

- Introduction to Indian Democracy and Parliament
- Historical Background of Indian Democracy
- People and Their Representatives
- Structure of the Indian Parliament
- Functions of the Parliament
- Law Making Process and Social Issues
- Citizen Participation and Democratic Responsibility
- Glossary
- Solved Examples
- Practice Set
- Answer Key
- Quick Reference

Introduction to Indian Democracy and Parliament

India is a proud democracy where the participation of citizens in decision-making and the consent of the people are fundamental. The Parliament is the heart of the democratic system. It enables citizens to participate in governance through their elected representatives and controls the government, making it a vital part of the Constitution.



The Vishnu Temple at Deogarh, dating back to the 6th century CE, is one of the earliest surviving Hindu stone temples. It features intricate carvings and a facing entrance symbolizing new life, and a flag representing sanctity. Temples like this are cultural landmarks that tell stories through art and architecture.

Historical Background of Indian Democracy

India gained independence on 15 August 1947 after a long struggle involving diverse sections of society inspired by freedom, equality, and political rights and lived in fear. Early demands for elected representation began as early as 1885 with the Indian National Congress. The Government did not grant universal adult franchise.

Post-independence, the Constitution of India established universal adult franchise, ensuring all adult citizens have the right to vote. This was inclusive participation in governance.

Exam Question: What was the significance of the Government of India Act 1909 in the context of Indian democracy?

Answer: The Government of India Act 1909 was significant because it allowed for some elected representation in the legislature, marking a step towards democracy, although it did not provide universal adult franchise.

People and Their Representatives

Democracy is based on the consent and participation of the people. Citizens approve and trust the government through elected representatives. Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) who form and control the government. The Parliament, composed of all elected members, is the highest authority and is functioning.

Prepzy

This photo shows election staff using an elephant to carry polling material and EVMs to polling stations located in difficult terrain.



In remote areas, election staff use elephants to transport Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and materials to polling stations, ensuring that all voters have access to the polls. This highlights the commitment to free and fair elections across India.

Exam Question: How do elections ensure the participation of citizens in a democracy?

Answer: Elections allow citizens to choose their representatives who form the government. Through voting, people give their consent and support to the government, which is the foundation of democracy.

Structure of the Indian Parliament

The Indian Parliament, located in New Delhi, is the supreme law-making institution. It consists of two Houses:

- **Rajya Sabha (Council of States):** The upper house with 250 members, representing the states, chaired by the Vice-President.
- **Lok Sabha (House of the People):** The lower house with 543 members, directly elected by the people.

Both Houses work together to discuss, review, and pass laws, ensuring democratic governance.

The Role of the Parliament

Formed after independence, the Parliament represents the people's faith in democracy, emphasizing participation and government by consulting and electing one MP. Political parties contest elections, and the party or coalition with a majority forms the government.

Prepzy

Results of the 17th Lok Sabha Elections

Political Party

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

Indian National Congress (INC)

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)

All India Trinamool Congress (AITC)

Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP)

Shiv Sena (SS)

Janata Dal (United) (JD (U))

Biju Janata Dal (BJD)

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)

Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS)

Lok Jan Shakti Party (LJSP)

Samajwadi Party (SP)

Independents (Ind.)

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP)

Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI (M))

Indian Union Muslim League (IUML)

Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC)

Telugu Desam Party (TDP)

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM)

Apna Dal (Apna Dal)

Communist Party of India (CPI)

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD)

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)

AJSU Party (AJSU)

All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)

All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF)

Janata Dal (Secular) (JD(S))

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM)

Kerala Congress (M)(KC(M))

Mizo National Front (MNF)

Naga Peoples Front (NPF)

National People's Party (NPP)

Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (PDPP)

Rashtriya Loktantrik Party (RLP)

Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP)

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM)

Viduthalaï Chinuthaigal Katchi (VCK)

Grand Total

The 2019 Lok Sabha elections resulted in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) winning 303 seats, securing a clear majority to form the government.

Exam Question: What determines which party forms the government after Lok Sabha elections?

Answer: The party or coalition that wins more than half of the total seats in the Lok Sabha forms the government, as it has the majority.

Functions of the Parliament

A. To Select the National Government

The Parliament includes the President, Rajya Sabha, and Lok Sabha. After elections, the party with a majority in the Lok Sabha forms the government and appoints ministers to manage various government departments. Sometimes, coalition governments are formed when no single party has a majority.

B. To Control, Guide and Inform the Government

Parliament controls the government through mechanisms like the Question Hour, where MPs ask questions to hold the executive accountable, highlight government shortcomings and offering alternative policies. Parliamentary approval is essential for financial matters, ensuring government expenditure is justified.

Exam Question: What is the purpose of the Question Hour in Parliament?

Answer: The Question Hour allows MPs to ask questions to the government, helping to control and guide the executive by seeking information and holding it accountable.

Law Making Process and Social Issues

Parliament makes laws based on societal needs. For example, the issue of domestic violence was raised by citizens and activists, leading to the passage of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. This law provides protection and relief to women facing physical, emotional, sexual, and economic abuse within households.

October 2006



Shazia, did you read today's newspapers? Isn't it a great day for women?

Not just women will benefit from such a long time. In fact, it becomes a need for a new

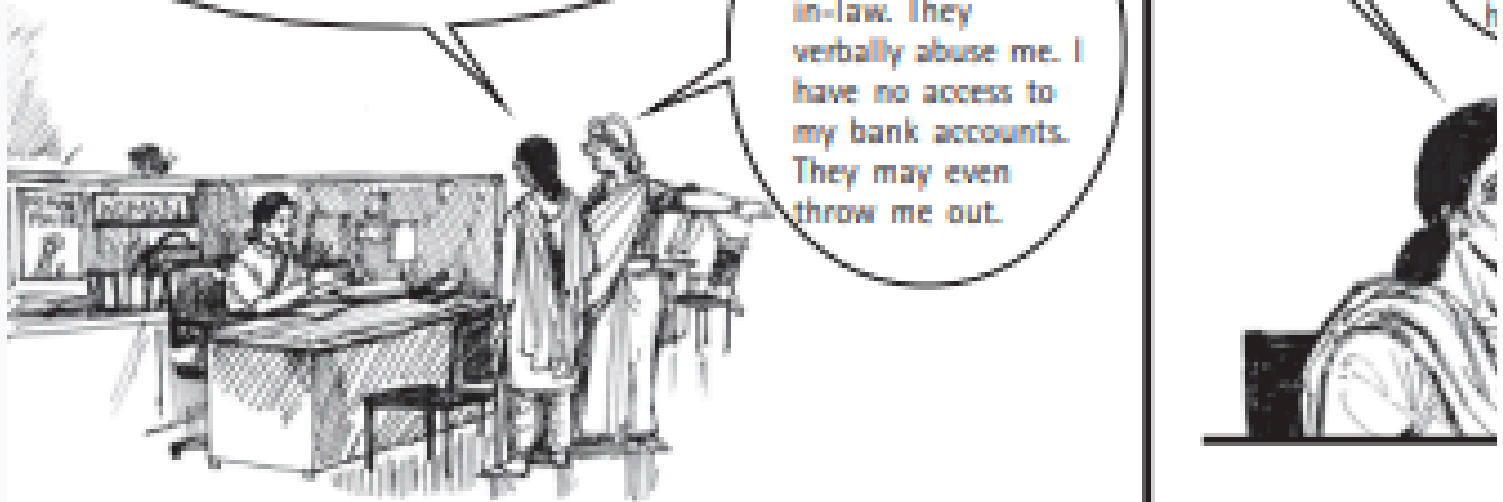


April 1991: A typical day at their office...

I need advice. My husband beats me up. I haven't told anyone so far. I feel so ashamed. I can't go on like this anymore. But I have nowhere to go.

I am being ill-treated by my son and daughter-in-law. They verbally abuse me. I have no access to my bank accounts. They may even throw me out.

I do not want to go to the police. I just want to stop the violence.

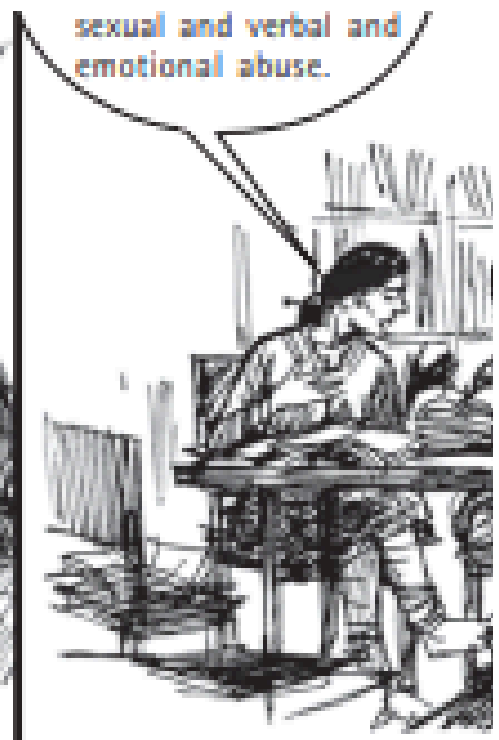


Throughout the 1990s, the need for a new law was raised in different forums.

We've heard testimonies of several women. We've seen that women want protection against being beaten, the right to continue living in a shared household and often temporary relief. We need a new civil law to address this issue.

In 1999, Lawyers Collective activists, after nation-wide drafting the Domestic Violence Bill, This draft bill was widely

The definition of domestic violence should include physical, economic,



The journey to pass this law involved testimonies, public awareness, drafting bills, and lobbying Parliament by women's organizations and ac

Exam Question: How did citizens contribute to the passing of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act?

Answer: Citizens, especially women's groups and activists, raised awareness, shared testimonies, lobbied Parliament, and participated i
to its enactment.

Citizen Participation and Democratic Responsibility

Citizens play a crucial role beyond elections by monitoring government actions, criticizing unfair laws, and participating in protests or camp
dissent through public meetings, media, and legal challenges. This active involvement ensures that democracy remains responsive and acc





Exam Question: Why is it important for citizens to criticize and protest against unjust laws?

Answer: Criticism and protest help ensure that laws are fair and just. They allow citizens to express disagreement, influence change, and strengthen democracy.

Glossary

- **Approval:** Consent or favorable acceptance, especially by citizens towards their government.
- **Coalition:** Temporary alliance of political parties to form a government when no single party has a majority.
- **Criticise:** To find fault or express disapproval, often used by citizens to hold governments accountable.
- **Evolution:** Development process from simple to complex, here referring to the development of laws like the Domestic Violence Act.
- **Sedition:** Acts considered as inciting rebellion against the government, often used arbitrarily under colonial rule.
- **Repression:** Excessive control that restricts freedom and natural expression, often through unjust laws.
- **Unresolved:** Problems or situations without easy or immediate solutions.

Solved Examples

Example 1:

Question: Explain how the Parliament controls the government.

Answer: The Parliament controls the government through mechanisms like the Question Hour, where MPs ask questions to the executive, ensure approval of financial matters and debates policies, guiding government actions.

Example 2:

Question: What is the significance of universal adult franchise in India?

Answer: Universal adult franchise means all adult citizens have the right to vote, ensuring inclusive participation in democracy. It was established as a goal of equal political rights.

Practice Set

Easy

1. What are the two Houses of the Indian Parliament called?
2. Who elects the Members of the Lok Sabha?

Moderate

1. Describe the role of the Opposition in the Parliament.
2. Explain the importance of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act.

Challenging

1. Discuss how citizens can influence the law-making process in India.
2. Analyze the significance of coalition governments in Indian democracy.

Answer Key

1. The two Houses are the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha.
2. Members of the Lok Sabha are directly elected by the adult citizens of India.
3. The Opposition highlights government shortcomings, offers alternative policies, and holds the government accountable.
4. The Act provides legal protection and relief to women facing domestic violence, promoting safety and justice.
5. Citizens influence law-making by raising issues, lobbying, participating in public debates, and voting.
6. Coalition governments allow multiple parties to work together when no single party has a majority, ensuring stable governance.

Quick Reference

- **Parliament:** Supreme law-making body of India consisting of Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha.
- **Universal Adult Franchise:** Right of all adult citizens to vote.
- **Question Hour:** Time in Parliament when MPs question the government.
- **Coalition Government:** Government formed by alliance of multiple parties.
- **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005:** Law protecting women from domestic abuse.