

ANSWERS

CHAPTER 9 – PUBLIC FACILITIES

1. Choose the correct option:

- (a) (i) Construction of bars
- (b) (i) Government
- (c) (ii) Right to Life
- (d) (iii) Sulabh
- (e) (i) Taxes paid by the people to the government.

2. Fill in the blanks.

- (a) urban, rural (b) affordable (c) diseases
- (d) misuse (e) education

3. Match the Columns

- (a) — (v)
- (b) — (i)
- (c) — (iv)
- (d) — (ii)
- (e) — (iii)

6. Short Answer Questions.

- (a) Every citizen of our country is entitled to certain essential facilities that include water, sanitation, health care, education, electricity and transport. These facilities are called **public facilities**.
- (b) Public facilities that include water, sanitation, health care, education, electricity and transport are derived from the fundamental **Right to Life** and are entitled to all people living in the country. This is how both are lined with each other.
- (c) Rapid urbanization has led to an increase in the demand of transportation facilities that has led the government to invest huge amounts in extensive metro rail projects.
- (d) India is one of the largest power and energy consumers in the world. The thermal and nuclear power plants as well as

from renewable sources are the sources of power generation of the country.

- (e) The government presents the budget in the parliament every year detailing out the expenses incurred for its programmes executed in the previous year and also presents an estimate of expenses for its planned initiatives in the coming year.

7. Long Answer Questions.

- (a) The government plays a crucial role in making quality public facilities available, affordable and accessible equally to all the people. All individuals are entitled to share these facilities and get benefited by them. For example, school is a public facility where many students get educated. Water supply to farmers helps them to irrigate their land. Electricity supplied to an area lights all homes in that area and so on. Let us have a look of the some of the basic facilities.

Water- Water is one of the most basic and essential needs for every human being. The Indian Constitution recognizes the right of every person to have universal access to sufficient amount of water to fulfill the daily needs at an affordable price. However, India has a large number of victims suffering from water-borne diseases like cholera, diarrhea and dysentery due to shortage and scarcity of safe drinking water. It is high time that awareness is spread among the citizens emphasizing the dire need of enforcing their right to safe drinking water.

Sanitation - Sanitation is also important for preventing waterborne diseases. Sulabh is a non-government organization that has been taking commendable efforts to provide public sanitation facilities for the low-income people in India. The organization has tied up with the local and municipal authorities for provision of land and funds to construct public toilets. In the last 3 decades, more than 1 million private toilets and more than 7000 public toilet blocks have been constructed for the poor working class. The maintenance is taken care through nominal user charges.

- (b) Municipal water supply can only satisfy the needs of 50% of the local people. Areas close to water storage points have better access to these facilities whereas colonies that are situated farther suffer for regular supply of the minimum resources required. Hence, to handle this shortage, water supply to major cities is done through tankers or sealed bottles at a price that may not be affordable by everybody. This shortage or scarcity affects the poor and the middle class more than the richer sections as they cannot cope up with the financial burden of digging borewells or buying water from tankers. The richer sections of the society have much more choices for 'safe' drinking water as they can afford water purifiers or bottled water.

When the responsibility of water supply is handed over to private contractors, they tie up with the farmers in and around the city and take water from these places to supply to the nearby cities by paying an advance to the farmers. This not only results in the shortage for water for agricultural purposes, but also affects the productivity and the yield. In addition, the ground water levels also depreciate due to overuse of the resources.

- (c) India is one of the largest power and energy consumers in the world, the electricity generated from thermal and nuclear power plants as well as from renewable sources is still not sufficient to satisfy the needs of the population as well as industrial requirements.

The shortage is acute and this impedes both socio and economic development of the nation. This has largely affected the rural areas more than urban cities. In addition, the reliability of supply even in urban cities is going towards crisis levels in the recent years.

The discrepancy in the distribution of electricity to the rural and urban households is quite high. Though the rural household electrification initiative taken by the government has lit up many more villages in the recent years, millions of households in remote parts of India still remain in the dark.

- (d) In order to cope up with the ever-rising demand of public facilities and to and manage them effectively, the government has handed over the responsibility of some of these facilities to private companies. However, this is not a viable solution in the long run as the facilities may not reach all sections of people equally. Private companies provide these facilities to those areas where they can make profit whereas most of the public facilities are not just profit-making businesses. For example, educational institutions, medical facilities, road construction and water supply are profitable in developed cities compared to rural areas. As these private contractors would not ensure that the public facilities are provided to the remote parts of the country also Privatization may actually result in unequal distribution of resources and further increase the discrepancy between the rural and urban areas.
- (e) Every citizen of the country is entitled to universal access to all public facilities which means ensuring physical access to good quality public facilities at an affordable rate. However, in reality, not all people enjoy equal access and provision of public facilities.

Scarcities, unequal distribution, shortage of supply are some of the predominant issues related to public facilities. For example, metros, larger cities and towns enjoy better amenities than rural areas and villages where services are limitedly available or in some cases, completely not available. Even in urban areas, poorer localities are relatively under-serviced when compared to wealthy localities. People often get confused between the issues of equal accessibility of public facilities and the provision of public facilities by the government. For example, discrepancy in the amount of water supplied to different areas is an issue of unequal distribution of water supply. This does not mean that the government is not able to provide these basic facilities at all.