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LAKHISARAI**

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Ch:WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?AND WHY DEMOCRACY?

READ THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND

Broader Meanings of Democracy

In this chapter, the meaning of democracy is discussed in a descriptive sense. Students get to learn about democracy as a form of government, thus helping them to identify a clear set of minimal features that democracy requires. The common form adopted by democracy is representative democracy. In democratic countries, all people do not rule. A majority is allowed to take decisions on behalf of all the people through their elected representatives. This has become necessary for the reasons given below:

- Modern democracies involve such a large number of people that it is physically impossible for them to sit together and take a collective decision.
- Even if they could, the citizen does not have the time, the desire or the skills to take part in all the decisions.

Democracy, as a principle, can go beyond the government and can be applied to any sphere of life. People use the word democracy not to describe any existing government but to set up an ideal standard that all democracies must aim to become. However, if the ideals of democracy are considered then no country in the world is correctly democratic. Still, having an understanding of democracy as an ideal will explain why to value democracy. It enables people to judge an existing democracy and identify their weaknesses. It also helps to distinguish between a minimal democracy and a good democracy. The most common form of democracy in today's world is being ruled through people's elected representatives. However, for a small community, there can be other ways of making democratic decisions. All people can sit together and make decisions directly. This is how the Gram Sabha should work in a village.

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