

Chapter 3 Democracy and Diversity

1. Discuss three factors that determine the outcomes of politics of social divisions.

Answer.

The three factors that determine the outcomes of politics of social divisions:

- The outcome depends on how people perceive their identities. If people see their identities in singular and exclusive terms, it becomes very difficult to accommodate.
- It depends on how political leaders raise the demands of any community. It is easier to accommodate demands that are within the constitutional framework and are not at the cost of another community.
- It depends on how the government reacts to the demands of different groups.

2. When does a social difference become a social division?

Answer.

The social division takes place when some social difference overlaps with other differences. Situations of this kind produce social divisions when one kind of social difference becomes more important than the other and people start feeling that they belong to different communities. The differences that turn into social divisions are called overlapping differences.

3. How do social divisions affect politics? Give two examples.

Answer.

Democracy involves competition among various political parties. Their competition tends to divide any society. If they start competing in terms of some existing social divisions, it can make social divisions into political divisions and lead to conflict, violence or even disintegration of a country. This has happened in many countries:

- In North Ireland - It has faced violent and bitter ethnopolitical conflict. Two major sects of Christianity - Protestants (53 per cent) and Roman Catholics(44 per cent) are represented in the country. The Catholics were represented by Nationalist parties who demanded that Northern Ireland be unified with the Republic of Ireland, a predominantly Catholic country. The Protestants were represented by Unionists who wanted to remain with the UK, which is predominantly protestant. The fight between Nationalist and Unionist led to social conflicts where hundreds of civilians died.
- In Yugoslavia - Political competition along religious ending ethnic lines led to the disintegration of Yugoslavia into six independent countries.

4. _____ social differences create possibilities of deep social divisions and tensions. _____ social differences do not usually lead to conflicts.

Answer.

Overlapping social differences create possibilities of deep social divisions and tensions. **Cross-cutting** social differences do not usually lead to conflicts.

5. In dealing with social divisions which one of the following statements is NOT correct about democracy?

- Due to political competition in a democracy, social divisions get reflected in politics.
- In a democracy, it is possible for communities to voice their grievances in a peaceful manner.
- Democracy is the best way to accommodate social diversity.
- Democracy always leads to the disintegration of society on the basis of social divisions.

Answer.

d. Democracy always leads to the disintegration of society on the basis of social divisions.

6. Consider the following three statements.

A. Social divisions take place when social differences overlap.

B. It is possible that a person can have multiple identities.

C. Social divisions exist in only big countries like India.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

(a) A, B and C

(b) A and B

(c) B and C

(d) Only C

Answer.

(b) A and B

7. Arrange the following statements in a logical sequence and select the right answers by using the code given below.

A. But all political expression of social divisions need not be always dangerous.

B. Social divisions of one kind or the other exist in most countries.

C. Parties try to win political support by appealing to social divisions.

D. Some social differences may result in social divisions.

(a) D, B, C, A

(b) D, B, A, C

(c) D, A, C, B

(d) A, B, C, D

Answer.

(a) D, B, C, A

8. Among the following, which country suffered disintegration due to political fights on the basis of religious and ethnic identities?

(a) Belgium

(b) India

(c) Yugoslavia

(d) Netherlands

Answer.

(c) Yugoslavia

9. Read the following passage from a famous speech by Martin Luther King Jr. in 1963. Which social division is he talking about? What are his aspirations and anxieties? Do you see a relationship between this speech and the incident in Mexico Olympics mentioned in this chapter?

“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character. Let freedom ring. And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring—when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children—black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics—will

be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: 'Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!' I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal'."

Answer.

Martin Luther King Jr. is referring to segregating policies used by the whites against the coloured people. He mentioned that it is reason for the social division between the two communities. His aspirants were to remind people of a secure society where different communities can live together peacefully. He aspired for a non-racial society where racial abuse doesn't exist. He wanted the communities to respect each other and don't discriminate each other on the basis of their colour. Yes, there is a relationship between his speech and the incident in Mexico Olympics as both reflect a stand against the plight of the African-American people.

