

Chapter 8 - Challenges to Democracy

Chapter 8 of Political Science will conclude all that you have learned in Class 9 and Class 10 Civics. The chapter will provide some suggestions through which you can approach the questions of democratic politics, such as what are the challenges that democracy faces? What can be done to reform democratic politics? How can democracy become more democratic in its practice and outcomes? Also, the chapter will help you to think on your own and come up with your own reading of the challenges and your own definition of democracy. So, to help you in understanding the chapter in-depth, we have provided the CBSE Notes Class 10 Political Science Chapter 8 - Challenges to Democracy.

Think About the Challenges of Democracy

A challenge is a difficulty that carries within it an opportunity for progress. Different countries face different kinds of challenges.

1. At least one-fourth of the globe is still not under democratic government. These countries face the **foundational challenge** of making the transition to democracy and then instituting a democratic government.
2. Most of the established democracies face the **challenge of expansion**. This involves applying the basic principle of democratic government across all the regions, different social groups and various institutions. This also means that less and less decisions should remain outside the arena of democratic control. Countries like India and the US face this challenge.
3. **Deepening of democracy** is the challenge faced by every democracy in one form or another. This involves strengthening of the institutions and practices of democracy. This requires an attempt to bring down the control and influence of the rich and powerful people in making governmental decisions.

Thinking about Political Reforms

All the suggestions or proposals about overcoming various challenges to democracy are called '**democracy reform**' or '**political reform**'. The below-mentioned guidelines will help in devising ways and means for political reforms in India:

1. Law has an important role to play in political reform. Carefully devised changes in law can help to discourage wrong political practices and encourage good ones. But legal-constitutional changes by themselves cannot overcome challenges to democracy. Democratic reforms are to be carried out mainly by political activists, parties, movements and politically conscious citizens.

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2. The best laws are those which empower people to carry out democratic reforms. The Right to Information Act is a good example of a law that empowers the people to find out what is happening in government and act as watchdogs of democracy.
3. The main focus of political reforms should be on ways to strengthen democratic practice.
4. Any proposal for political reforms should think not only about what is a good solution but also about who will implement it and how.

Redefining Democracy

Democracy is a form of government in which the rulers are elected by the people.

1. The rulers elected by the people must take all the major decisions.
2. Elections must offer a choice and fair opportunity to the people to change the current rulers.
3. This choice and opportunity should be available to all the people on an equal basis.
4. The exercise of this choice must lead to a government limited by basic rules of the constitution and citizens' rights.

Here we have summarised the points that you have learned in democratic government and politics.

1. You have learned the democratic rights at length and understood that these rights are not limited to the right to vote, stand in elections and form political organisations. Also, you have read about some social and economic rights that democracy should offer to its citizens.
2. You get to know that power-sharing is the spirit of democracy and how power-sharing between governments and social groups is necessary in a democracy.
3. You saw how democracy cannot be the brute rule of the majority and how a respect for the minority voice is necessary for democracy.
4. You have learned how eliminating discrimination based on caste, religion and gender is important in a democracy.
5. Finally, in this chapter, you get to know about the outcomes of democracy.