

## Chapter 9 - Struggles for Equality

**Q.1 What do you think is meant by the expression ‘power over the ballot box’? Discuss.**

**Solution:** Power over the ballot box, signifies the power of the common people who are availing the right to vote in every election.

They are the real power of any country, who are driving the government and the working of the system without any second thoughts.

**Q.2 What issue Tawa Matsya Sangh fighting for?**

**Solution:** In 1994, the government gave the rights to fishing in the Tawa reservoir to private contractors. These contractors drove the local people away and threatened the ones who did not leave, by bringing in hoodlums.

The villagers stood united and decided that it was time to set up an organisation and do something to protect their rights. Thus they formed the Tawa Matsya Sangh (TMS) which organised rallies and protests demanding their right to continue fishing for their livelihood.

**Q.3 Why did the villager set up this organisation?**

**Solution:** The villagers set up this issue in order to protect their livelihood and their land. They also set up this organisation with the additional objective of highlighting the injustice meted out to them by the government.

**Q.4 Do you think that the large scale participation contributed to the success of the TMS? Write two lines on why you think so.**

**Solution:** In response to the large scale protests by the TMS, the government created a committee to assess the issue. The committee recommended that fishing rights be granted to the villagers for their livelihood. In 1996, the Madhya Pradesh government decided to give to the people displaced by the Tawa dam the fishing rights for the reservoir. A five-year lease agreement was signed two months later.

On January 2, 1997, people from 33 villages of Tawa started the new year with the first catch. With the TMS taking over the fish workers were able to increase their earnings substantially.

Thus it can be said that the large scale participation by the people forced the government to review the situation the villager’s favour as they worked out a deal which would be beneficial for all the parties.

**Q.5 What role does the Constitution play in peoples struggle equality?**

**Solution:** Constitution plays a significant role in the people's struggle for equality. It ensures that there

are freedom and fair treatment. In the eye of the constitution, everyone is equal. No one is superior over the other. It ensures that every person must get equal rights under the law. It makes sure that everyone has access to the basic and fundamental rights.

