

# Governments of South Eastern Asia

**SS7CG6 The student will compare and contrast various forms of government.**

b. Explain how governments determine citizen participation: autocratic, oligarchic, and democratic.

People who live under different kinds of governments often find there are great differences in the rights given to individual citizens.

An **autocratic government** is one in which the ruler has absolute power to do whatever he wishes and make and enforce whatever laws he chooses. Individuals who live under autocratic governments do not have any rights to choose leaders or vote on which laws are made and put into practice. Some autocratic governments may allow the people rights in certain areas like managing local affairs, but the central government keeps control of all the most important aspects of the country's life. In an autocratic system, people usually have little or no power to use against the government if they disagree with decisions that government or ruler has made. There are many different kinds of autocratic governments. The communist government of **North Korea** could be an example of an autocratic government. In North Korea, Kim Jong-il holds the office of premier and head of the National Defense Commission, the two most powerful positions in the government. He rules North Korea as an autocratic dictator.

An **oligarchy** means "government by the few." In this form of government, a political party or other small group takes over a government and makes all of the major decisions. The people of the country have little choice but to go along with the decisions they make. This sort of government can be very similar to an autocratic government. The government of the **People's Republic of China** could be considered an oligarchic government, as the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party control most of what goes on in the country.

In a **democratic government system**, the people play a much greater role in deciding who the rulers are and what decisions are made. **Democracy** comes from the Greek word "demos," which means "people." In this form of government, a great deal of power is left in the hands of the people themselves. People who live in a democracy generally recognize that there must be some rules to organized society, but the goal is to leave as much individual freedom as possible. Decisions are often made by majority votes, but there are also laws in place to protect individual rights. If a person living in a democracy feels his rights have been violated, he has the power to ask the government for help in correcting the situation. Among the countries of Southern and Eastern Asia, India, Japan, and South Korea are examples of democracies.

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c. Describe the two predominant forms of democratic governments: parliamentary and presidential.

In a **parliamentary form of democratic government**, the people vote for those who represent the political party they feel best represents their views of how the government should operate. The legislature they elect, **parliament**, makes and carries out (enforces) the laws for the country. The leader of a parliamentary form of government is usually chosen by the party that wins the majority of representatives in the legislature. This leader is often called a prime minister or premier and is recognized as the head of the government. The prime minister leads the executive branch of the government and must answer directly to the legislature for the actions and policies recommended. In many parliamentary governments, a head of state serves as ceremonial leader.

The actual work of the parliament is led by the **prime minister**, who represents the leading political party in the country. He rules with the help of a **cabinet**, or group of advisors. A prime minister holds power for whatever term of office the country's constitution allows. A prime minister may be voted out of office before the term runs out if the party he leads begins to lose power.

There are several countries in Southern and Eastern Asia that have parliamentary systems of government. **India** is the largest parliamentary democracy in the world. The people elect representatives to the Indian National Congress, and the majority party in the Congress chooses who will be the prime minister. **Japan** is also a good example of a parliamentary democracy. The Japanese two-house parliament is called the Diet. The Japanese Diet holds the real power in Japan, even if the government also includes an emperor. The Japanese emperor is a ceremonial figure who has no real power.

A **presidential form of democratic government** is sometimes called a **congressional form of government**. Here a **president**, or chief executive, is chosen separately from the legislature. The legislature passes the laws, and it is the duty of the president to see that the laws are enforced. The president holds power separately from the legislature, but he does not have the power to dismiss the legislature or force them to make particular laws. The president is the official head of the government. The legislature does not have the power to dismiss the president, except in extreme cases when the president has broken a law. The president is both the head of state and the head of the government.

One difference between a presidential and parliamentary system of government is that a prime minister is a member of a parliament while a president is in a separate branch of the government. In a presidential system, the president serves for a set period of time.

1. Which branch of government is responsible for making and carrying out the laws in a parliamentary system of government?

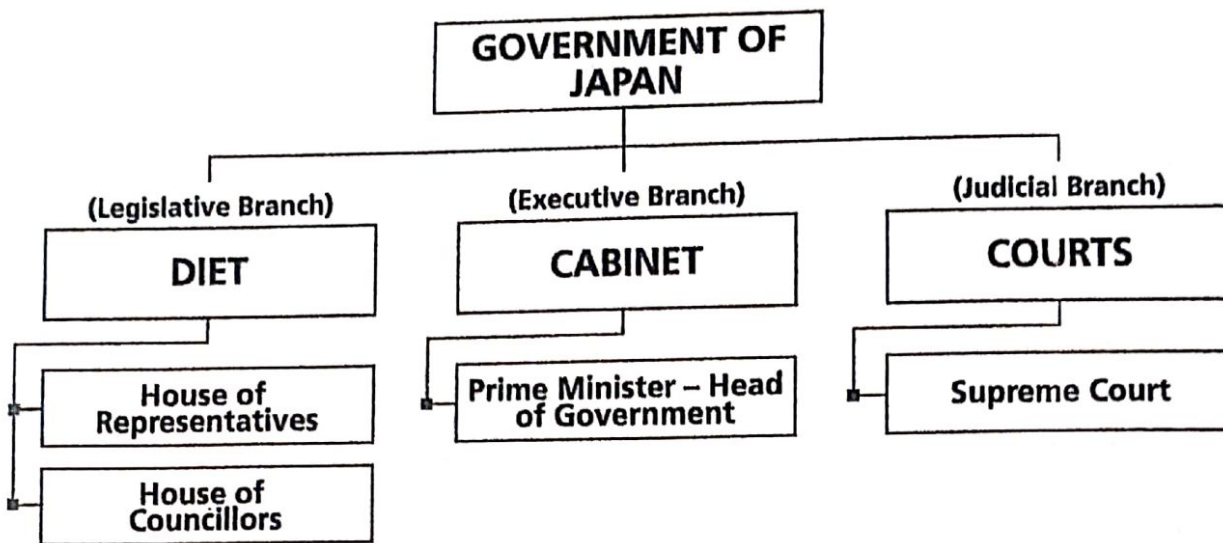
- A. courts
- B. monarch
- C. president
- D. legislature

2. The leader of a parliamentary system is often called the

- A. king.
- B. president.
- C. prime minister.
- D. constitutional monarch.

- 3. **The leader of a parliamentary system is chosen by**
- A. the monarch or king.
  - B. a popular vote of the people.
  - C. a decision by the national courts.
  - D. the political party with the most representatives in the legislature.
- 4. **Which branch of government makes the laws in a presidential system of government?**
- A. president
  - B. legislature
  - C. national courts
  - D. both the president and the legislature together
- 5. **In a presidential system of government, a president is chosen**
- A. by a decision of the national courts.
  - B. by a majority vote of the legislature.
  - C. in a separate vote from the one that chooses the legislature.
  - D. by the political party with the most representatives in the legislature.
- 6. **What is the role of the president regarding the laws passed by the legislature?**
- A. The president is supposed to enforce those laws.
  - B. The president can change the laws he does not like.
  - C. The president sends the laws to the states for approval.
  - D. The president does not need to approve laws passed by the legislature.
- 7. **What is one main difference between a president and a prime minister?**
- A. A prime minister has more power than a president.
  - B. A president has to be elected while a prime minister does not.
  - C. A prime minister does not belong to a particular political party while a president always does.
  - D. A president is in a separate branch of government while a prime minister is a part of the legislature.

Use the chart to answer questions 476-477.



8. What is the purpose of the chart?

- A. to explain the role of the Emperor in Japanese government
- B. to explain how power is divided in the government of Japan
- C. to show that the prime minister controls all parts of the government
- D. to show that the three branches of government are not equally powerful

9. Which part of the government leads the legislative branch?

- A. the Diet
- B. the courts
- C. the cabinet
- D. the emperor

**SS7CG7 The student will demonstrate an understanding of national governments in Southern and Eastern Asia.**

- a. Compare and contrast the federal republic of The Republic of India, the communist state of The People's Republic of China, and the constitutional monarchy of Japan, distinguishing the form of leadership, and the role of the citizen in terms of voting rights and personal freedoms.

## **THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA**

The country of **India** came under British rule beginning in the 1700s. It was a colony of the British Empire until 1947. When India became independent in 1947, they modeled their government after Great Britain's government. India became the world's largest democracy. The Indian constitution was adopted in 1950. It guarantees all Indian citizens the same basic rights. Even the Untouchable caste was granted equal rights, and many among this group are elected officials of the government today. Women were granted voting rights as well. Several women have held the highest offices in India's government. Indira Gandhi was the first woman to be elected as India's prime minister in the 1990s.

Local power is in the hands of village councils in India. Each village council, known as a **panchayat**, is part of a larger group of villages. These larger groups belong to **district councils**. Indian law requires that women and Untouchables be allowed to run for positions in these three levels of councils. The national parliament of India is made up of two houses, and its representatives are elected from local districts. For this reason, India can be described as a **republic**, one in which elected individuals make decisions for the people. If the voters are unhappy with the way these representatives make decisions, they can choose different people in the next election. Elections for the Indian parliament are held every five years. The leader of the majority political party in the Indian parliament serves as **prime minister** and head of the government.

Because India is so large and has so many different languages, castes, and religions, the national government has had to work very hard to see that all groups feel included and are equally protected. The country is **secular**, meaning it favors no special religion, even though the majority of India's people are Hindu.

## **THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

The **People's Republic of China** is a communist country. It is run as a one-party dictatorship. The Chinese Revolution in 1949 brought the communists to power under the leadership of **Communist Party Chairman Mao Tse-Tung**. Power was in the hands of Mao and a small committee called the **Political Bureau of the Communist Party**, a small group of men who made all of the decisions on how the Chinese government and life in that country would be organized. The Chinese communist government has some control over almost every aspect of Chinese life. People are put to work according to what the Party sees are the needs of the country. All children are expected to attend school. This is an improvement for the very poorest of the Chinese people. Property was taken from wealthy landowners and given to peasants who had no land before the revolution. When the communists took over the government, rural farmers were organized into communities and told to farm as the government saw they should. Chinese industries were organized and controlled by the government.

There was often great suffering in the years following the revolution, and starvation was widespread during some of the early years as officials tried to organize farming. While there were those in China who were more interested in having jobs, education, health care, and housing, most were not worried about losing their personal freedoms.

Today, the Chinese government is still run by the Chinese Communist Party. The government controls most aspects of Chinese life. The **National People's Congress** is elected every five years by a vote of the Chinese people. Every Chinese citizen over the age of 18 is eligible to vote; however, few candidates run for election if they are not approved by the Chinese Communist Party. The National People's Congress chooses a president and vice-president. The president then chooses a **premier** who serves the same five year term as the Congress.

There are signs that China is gradually opening itself up to the rest of the world. Demand for western goods and interest in western culture have become part of China's daily life. The Internet has made the Chinese people aware of life outside of China. The Beijing Olympics gave the rest of the world a look at China, including a look at how strong government control is of most things in that country. The role of the citizen, including what job and what education he or she will have, is determined by the state and there are no votes cast in Chinese elections for anyone other than candidates approved by the government.

## **THE CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY OF JAPAN**

Before World War II, the country of Japan was a **monarchy**. It was ruled by a hereditary emperor named **Hirohito**. The people believed him to be descended from the Sun. He was thought to be a god, and few in the country had ever seen him. After Japan was defeated in World War II, the United States helped the Japanese reorganize their government as a constitutional monarchy. A **constitutional monarchy** is a government in which there is a king or emperor, who is limited to the power granted to him by the constitution or laws of the nation.

In 1947, Japan adopted their first constitution that created a **two-house parliament**. This parliament is called the **Diet**, and the government is led by a **prime minister** and a **cabinet** of advisors. The prime minister is chosen by an election of the members of the Diet. All Japanese citizens over the age of 20, including women, are guaranteed the right to vote for the members of the Diet. The constitution also includes a **Bill of Rights**, spelling out the basic freedoms that all Japanese citizens may enjoy. The **emperor** of Japan remains in his position, but he has no political power. The constitution also states that the emperor is no longer to be considered a god.

Use this chart to answer questions 478-485.

Country	Type of Government	Who Votes	Role of Religion	Design of Government
Japan	Constitutional Monarchy	All citizens 20 years old or older	No direct role; the government is considered secular	Elected parliament (the Diet) and a prime minister chosen by the Diet members
China	Communist Party	All citizens over the age of 18	Religion is not encouraged by the Chinese government	National People's Congress with leaders chosen by the congress
India	Democratic Republic	All citizens over the age of 18	India is a secular government	Elected parliament with a prime minister chosen from the majority party

- 10. Which best describes the Japanese government?
- A. monarchy
  - B. theocracy
  - C. federal democracy
  - D. constitutional monarchy
- 11. The Japanese parliament is called the
- A. the Diet.
  - B. Knesset.
  - C. Congress.
  - D. House of Representatives.
- 12. What role do religious leaders play in the Indian government?
- A. No religious leaders are allowed to run for political office in India.
  - B. Religious leaders choose the candidates that run from most rural areas.
  - C. They are guaranteed a certain number of representatives in each election.
  - D. The country has a secular government in order to avoid seeming to favor one group over another.
- 13. Who is allowed to vote in Indian elections?
- A. All citizens who are over the age of 18.
  - B. All citizens who are 16 years of age or older.
  - C. Only men who can prove they are Indian citizens.
  - D. Only those who can prove they were born in India.

- 14. **Who is allowed to vote in Japan?**  
A. Only men can vote in Japanese elections.  
B. All citizens who are 20 years of age or older may vote.  
C. Only those who can read and write are allowed to vote.  
D. Voters who can prove they were born in Japan may vote.
- 15. **What sort of government is the People's Republic of China?**  
A. monarchy  
B. federal democracy  
C. constitutional monarchy  
D. communist government
- 16. **What is the name of the elected Chinese legislative assembly?**  
A. the Diet  
B. Political Bureau  
C. Chinese Communist Party  
D. National People's Congress
- 17. **Who can vote in national elections in China?**  
A. only Chinese men  
B. only those who live in cities  
C. all citizens who are over the age of 18  
D. voters who have completed 12 years of school
- 18. **How often are elections for the national government held in India?**  
A. Elections are held every six years.  
B. Party members are elected for life.  
C. Elections for national office are held every five years.  
D. Religious leaders can require new elections to be held if they think it is necessary.
- 19. **Which country is the world's largest democracy?**  
A. India  
B. Japan  
C. China  
D. Korea
- 20. **Who was Indira Gandhi?**  
A. mother of Mohandas Gandhi  
B. powerful religious leader in India  
C. first woman prime minister in India  
D. leader of the effort to end the Untouchable caste in India



- 21. **What role do the people play in a government like that of Japan?**
- A. The people have the real power in Japan.
  - B. They have the power to vote the Japanese emperor out of office.
  - C. The people get to approve the laws made by the Japanese emperor.
  - D. They have little power because the emperor makes most decisions.
- 22. **What was the position of the Japanese emperor before World War II?**
- A. His power was weakened by a powerful parliament.
  - B. He was believed to be a god descended from the sun.
  - C. The emperor played a part in selecting people to run for public office.
  - D. The emperor was very involved running the government of the country on a daily basis.
- 23. **What group makes most of the important decisions in the government of the People's Republic of China today?**
- A. the wealthy landowners
  - B. the Chinese Communist party
  - C. Mao Tse-Tung and his advisors
  - D. people in the local village councils
- 24. **Who chooses the president and vice-president of the National People's Congress in China?**
- A. People are chosen for these jobs by the king.
  - B. The members of the National People's Congress choose them.
  - C. The voters choose people for these jobs in the general election.
  - D. These jobs are filled by the two oldest members of the National People's Congress.
- 25. **The premier of the National People's Congress in China is chosen by the**
- A. president.
  - B. National People's Congress.
  - C. president and the vice-president.
  - D. Chinese voters in general election.
- 26. **Who was the first leader of the People's Republic of China?**
- A. Hirohito
  - B. Mao Tse-Tung
  - C. Indira Gandhi
  - D. Mohandas Gandhi