# Chapter 10: Grassroots Democracy Part 1: Governance

## Questions — Questions, Activities and Projects

**Q1** What is the meaning of democracy? What is the difference between direct democracy and representative democracy?

SOLUTION

The word 'democracy' comes from the Greek words dēmos (people) and kratos (rule), meaning 'rule of the people'.
In a democracy, people have a say in the decisions that govern their lives.

Direct democracy is when every person votes directly on a decision — for example, the class voting by raising hands to choose a picnic spot.
Representative democracy is when people elect representatives (such as MLAs or MPs) to make decisions on their behalf. India is a representative democracy.

Answer: Democracy means 'rule of the people'. In direct democracy, everyone votes on each decision directly. In representative democracy, people elect representatives who make decisions for them — India follows this system.

---

**Q2** Recall the three organs of government. What are their different roles?

SOLUTION

A modern government has three organs, each with a distinct role:

The Legislature makes laws. In India at the national level, this is the Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha); at the State level, it is the State Assembly (Vidhan Sabha).
The Executive implements (executes) the laws. It includes the head of state, ministers, and agencies such as the police that enforce law and order.
The Judiciary is the system of courts. It decides whether someone has broken the law, determines punishment if needed, and checks whether laws and executive decisions are fair.

The three organs are kept separate — this is called the separation of powers — so that each can check the work of the others.

Answer: The Legislature makes laws, the Executive implements them, and the Judiciary interprets laws and delivers justice. Keeping them separate creates a system of checks and balances.

Q3 Why do we need three tiers of government?

SOLUTION

Different problems need to be handled at different levels, so government is divided into three tiers: local, State, and Central (national).

Local government handles issues within a town or village — for example, a broken streetlight or a local road.
State government steps in when the problem affects many towns or the whole State — such as a flood that hits several districts.
The Central government deals with national matters — defence, foreign affairs, currency — or very large disasters that need the army or national relief.

Having three tiers ensures that every problem is handled by the most appropriate level of government, making governance more efficient and responsive.

Answer: Three tiers of government — local, State, and Central — ensure that different problems are handled at the right level. Local issues stay local, while large or national problems are managed by the State or Central government.

---

Q4 Project: Many of you will remember the lockdown that took place during the COVID-19 pandemic. Make a list of all the actions that were taken at that time. Which tiers of government were involved in managing the situation? What was the role of each of the organs of government?

SOLUTION

Guidance: This is a project based on your own memory and family discussions. Here is a model framework to help you organise your response.

Actions taken during COVID-19 lockdown (sample list):
Schools, colleges, shops, and offices were closed. People were asked to stay at home. Masks were made compulsory. Hospitals were set up or expanded. Vaccines were distributed. Free rations were provided to the poor.

Tiers of government involved:
The Central Government announced the national lockdown, coordinated vaccine procurement, and deployed the army for relief in severely affected areas.
State Governments enforced lockdown rules within their States, managed hospitals and quarantine centres, and organised food distribution.
Local Government (municipal councils, gram panchayats) ensured rules were followed in neighbourhoods and villages, helped distribute rations, and traced

contacts.

Role of each organ of government:
Legislature: Parliament passed laws and approved funds for relief. State Assemblies similarly passed orders for their States.
Executive: The Prime Minister, Chief Ministers, and district officials issued orders and managed day-to-day relief operations.
Judiciary: Courts monitored the situation, took up cases about migrant workers, and ensured government actions did not violate citizens' rights.

Answer: During COVID-19, all three tiers acted together: Central (lockdown, vaccines), State (hospitals, enforcement), and Local (neighbourhood-level rules and rations). The Legislature approved relief funds, the Executive managed operations, and the Judiciary protected citizens' rights.