

Chapter 11

THE CIVIC LIFE IN PAKISTAN

1. Democratic Government

The democratic government is that form of government in which right of governance is not the prerogatives of any individual of a political party and in its stead, the elected representative of the people enjoy the power to govern during the currency of their tenure. In a democratic set-up the people elect their rulers and have a say in framing and implementing the policies of the government. Democracy means government of the people, by the people and for the people.

2. Democracy as Freedom of Expression

Each citizen enjoys the freedom of speech, writing and expression of his feelings or views. He can bring his personal views or reactions through speech and writing on all domestic and foreign affairs, provided it is in the interest of the nation and the country. The freedom of expression covers public speeches, writing of books and pamphlets and as, such a democratic governments grants due freedom to newspapers and publications. Besides, the freedom of expression, a democratic order grants to its citizens the personal freedom, freedom of faith and professions, movement of the people and right to else a legal livelihood and the government affords equal treatment to all Democracy affords peace and tranquility to people. In most of the countries of the world, democracy alone is the popular form of government.

3. The Functioning of a Democratic Government

Democracy as the government of the people does not mean that every citizen participates in the government. The government is run by a few representatives of the people. You might be having a student's council in your school. All students elect their class representatives and these elected representatives run the students council on behalf of the students of the school. Similarly, all citizens elect their representatives by voting. The elected

representatives constitute the assembly. Various political parties field their candidates who are elected by the common voters. The political party having a majority in the assembly elects one of its elected members as Prime Minister who chooses ministers (members of cabinet) runs the government during the tenure of the assembly. If at any time the majority of the members of the assembly fail to support the government, then the later resigns and new election has to take place. Each government tries its best to fulfill the promises made to the general people. The views of the people are given their due place because it is the opinion of the people which matters in the making or unmaking of the government.



4. The Rights and Duties of Citizens

In common parlance the resident of a city is known as citizen. But when it comes to the rights and duties of citizens, it covers all people, be they dwellers of cities or villages and all citizens have same rights and same obligations (duties).

Rights of Citizen or Civil Rights

i. Personal Freedom

It is everybody's right to be free in his thoughts and deeds, provided these do not harm others. It is his right to enjoy freedom of his person and no one should be arrested or imprisoned without sufficient justification. He has the right to move and reside in any part of the country.

He has right to go anywhere for trade, employment or excursion (picnic, sightseeing and recreation). Similarly, he has the right to adopt any profession for his livelihood, provided it is not an illegal, immoral or disastrous for others.

ii. Freedom of Expression and Religious Freedom

Every citizen has to enjoy the freedom of speech and writing so that he can express his views. His newspapers and magazines should also be free. No one has the right to express such views which may lead to commotion or which involves defamation or which is against the country or

which may lead to a civil riot. Each citizen has the right to adopt and practice any religion but no one has the right to speak against any other religion.

iii. Access to Education and Health

Education is a basic requirement. In the interest of society as a whole, it is necessary that all people have access to education, but it does not mean that the state has to make available all educational facilities from primary to the higher levels. Generally, it is the duty of the state to provide primary education to all its citizens and after that the state has to go as the resources permit. The access to health care is also a basic requirement.

Along with the above rights, a citizen has certain duties or obligations as well.



5. Duties or Obligations of Citizen

i. Respect for Law and Loyalty to the Country

It is the prime duty of each citizen to have respect for the law and act accordingly. Any society can have the real discipline if everybody follows law. The next obligation of each citizen is to be loyal to the country. He should desist from working against the national interests and should refrain from joining any movement which is disloyal to the country. Each citizen should be ready to sacrifice his life and property for the national defence and survival and can play an important role in eradicating the curse of drugs and other intoxicants in the country.

ii. Perception for the Rights of Others

A good citizen is under obligation to care for the rights of others. The rights desired by him also belong to others. Honesty in business and professional dealings, justice in matters involving others and strict observance of state laws and directives. It is in the interest of the society

as a whole that everybody fulfills his obligations and cares for the right of others.

iii. Duties or Obligations of Citizen

As students are also citizens, they have their obligations. As long as they are students, it is their duty to complete their education with devotion and dedication. During vacation or free hours, they can undertake such national duties as providing adult education or extending help in the task of Red Crescent. They can get training in civil defence. They can collect cash and consumable articles for affecters of national disaster. They should respect their teachers and their elder. Like all other citizens, they too have to respect the laws of the country and have to be faithful to the country.



6. The Role of Individual in Society

No one can lead life in isolation. He has to meet his needs as a member of the society. Since times immortal, wherever the people have resided, they have led a life of social togetherness. Each individual has such requirements of life to meet that he is bound to lead a collective life. The collective life means living with and working for others. In other words, each individual is an ingredient of society and he has to lead a collective life. He is important only as a member of the society and separable he is reduced to a non-entity. Our great philosopher poet, Allama Iqbal has rightly said:

"An individual survives not in isolation but in national rapport".

You and I survive only through, collective or social interaction and are reduced to a naught by avoiding it.

The welfare of any society rests on full discharge of an individual's responsibility. Each individual should be of sterling character based on highest moral values. It is in this way that the society improves and country makes progress and in its absence there occurs hurdles in the way of national advancement.

Each member of a society wants to lead a life of comfort and prosperity and wants to make progress but in a good society no person deprives others of their rights for his welfare and progress and in its stead is always ready to help others. He harms none and makes none suffer by his doings. He discharges all obligations (with full efforts and devotion) enjoined on him by the society on collective aspect of life. Every person must have a full perception of the fact that it is only through high character and noble disposition that one can contribute to collective welfare and has to work for it. We must show due respect to all individuals and hold their accusations in high esteem. All the people who belong to our nation should live like members of one family. It is the duty of every individual to help check the growing trend of drug-addiction among our youth.



7. Law and Freedom

We know that in a democratic government, people enjoy a lot of freedom. Their lives and properties are protected, but these freedoms do not entitle a person to do whatever he likes and no one can stop or question his behaviour for that would destroy the very fabric social order. Accordingly, each individual enjoys freedom to the extent provided in the laws of the land and only as long as he does not infringe upon the rights of others. The doings of a person within the bounds of law alone guarantee freedom.

Some people do not realise their responsibility and work against the government or social order and destroy the administrative order of the country. Accordingly, laws are made to suit the circumstances of the country and people are made to follow the laws. It is the law which sets the boundaries of mutual relationship and also explains as to how far the state can go in this regard. The law puts limits on individual's freedom so that no one could trample upon the rights of others by taking undue advantages of his freedom. It is the levity which affords justice to the people and provides stability to the government and

provides opportunity to the people to lead a life of comfort and prosperity. This is why it is the obligation of each citizen to respect the laws of the land while exercising his limits of freedom.

The courts function in each country for enforcement of laws and punish those who violate the laws. The laws are generally of two types, one relating to property, monetary transactions or civil rights are known as civil laws, the other relating to control of drubbing, murder, looting, theft and dacoity are known as criminal laws.

The law determines the limits of freedom. Freedom is rightly used when one knows its limits. The freedom and law are inter-related. The freedom becomes dangerous in the absence of law. It is obligatory on each individual to bind himself to laws and to keep his activities within the legal limits.



8. Disobedience to the Law / Corruption

In your home your parents make some rules which all the members of the family have to follow. For example, they may fix a time when everyone has to get up in the morning. A rule may require you to study for two hours every day. Your parents will have also told you the consequence of breaking the rules. For example, you may not be allowed to watch television if you have not studied for two hours. Why do you think your parents make these rules? Why do you think there are some consequences for breaking the rules?

Just as there in the rules in the home that all the family members have to follow, every country has laws that all its citizens must follow. Laws are essential for the functioning of a society. Without laws everyone would be free to do whatever they liked. There would be complete disorder in society. It would become very difficult for citizens to live in peace and prosper.

In Pakistan, some people do not obey the law. They do not stop at a red light, they steal electricity, they cheat in examinations and they do not pay tax on their income.

You may have heard the word "**corruption**". Corruption takes place when people in authority break a law to benefit themselves or favour someone, so as to receive money or gifts in return. For example, a policeman takes a bribe from a person who broke the law rather than making them pay the prescribed fine. A banker approves a loan to a friend of a minister without following the proper procedure. For doing this, the banker may receive money or other favours.

Each one of us is badly affected when disobey the law.

- The government does not get the money needed to build more schools, hospitals and roads.
- More accidents take place on the roads.
- We have to pay more for electricity.
- Some students do not get the result they deserve in an examination.
- There is an increase in lawlessness.
- There is social and moral damage to society.



In this way, corruption has badly affected the social fabrics of our country. Every person is involved by this menace in any way. We should wipe out this social evil from our society and we should not do any work that could promote corruption and other social evils.

The Government has made proper rules and regulations and different institution such as National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and Provincial Anti-Corruption Departments to curb the curse of corruption at federal and provincial level.

Being responsible citizens, it is our duty to keep safe and make conscious our children, youngsters and family members about this curse, because corruption has become a big deal / challenge for us.

ACTIVITY

Prepare an advertisement for newspaper, radio or television in which give the message to individual and every employee to abide by the law and not to take bribe.

EXERCISE

A. Answer the following questions:

1. Describe the rights and obligations (duties) of a citizen.
2. Being a student, what are your duties / responsibilities?
3. What is the meaning of corruption? What are its harmful effects on the society?

B. Fill in the blanks with appropriate words:

1. In democracy there is _____ and freedom of expression.
2. The people elect their representatives by _____.
3. National interests should be _____ over personal interests.

C. Practical work:

1. Make a chart and write down the rights of a citizen in it.
2. Fill in the following table with the help of a teacher:

Types of corruption	Causes	Effects	Measures to reduce it	What can you do in this regard