring that all its citizens have enough to eat and have good health facilities.

6. Relief : It provides relief measures in case of floods and earthquakes and other natural calamities. When there are natural disasters like the tsunami, floods or an earthquake, it is the government that provides relief operations and organizes aid in the form of food, clothing and medicines for the affected people.

7. Maintains relations with other countries : Government maintains diplomatic, commercial and cultural relations with other countries in the world.

Base of Different Types of Government

Form of government refers to the system by which a government is run. There are different form of Government existing in various countries of the world and their base of formation, working and objectives is different.

1. Source of authority : This is the most basic element of the type of Government. The government may get its authority from different sources-

- Some rich or influential people
- All the citizens
- The religious leaders
- The Army

For example, in a democracy like India, it is the people of the country who decide and are the source of authority, while in a theocracy, the source of authority is religious beliefs and the head of a religious institution.

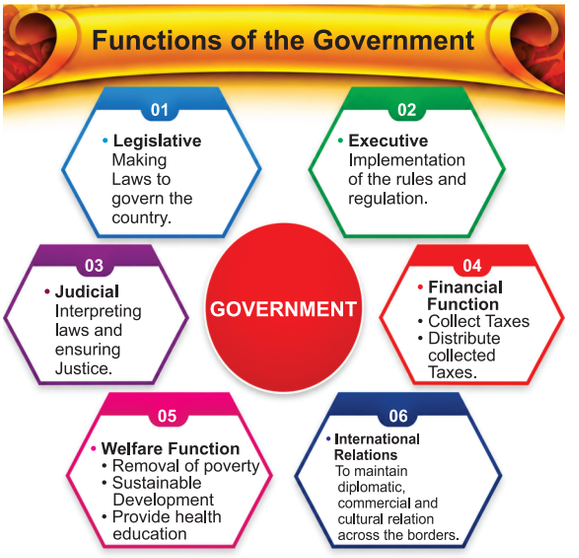


Fig. 9.3.

2. Formation of the Government : There are different ways through which a government can be formed. In a democracy, a government is formed through elections whereas in kingdoms which have kings or queens, usually someone from within the family continues to rule and

decide how the government will be set up. There are other ways of forming a government, and even in democracies there can be different kinds of elections.



Think about it!

Imagine if there was no government- what would be the consequences? There would be an anarchy and lawlessness. People would be fighting over food, water, land and other things. We would be living in a world where there is no security of life and property and fundamental rights are not guaranteed.
Country would be ruled by mobs of unruly people and there would be no defence against foreign invasion.

3. Different parts of the Government and their functions : Any government has many parts and systems, and these vary across different types of government. For example, the three functions of government referred to earlier — legislative, executive, and judiciary — can be performed by totally independent bodies or by the same body. Under democracy, the system to decide how the government will work is usually written down in a book of fundamental rules of the country, called the **'constitution' whereas under monarchies** the king or queen decide or take decisions.

4. Ultimate goal of the Government : Another point which decides the type of government is values and ideals for which the government is working for. Most of the democracies like the government of India are designed to work towards equality and prosperity for all, while some other governments may be designed only for the prosperity of some families or groups.

Different Types of Government

There are differences between different forms of government based on these four major aspects, but there could be other kind of differences. So, let us now look at some types or forms of government.

Dictatorship

A dictatorship is a form of government headed by a dictator or a military ruler who has absolute power.

- In this form of government, a person or a group of persons declare themselves as rulers.
- It is the **arbitrary rule** of a single person. There are no free and fair **elections**, and people have no say in choosing who governs the country.
- Some of the examples of dictators are Hitler in Germany and Castro in Cuba.



Activity

Find out and write the names of countries having dictatorship and also mention the names of their dictators.

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_____

NEW WORDS

Election : An election is a formal group decision making process whereby a population chooses an individual or multiple individuals to hold public office.

Arbitrary : An arbitrary rule is a rule or decision that is not based on any clear, logical, or consistent principle, but rather on personal preference, whim, or chance.

Theocracy

A theocracy is a form of government where religious law and religious leaders hold the primary authority.

- Key characteristics include the fusion of religious and political power.
- The use of religious texts as the basis for law.
- The belief that the state is guided by a divine power.

Iran, whose full official name is '**Islamic Republic of Iran**' has a unique political system combining elements of both a theocratic and democratic governance. Its **constitution** is based on the fundamental principles of Islam, the country's official religion. The Supreme Leader, who has the ultimate authority over the legislature, executive and judiciary, is selected by a group of Islamic clerics and his term is for life. There are also an elected President and a Parliament that take care of everyday governance. The intent of the republic is to establish a society based on Islamic norms. Other theocracies currently in existence include Afghanistan and Vatican City.

Oligarchy

An oligarchy is a form of government where power effectively rests with a small, elite group of individuals. This group, known as **oligarchs**, typically achieves power through wealth, family-ties, military strength, or a combination of these factors. Oligarchies are characterized by -

- Limited citizen participation, a concentration of wealth and resources within the ruling elite.

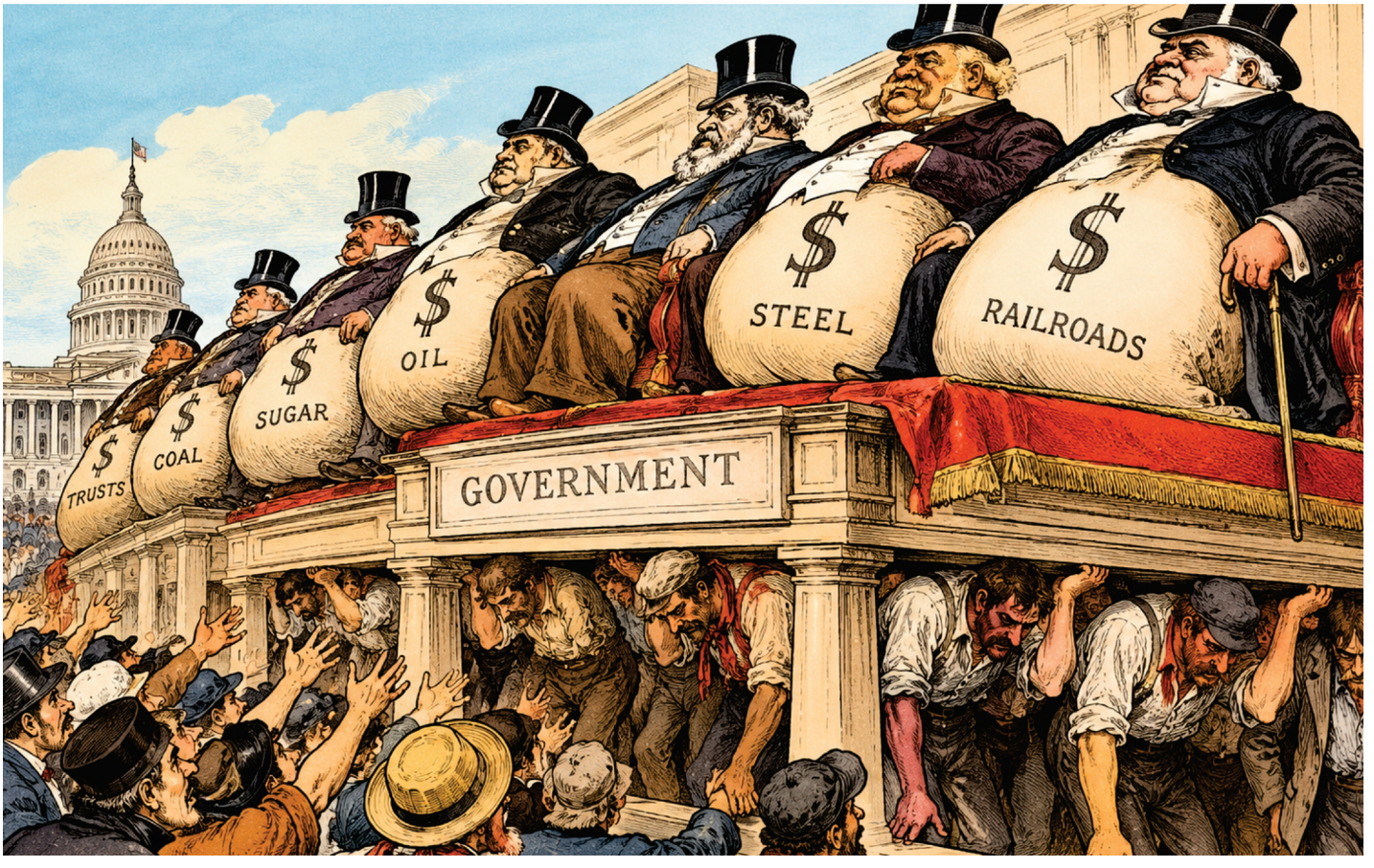


Fig. 9.4. A Cartoon from 1889 Depicting an Oligarchic Situation.

- Policies that often benefit the ruling class at the expense of the general population.

In some places in ancient Greece, aristocratic families ruled as oligarchies. In modern times, it has been observed that even some democracies show signs of oligarchy when a small group of politicians and wealthy businesspeople hold too much influence in governance.

Monarchy

A monarchy is a form of government headed by a king or queen. There are two primary types :

(a) Absolute monarchy

(b) Constitutional monarchy.

1. Absolute Monarchy :

- In an absolute monarchy, the monarch holds ultimate, unchecked power over the state and its government.
- He can make laws, impose punishments, and rule by decree without any constitutional limitations.
- Examples include Brunei, Eswatini, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the Vatican City.

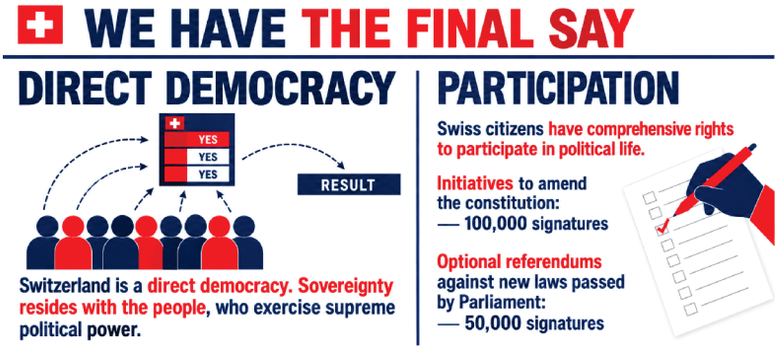
2. Constitutional Monarchy :

- In a constitutional monarchy, the monarch's powers are limited by a constitution or a parliament.
- The monarch may still be a symbolic Head of state, but the real governing power rests with the elected government which functions democratically.
- Many countries, like the UK, Canada, and Japan, are considered constitutional monarchies.

Democracy

Democracy is the most popular form of government prevailing in a large number of countries in present times.

- In a democracy, the government is elected by the people.
- It is the government of the people by the people and for the people.
- In this form of government, the people have a say in the government. The supreme power belongs to the people. They elect representatives, who in turn, rule the country on their behalf.
- The government is answerable to the people.



Different forms of democratic governments

Let us now understand the different forms of democratic governments around the world!

1. Direct democracy

Under this type, people directly participate in the formation and working of the Government. They are directly responsible for all the rules, regulations and functions.

In contemporary times, some kinds of this form of government is found in a few countries, like Switzerland, Taiwan etc. The limitation of this form of government is that it is very hard to carry it out in practice, particularly in larger countries.

2. Representative democracy

This is the most common form of democratic government.

- Under this type of government, people elect their representatives.
- For example, MLA and MPs in India are elected by people through **universal adult** franchise who rule the county on their behalf.
- In this form of democracy, the people do not directly govern, but the government is always **accountable** to the people.
- If the people are not happy with the working of the government, they can even change the government.
- India is the largest democracy in the world. Some of the other important democracies in the world are USA, Canada, Japan, Germany and South Africa.
- Elections are an integral part of representative democracy through which people can express changes in their choices as well. To accomplish this, elections happen in regular and fixed intervals of time.
- In India, we have **General Elections** every five years, while in the United States of America they occur every four years.

DO YOU KNOW?

Democracy, meaning "rule by the people." has a rich and evolving history. It had some traces in ancient Athens or Mahajanapadas in India, where citizens directly participated in decision making. and has since developed into various forms, including representative democracies where citizens elect representatives. The concept of democracy continues to be refined and debated as societies grapple with issues of equality, representation, and the role of government.

Country	Year when democracy was established
USA	1787
Switzerland	1848
India	1947
Germany	1949
Kenya	1964
Nepal	2008



Fig. 9.5.

NEW WORDS

No-confidence Motion : In India, a motion of no confidence, also called vote of no confidence/no trust, is a motion of no confidence initiated in the Lok Sabha or in a State Legislative Assembly to determine the confidence of the House in the Council of Ministers.

Council of Ministers : Council of Ministers is a traditional name given to the supreme executive organ in some governments. It is usually equivalent to the term cabinet.

There are two forms of representative democracy :

a. Parliamentary democracy

A Parliamentary democracy is a form of government where citizens elect representatives to form the legislative body. The executive branch of the government derives its authority from the legislature and can be removed from power through **no-confidence motion**.

India operates under a Parliamentary democracy at both the Union and state levels. At the Union level, the Parliament consists of the President and two Houses :

- The Lok Sabha (House of the People, Lower House)
- The Rajya Sabha (Council of States, Upper House)

The Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers are also Members of the Parliament.

The **Council of Ministers** is accountable to the legislature and continue working as long as they have the confidence of the legislature i.e. the Lok Sabha.

Similarly, each state has a legislature, either bicameral with a Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, or unicameral with only a Legislative Assembly. The executive branch at both levels is responsible to the legislature.

b. Presidential democracy

There is only one executive in this form of government which is the President. Hence, it is also called the single executive system.

- The President is the Head/Chief Executive of the state as well as the government and is chosen by the people directly.

In different forms of democratic governments, the relationships between the three organs of government differs. But as we read in the beginning, some characteristics, like equality, freedom and universal adult franchise remain the same in all democracies.

General Elections : A General Election is an electoral process to choose most or all members of a governing body at the same time.

NEW WORDS

Executive : The Executive is the organ of the government which is responsible for implementing the law.

Legislature : The Legislature is the body of the government which is responsible for making laws. It is known by different names in different countries. In India, it is called 'Parliament'; in the USA, it is called 'Congress' In most democracies, it has two houses, the 'Upper House' and the 'Lower House'.

Upper House and Lower House : In most countries, the Lower House is elected by direct voting and is generally more powerful than the Upper House which is formed either by election or nomination. These Houses are known by different names in different countries. In India, the Lower House is called the Lok Sabha, and the Upper House is called the 'Rajya Sabha'

Separation of Power : Division of power among the three organs of the government — Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary — work independently and do not interfere in each other's functions.

Let's Explore

- Analyse the table given at the end of the chapter and discuss amongst yourselves the similarities and differences in all the examples.

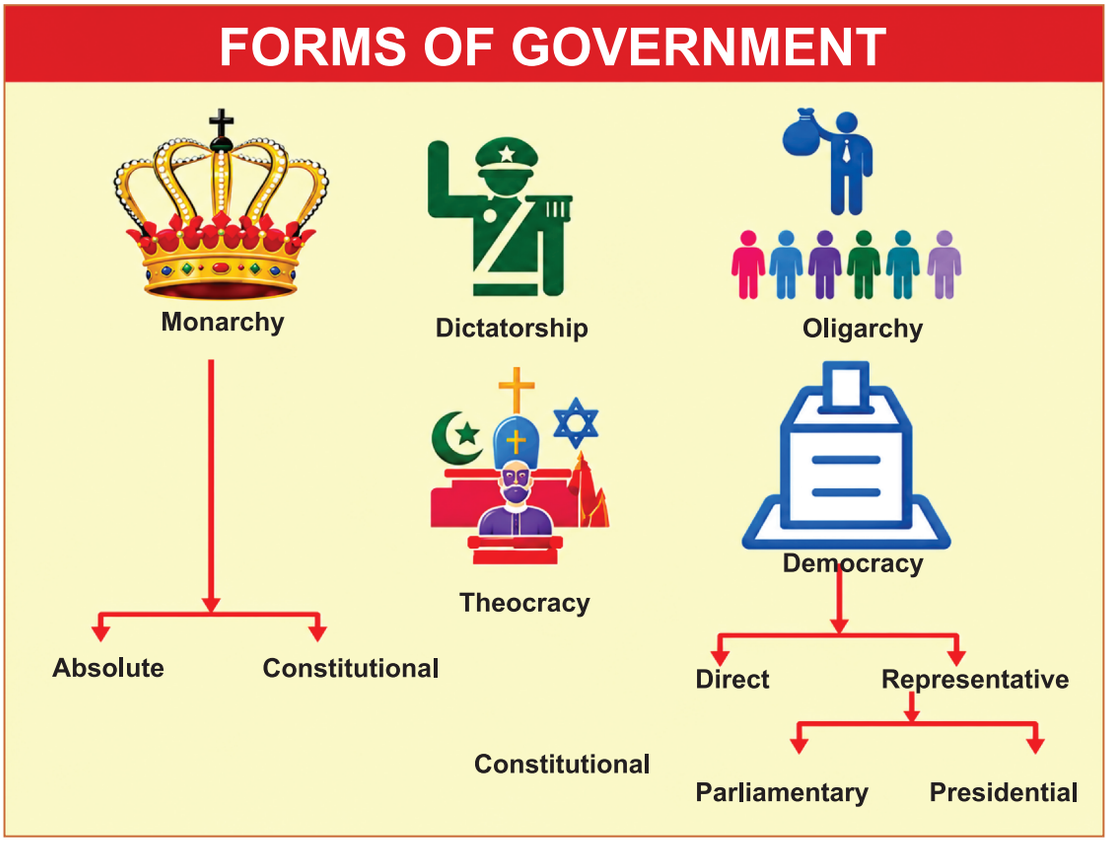


Fig. 9.6.

Different form of Democratic Government			
Institution	**Executive**	**Legislature**	**Judiciary**
India	Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers	Lok Sabha (Lower House) is more powerful than Rajya Sabha (Upper House)	Independent from executive and legislature (separation of power)
USA	President	Equal power between Upper House (Senate) and Lower House (House of Representatives)	Independent from executive and legislature (separation of power)
South Korea	President	Single house (National Assembly)	Independent from executive and legislature (separation of power)
Australia	Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers	Equal power between Upper House (Senate) and Lower House (House of Representatives)	Independent from executive and legislature (separation of power)
France			
South Africa			
Complete the table for the given democratic countries with regard to the organs of the government.			

Fundamental Principles of Democracy :

1. Liberty and freedom : In democracy, the rights and the liberties of the people are well safeguarded. People are given freedom to express their views without any fear. They can criticise the wrong policies of the government.

2. Equality : In democracy, all are equal in the eyes of law and no discrimination is done on the basis of birth, race, caste, colour, sex, religion, etc. All citizens get equal opportunities to participate in the affairs of the state.

3. Representative participation means that every person has a right to choose and elect their representatives. This is done through the process of elections. Elected representatives become a part of the legislature.

4. Universal adult franchise : Every citizen (above a certain age) has the right to vote to choose their representative.

5. Fundamental rights : Democracy provides and protects Fundamental Rigths of citizens, such as — right to equality, right to freedom of speech and expression, and right against exploitation.

6. Independent judiciary : Independence of judiciary ensures that every citizen's fundamental rights are protected, and that laws are followed not only by the citizens but also by all the parts of the government.

A Peek into History

Early Republics

As early as the Vedic period, around 1500 BCE, the Sabha and Samiti played central roles in governance. **The Sabha** was a council of elders, often composed of respected individuals chosen for their wisdom and experience. **The Samiti,** on the other hand, was a more inclusive assembly that allowed for broader participation by the community members. These institutions were the backbone of governance, which ensured that key decisions, that impacted the society, were made by collective consensus.

Activity

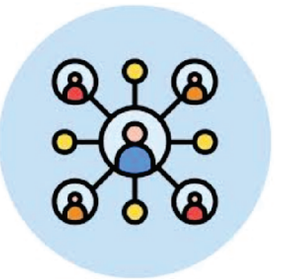
Prepare a plan to form a students' committee. Do cover the following aspects.

(I) List the core principles.

(ii) Rules to form it in a democratic way.

(iii) Functions of the Committee.

(iv) Who will provide the solution in case of a dispute?



People



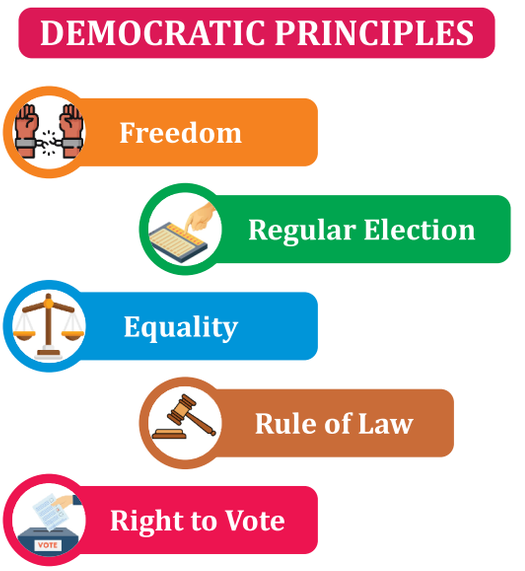
EVM (Electronic Voting Machine)



Rights



Judiciary



The leaders who emerged from these assemblies were chosen on merit, based on their knowledge and wisdom, and ability to mediate, guide and unite. This gives us a view of what leadership meant – the practice of facilitating discussions and arriving at decisions that reflected the collective wisdom of the community (Sen, 2006). Negating traditional Western notions of leadership, often associated with autocracy and power, the model of leadership drawn from ancient India was grounded on inclusivity and collective responsibility. This is, today, more relevant than ever before.

The period between 600 BCE and 400 BCE encountered the rise of the Mahajanapadas, large kingdoms or republics that flourished across Northern India. Among these, the Vajjis, Mallas, and Sakyas stand out as shining examples of republican governance where rulers were chosen by election rather than hereditary succession.

Even the Cholas were also following the same system. A remarkable example from the Chola period is seen in the Uttaramerur inscriptions from the 10th century CE in Tamil Nadu, which provide us with details about the election of members to the village sabhā (local administrative body). The **inscription** contain details about the election process, including sealed **ballot boxes**, qualifications of members, their duties, and also the conditions that could lead to their dismissal.

For instance, members would be immediately removed if found to have indulged in any corruption.

There were republics in other parts of the world too. In the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, Rome and Greece had republics. In some regions of Greece, free men could vote, but women, workers and **slaves** could not. Other areas had a system where only a small, privileged group could vote or make decisions.



NOTE

Universal Adult Franchise

The word Franchise means right to vote to express one's choice. Universal adult franchise means that every adult citizen, irrespective of his/her religion, caste or education, colour, race or economic status has a right to vote. Universal Adult Franchise is based on the concept of equality. Principle of Universal adult Franchise helps in forming true democratic governments because it allows each one to participate in the elections to form governments at all levels. In India, every citizen who is eighteen years of age or above has a right to vote. Such people can participate in voting for any candidate of their choice in central, state or local governments.

NEW WORDS

Republic : It is a form of government in which the people elect, or choose their leaders. In most countries with a republican government, the people elect the Head of the government, such as a President. They also elect other people called representatives to make laws.

Slave : A person who is forced to work for and obey another and is considered to be their property.

Inscription : An inscription is writing carved into something made of stone or metal such as a gravestone or medal.

Ballot Box : It is closed and sealed container into which voters put their votes.

Notable Republic Mahajanapadas
• Vajjis • Mallas • Sakyas • Kuru

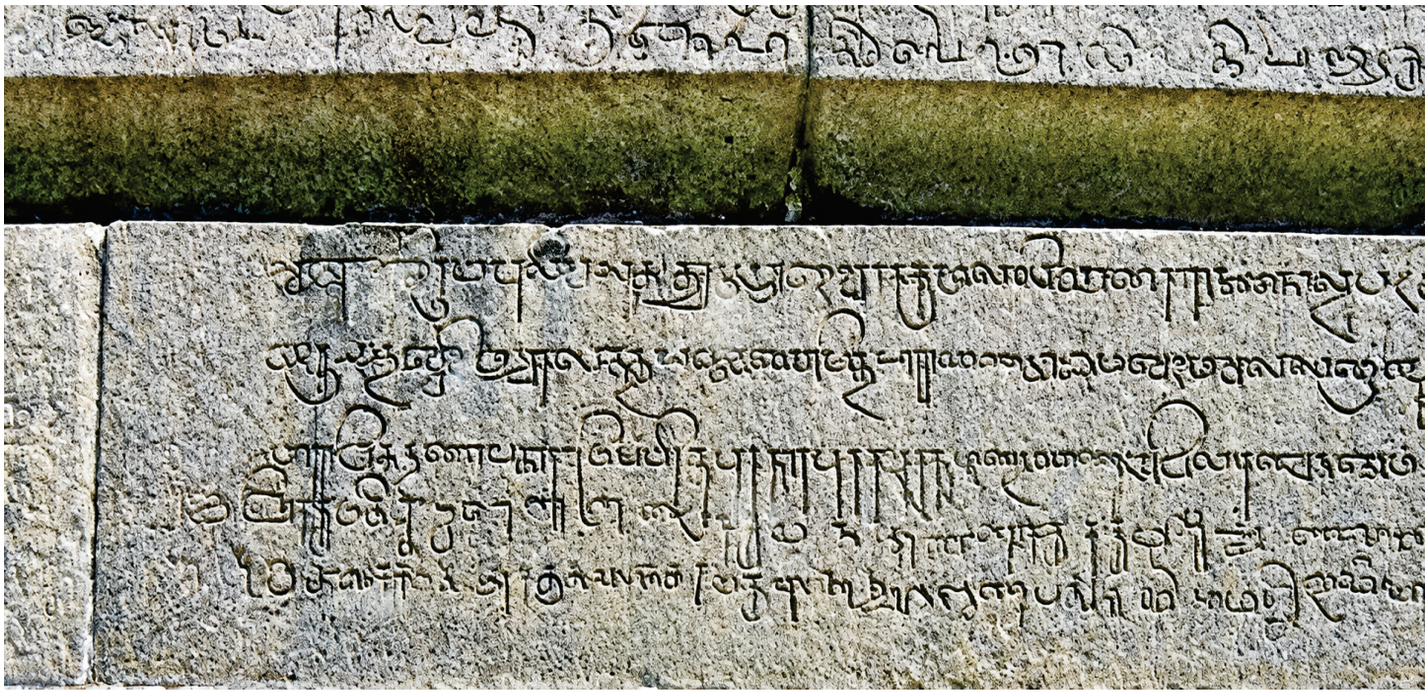


Fig. 9.7. Chola Period Inscriptions on the Walls of Vaikuntha Perumal Temple, Uttaramerur, Tamil Nadu

WORKSHEET

1. Do you think it is important for people to be involved in decisions that affect them? Give two reasons for your answer.

2. Which type of government would you like in your country and why?

3. You have learnt the basic characteristics of various forms of governments. Do a small role play of the various forms in your classroom :
   - Enact democracy
   - Enact monarchy
   - Enact dictatorship
   - Write dialogoues for any one form of government in the space given below.

Comparative Study – Democracy and other Forms of Governments

Feature	Democracy	Dictatorship	Monarchy	Theocracy	Oligarchy
Base	Will of the people	Will of an individual of group.	Will of the king or Queen	Rules of religion and religious leaders.	Will of the wealthy powerful gropu.
Term of Government	Tenure is fixed people have power to change the government through elections.	Not fixed term and very difficult to change the dictator.	**Absolute Monarchy** • Not fixed, **Constitutional Monarchy** • Terms is fixed.	Not Fixed	Not Fixed
Accountability	Elected Government is accountable to the people	Not accountable to the people.	**Absolute Monarchy** • Not accountability **Constitutional Monarchy** • Elected Government is accountable to the people.	The Supreme leader has the ultimate authority but the elected President and Parliament are accountable to the people.	Not accountable to the people.
Liberty and Freedom	People have Freedom to express views.	People have no freedom to express views.	**Absolute Monarchy** • No freedom of expression **Constitutional Monarchy** • People are free to express their views.	Limited Freedom	Limited Freedom
Equality	All are equal before law.	Discrimination on the basis of economic status, colour, gender and religion.	**Absolute Monarchy** • Limited **Constitutional Monarchy** • All are equal before law.	Limited	Limited
Rule of Law	Rule of law as per Constitution	No written Constitution (if there is any, it can be changed as per the will of the dictator)	**Absolute Monarchy** • Will of the Monarch **Constitutional Monarchy** • Rule as per Constitution.	Based on Religion	Privileges and advantages to wealthy people.
Example	India	Uganda	**Absolute Monarchy** • Saudi Arabia **Constitutional Monarchy** • United Kingdom	Afghanistan and Vatican City	