



UNIQUE STUDY POINT

Chapter 9 Struggles for Equality

Question 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.

Question 2: What issue is 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.

Question 3: Why did the villagers 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.

Question 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 fishing rights for the reservoir to the people displaced by the Tawa dam. 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 in the villager's favour, as they worked out a deal which would be beneficial for all the parties.

Question 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 is a free 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.

Extra Questions
Very Short Answer Questions

1. What feature promotes equality in the Indian Constitution?

Answer: (i) Equality before law, which means no person is discriminated on the basis of being rich or poor, religion, sex, caste, etc.

(ii) All adults in India have right to vote without any discrimination.

2. How are the poor deprived in India? Give some examples.

Answer: (i) The increasing privatisation of health services and the neglect in government hospitals have made it difficult for poor to get treatment as they can't afford it.

(ii) Likewise, domestic workers are given low wages. Also, small farmers are paid less than adequate wages.

3. Why do the poor face inequality?

Answer: Poverty and lack of resources continue to be the key reasons for so many people's lives to be unequal.

Short Answer Questions

1. Which communities face discrimination in India?

Answer: (i) The worst discrimination is faced by minorities, women, dalits and adivasis.

(ii) All these people are discriminated primarily because of their social and cultural background as well as because they are women.

(iii) Discrimination on the basis of a person's religion, caste and sex is another factor for being treated unequally in India.

2. Why do people struggle? In what forms do they struggle?

Answer: (i) People struggle because they are discriminated, their dignity is hurt and they are treated unequally.

(ii) Some of the famous struggles are like women's movement against inequality, dowry, domestic violence, etc.

(iii) Likewise, the Tawa Matsya Sangh in MP came to fight for displaced people.

(iv) And several other struggles cooperatively or collectively led by beedi workers of fisherfolk, agricultural labourers, slum dwellers, etc.

3. How does the building of dam affect people?

Answer: (i) When dams are built and forest areas are declared as sanctuaries for animals, thousands of people get displaced.

(ii) Whole villages are uprooted and people are forced to go and build new homes and start new lives elsewhere.

(iii) These are generally very poor and do not have any means to make a new home or get a new job for livelihood.

(iv) Some of them are relocated to areas outside the city.

Long Answer Questions

1. How did Tawa Matsya Sangh (TMS) organise and support people?

Answer: (i) TMS organised rallies and chakka jam (road blockade) and enabled locals to think of having the right to livelihood through fishing.

(ii) A committee was formed, which said that fishing rights should be given to villagers for their livelihood.

(iii) In 1996, people displaced by the Tawa dam got the right of fishing in the reservoir by the Madhya Pradesh government.

(iv) TMS helped fishworkers to improve their income substantially.

(v) They set up a co-operative to ensure that fishermen get a fair price.

(vi) TMS also gave loans to fishworkers for repairing and buying nets.

(vii) TMS has demonstrated that people's organisations can also be good managers.

2. How is the Indian Constitution a living document?

Answer: (i) The pioneer of all struggles wanted the Indian Constitution to be implemented in letter and spirit.

(ii) Indian Constitution gives equality to all, freedom to all, dignity and respect to all, end of discrimination and special benefits to marginalised and disadvantaged section.

(iii) It has real meaning in our lives, this makes it a living document.

Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

1. Why was the Tawa Matsya Sangh formed?

Answer: (i) The Tawa Dam was built on River Tawa, a tributary of Narmada between 1958 and 1978.

(ii) People were displaced due to the dam.

(iii) Their livelihood was affected.

(iv) In 1994, the government gave the rights for fishing in Tawa reservoir to private contractors, who forced villagers to vacate the area.

(v) The villagers stood united and organised the Tawa Matsya Sangh to protest.

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