

Chapter 3 What is Government

Look at the statements in the column on the left. Can you identify which level they belong to (Local/State/Central)?

1. The decision of the Government of India to maintain peaceful relations with Russia.
2. The decision of the Government of West Bengal in whether to have a Board exam in Class 8 for all government schools.
3. Introduction of two new trains between Dibrugarh and Kanyakumari.
4. The decision to locate a common well in a particular area of the village.
5. The decision to construct a big children's park in Patna.
6. The decision of the Government of Haryana to provide free electricity for all farmers.
7. Introduction of new 1000 rupee note.

Solution:

1. The decision of the Government of India to maintain peaceful relations with Russia - Central
2. The decision of the Government of West Bengal in whether to have a Board exam in Class 8 for all government schools - State
3. Introduction of two new trains between Dibrugarh and Kanyakumari- Central
4. The decision to locate a common well in a particular area of the village- Local
5. The decision to construct a big children's park in Patna - Local
6. The decision of the Government of Haryana to provide free electricity for all farmers - State
7. Introduction of new 1000 rupee note - Central

Questions

1. What do you understand by the word 'government'? List 5 ways in which you think Government affects your daily life.

Solution 1:

- a. The decision on where to build roads and other infrastructure.
- b. The decision on various social welfare programmes
- c. The decision on important goods and commodities like petrol, onion
- d. Protect the boundaries and maintain friendly relations with other countries
- e. Ensuring that there are good health facilities.

2. Why do you think the Government needs to make rules for everyone in the form of laws?

Solution 2:

Some rules have to be made that apply to everyone. For example, there is a need to control resources and protect the territory of a country, so people can feel secure.

Governments do this on behalf of their people by exercising leadership, taking decisions and implementing these among all the people living in their territory.

3. Name two essential features of a democratic Government.

Solution 3:

- a. Government is answerable to the people.
- b. People elect their leaders to govern the nation through the process of elections.

4. What was the suffrage movement? What did it accomplish?

Solution 4:

Suffrage means right to vote. Earlier women and poor of the USA did not have the rights to vote. They fought for their rights and this movement gathered in strength during the First World War. Finally, they succeeded in the USA in 1920 and in UK they succeeded in 1928.

5. Gandhiji strongly believed that every adult in India should be given the right to vote. However, a few people don't share his views. They feel that illiterate people, who are mainly poor, should not be given the right to vote. What do you think? Do you think this would be a form of discrimination? Give five points to support your view and share these with the class.

Solution 5:

- a. In all the democracies poor and illiterate have the right to vote
- b. Constitution of India says that all citizens are equal.
- c. Elected Government works for all citizens not just for literate and rich people
- d. A few minorities should not decide the fate of the majority
- e. It is not a crime to be poor, hence they should be given the right to vote.