

CLASS: SS1

SUBJECT: GOVIC

TOPIC: BASIC CONCEPTS IN GOVERNMENT

WEEK: 2

TERM: SECOND

COMMUNALISM

Communalism as a system of government was more predominant in the **pre-colonial** era. It refers to a system of **collective ownership** of property and **co-operation** among members of a community in the execution of development projects in a community. In a communal system, members pursue a common goal collectively and Property like land is owned collectively and shared among members on equal basis.

Features of Communalism

1. Collective ownership of property
2. Co-operation among members in the execution of developmental project and other responsibilities.
3. The system is mostly common in communal societies.
4. No member of the communal society is allowed to own private land.
5. It discourages members from pursuing individual objectives.
6. Members of a communal society share common culture and identity
7. Communalism was common in the pre-colonial era.
8. Members are economically and socially self-sufficient in their needs.
9. The community is granted the widest degree of autonomy with distinct identity.

FEUDALISM

Feudalism is an ancient political and economic system that was based on hierarchical orders of land ownership. It is a social system based on personal ownership of land resources and personal fidelity between the lord and vassals (subjects). The king (LORD) on receiving his feud (or estate) was entrusted with sovereignty over all persons living on it. He became their law maker, their commander and the judge.

The feudal system developed in **Europe** from A.D 476-AD 1500. During this period, the **Lords** gave land to the **vassal** (or **Serfs** or **tenants**) who worked on the **land**. The vassals paid dues for working on the land. Land was the main source of wealth; and land owners controlled the society as at that time.

Features of Feudalism

1. Feudalism is based mainly on hierarchical order of land ownership.
2. Ownership of land is vested in the king or monarch or emperor.
3. The land users or serf hold land in return for the services they render to their lords or kings.
4. The land owners or lords are duty-bound to protect the serfs.
5. The system is characterized by close personal bond between the lords and the serfs.
6. The feudal tenants or serfs vowed to give military service to the owner of the land.
7. The vassal keeps possession of land as long as he performs his feudal duties.
8. The land goes back to the lord when the vassals fail in their responsibilities.

Merits of Feudalism

1. It fostered among the big landlords self-reliance and love of personal independence.
2. It instituted orderliness and avoided total chaos.
3. The feudal system encourages decentralization.(transfer of authority or delegating duties).

Demerits of Feudalism

1. It disintegrates the state, and therefore, the absence of strong national government can give room to anarchy(a state of disorder due to absence of authority).
2. Feudalism is an exploitative master-servant relationship.
3. Loyalty and obedience was not to the government, but to the landlords.
4. It was highly autocratic, because people were denied the opportunity to choose their leaders.

CAPITALISM

Capitalism refers to the political and economic system in which **individuals own and controls** the means of production, distribution and exchange. It is based on free enterprise, but rejects government intervention and control of the economy. Nearly all the so-called first world or developed nations of the world such as Japan, North America, New Zealand, Western Europe, Australia, Israel etc, are capitalist countries.

Features of Capitalism

1. Private ownership and control of all or most means of production.
2. The forces of demand and supply guide the economy.
3. The entrepreneurs determine the quantity and price of their products.
4. The citizens determine the people that govern them through an electoral process.
5. The role of government in production and distribution of good and services is limited.
6. There is the application of advanced technology in production and specialization in occupation in a capitalist state.
7. The level of economic growth in a capitalist economy is faster and more sustainable.

Merits of Capitalism

1. Capitalism offers people freedom to choose how to earn a living.
2. There is competition in the production, distribution and marketing of items produced.
3. There is a high level of incentive to enable the enterprise to attract the skills and expertise it need.
4. The level of growth is faster.
5. Capitalism encourages specialization in production.

Demerits of Capitalism

1. Capitalism widens the gap between the rich and poor in the society.
2. Small scale enterprises cannot compete favorable with large organization.
3. Industrial establishments and social amenities are often concentrated in the cities and urban centers, neglecting the rural areas where there are no established large markets.
4. There is sometimes excessive production of goods in a capitalist society.
5. In a capitalist system, the relatively poor cannot effectively contest for public office.

SOCIALISM

Socialism refers to the political and economic theory which emphasized **state ownership and control** of factor of production, distribution and exchange. Some socialist countries are: China, Cuba, and the former Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria Romanian, Poland, etc.

Advantage of socialism

1. It leads to equitable distribution of state resources.
2. It tries to cater for the needs of all citizens.
3. It bridges the gap between the rich and the poor.
4. Unhealthy rivalry is absent in a socialist economic system.
5. Socialism gives the citizen a sense of belonging.
6. It is also argued that socialism makes the government to be stable.
7. Private monopoly is prevented in a socialist system.
8. It ensures job security.
9. Government always intervenes in business by giving bailouts.

Disadvantages of Socialism

1. Socialism suppresses individual initiatives and ideas.
2. The system makes people to be lazy and un-enterprising.
3. Socialism is not self-regulating and self-functioning.
4. Socialism does not encourage specialization.
5. Absence of economic competition in a socialist economic system lowers the quality of goods produced.
6. Socialism does not encourage faster economic development.
7. Production is mainly designed to meet social needs, not for profit.

Assignment

Choose the political system you prefer (among the one above), and state five reasons for preferring such system of government.