



UNIQUE STUDY POINT

Chapter 3 How the State Government Works

Question 1: Use the terms 'constituency' and 'represent' to explain who an MLA and how is the person elected?

Answer: Every state in India has a Legislative Assembly and each state is divided into different areas or constituencies. From each constituency, the people elect one representative who then becomes a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA). Each MLA belongs to a particular political party. MLAs are elected by the people and form the government, hence, they represent the people.

Question 2: How did some MLAs become Ministers? Explain.

Answer: Some MLAs become ministers when their party wins more than half the number of constituencies in a state and thus, is in majority. The MLAs from the ruling party can elect an MLA from their party to become the Chief Minister of the state. The Chief Minister then selects other people as ministers. After the elections, it is the Governor of the state who appoints the Chief Minister and other ministers.

Question 3: Why should decisions taken by the Chief Minister and other ministers be debated in the Legislative Assembly?

Answer: Every decision taken by the Chief Minister and his/her cabinet, must be debated upon the Legislative Assembly to ensure that the decision being taken is in the best interest of the common people at large. Also, discussed is the level of priority the said decision must be given, the subsequent cost of implementing it and whether, such a decision will earn the objections of any particular community.

Question 4: What was the problem in Patalpuram? What discussion/action was taken by the following? Fill in the table.

Public meeting

Legislative Assembly
Press Conference
Chief minister

Answer: The problem in Patalpuram was that there was a shortage of clean drinking water and lack of proper sanitation. In addition, people were dying of water-borne diseases and there was a shortage of proper medical facilities.

Public meeting – Demand for the MLA taking responsibility for the deteriorating healthcare and sanitation conditions.

Legislative Assembly – Discussion on the need for proper sanitation and healthcare facilities by the MLAs. Explanation by the MLAs on the steps taken by the government.

Press Conference – Explanation by the Minister on the steps taken to improve medical facilities and provide tankers which would supply clean drinking water.

Chief Minister – Promise of funds for the measures suggested by the Health Minister.

Promise of proper and timely collection of garbage for better sanitation.

Question 5: What is the difference between the work that MLAs do in the assembly and the work done by government departments?

Answer: MLAs make and debate decisions in the assembly and pass laws. The government departments implement the laws made by the Legislative Assembly. The work done by the government departments has to be approved by the members of the Legislative Assembly.

Extra Questions
Very Short Answer Questions

1. What is a constituency?

Answer: It is a particular area of the state which has legislative assembly from where all the voters living there choose their representatives.

2. What is a majority in legislature?

Answer: It is a situation where more than half the members in a group supports the government or an idea. This is also called simple majority.

3. What is an opposition?

Answer: This refers to elected representatives who are not the members of the ruling party and who play the role of questioning the government decisions and actions as well as raise new issues for the consideration of the assembly.

4. What is a Press Conference?

Answer: It is a gathering of journalists from the media who are invited to hear about and ask questions on a particular issue and are then expected to report on this to the larger public.

5. Who is an MLA?

Answer: MLA or Member of Legislative Assembly is the elected representative of an area in a state.

6. Name the two houses found in a state.

Answer: The two houses found in a state are legislative assembly or lower house and legislative council or upper house.

7. What is a coalition government?

Answer: When no single party gets a majority and two or more parties join to form a government, it is called a coalition government.

8. What is a political party?

Answer: A political party is a group of people who come together on a common platform with some common objectives to achieve power.

9. Examine the role of the Governor.

Answer: The Governor is the nominal head of the state. All decisions are taken in his name. He appoints the Chief Minister and the council of ministers.

10. How is the government formed in a state?

Answer: The leader of majority party in the assembly is appointed as the Chief Minister of the state by the Governor and on his advice other ministers are appointed, who head the various departments.

11. Where do debates take place?

Answer: Debates take place in the legislative assembly where MLAs speak about their areas' problems and get the government response on how to solve the problem.

12. What is the role of the chief minister?

Answer: The Chief Minister is the chief executive of a state. He is the chief spokesman, chief decision-maker and a chief strategy maker of the state.

Short Answer Questions

1. How do MLAs have dual responsibilities?

Answer: The Chief Minister and other ministers run various government departments. They have separate offices. A legislative assembly is a place where all the MLAs, whether from the ruling party or from the opposition, meet to discuss various things. Hence, some MLAs have dual responsibilities, one as an MLA and the other as a minister.

2. Give any three functions of a legislative assembly.

Answer: (i) To discuss and debate on important issues concerning the state.

(ii) To pass money and non-money bills.

(iii) To ask questions and to move motions like no-confidence bill, adjournment motion, census motion, etc.

3. Describe the Term MLA. Is it necessary to become a member of any political party to become an MLA?

Answer: The term MLA stands for a Member of Legislative Assembly. MLA is elected through an election and represents a particular constituency. It is not necessary for one to be a member of any political party to become an MLA.

4. Who is a Chief Minister and how is he elected?

Answer: Chief Minister is the leader of the ruling party of particular state. Chief Minister is elected out of the total members of the party gaining majority in election. He/She is the executive head of the Government in the state.

Long Answer Questions

1. How does the working of the government take place?

Answer: (i) The government works through the chief minister and the minister.

(ii) These people further govern through various departments like public works department, the agriculture, the health department, the education department and so on.

(iii) They are answerable to the questions asked in the legislative assembly and convince people by giving examples of work done by them practically.

(iv) For the people, media, both print and electronic, keep a coverage of what the ministers do.

(v) The government also responds to people's queries through press conferences.

2. Discuss the process of formation of state government.

Answer: For the formation of government in the state, firstly a general election is conducted to elect representatives from various constituencies. The party which earns more than half of the total seats is said to be in majority. That party is usually called for forming the government. Sometimes, no party gains clear majority. In this situation, the party with maximum members tries to form government with support of like minded parties. The party that proves majority, Governor invites him to form Government. Otherwise Re-election takes place.

Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

1. Mention the powers of the Governor of a State.

Answer: Powers of the Governor:

Executive Powers:

- (i) All executive actions are taken in his name.
- (ii) He appoints the leader of the majority party as the chief minister.
- (iii) He also appoints the Council of Ministers and other important functionaries on CM's advice.

Legislative Powers:

- (i) He is a part of the state legislature and can summon, prorogue or adjourn the legislature.
- (ii) Every year, he causes the annual budget to be laid down in the State Legislative Assembly.
- (iii) He can recommend President's Rule in the state if he feels that state machinery cannot be run as per the provisions of the constitution.
- (iv) He can withhold a bill for the consideration of the President if he thinks that it involves a matter of public interest.

Judicial Powers: The governor has financial, judicial and discretionary powers.

2. Describe the powers of State Legislature.

Answer: Functions of the State Legislature:

(a) Control over Executive: Only the State Legislative Assembly can pass a no confidence motion against the council of ministers headed by the Chief Minister. The other house can only ask questions.

(b) Control on Non-money Bills: Bills other than money bills can be introduced in any House of legislature. If the council rejects a bill or if three months pass without the council passing the bill, it can be reintroduced in the Assembly.

(c) Election of the President: Only members of State Legislative Assembly participate in the election of the president. The state legislature is empowered to make laws on 66 subjects mentioned in the state list and 47 subjects in the concurrent list

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