

The key responsibility of a government is to create wealth for the country.' What is your view?

Thinking aspect:

For this question, the requirement of the question is to examine whether the main responsibility of the government is to create wealth and in this attempt, we have to look at the various functions of the government from a wide area of discussion. The key responsibility is argued based on the significance of the function where this function of wealth creation is the vital and pivotal development that determines the success of the country seen from the prosperity, progress and flourishing of the country. It is also imperative to see this key responsibility from how it can ensure the survival and safety of the people and the freedom and rights of the people.

It is important to consider this form of question as a 'Do You Agree?' (DYA) type of question where your view is the aspect of discussion which you agree to and the other view is the part which you disagree with. This question needs a good introduction with an observation of the subjects and their linkage, followed by the perspectives of views and the stand.

Introduction

As the world becomes more complex and institutionalised, countries have to be more organised to be competitive, adaptive and innovative. To achieve this, these nations require the relentless effort of the people and the efficiency of the government. In view of this development, there is no doubt that the government plays an imperative role but the debate is on which is the main function of the government. It is conventional wisdom for many to see the role of the government from an economic angle where the key responsibility is to create wealth. However, if we examine what makes a country great and serves the interests of its people, there are other areas of concern that must be fulfilled by the government. In view of the diverse opinions, my view on this issue is that the key responsibility of the government is not just confined to creating wealth as there are other concerns of great benefit and vital to the society and its people.

Main Body

Point 1 - Other view

Many economists would argue for the view that the key responsibility of the government is to create wealth as raising the economic well-being of the people and prosperity of the country has critical benefits to the country. Simply put, the government must be directly involved to trigger economic activities within the country, generating investment opportunities that have a trickle down effect for the people. Most people today expect their governments to take action to promote national prosperity and quality of life. Consequently, the standard of living of citizens would improve. In the 1960s, the city-state of Singapore was an undeveloped country with a GDP per capita of less than U.S. \$320. By 1972, just seven years after independence, one-quarter of Singapore's manufacturing firms were either foreign-owned or joint-venture companies, and both the United States and Japan were major investors. Today, it is one of the world's fastest-growing economies. Its GDP per capita has risen to an incredible U.S. \$60,000, making it one of the strongest economies in the world where people enjoy high standards of living and satisfaction. Therefore, the key responsibility of a government is to create wealth for the country.

Point 2 - Rebuttal - Prove why the opposing view is limited

However, a country needs to maintain social and political stability to consolidate a stable framework to create wealth as this builds consumer and investment confidence for economic activities to flourish. The focus on expanding the economic wealth of the country may seem like a sustainable option, but it requires the social and political ambience to maintain the attractiveness of the host country for businesses to set up bases there. For example, Singapore provides a sound business environment with low financial loans and efficient taxing systems. Singapore is home to over 128 commercial banks, 31 merchant banks, 365 fund managers and 604 capital markets services license holders which makes it easy for businesses to have access to private as well as commercial banking services to fund their expansion at low-interest rates. Furthermore, the government has signed over 21 free trade agreements with 27 economies and 76 comprehensive avoidance of double tax agreements which facilitates smooth business across borders. These tax incentives have attracted and retained foreign businesses, investors and start-ups to Singapore. Therefore, the political and social ambience has attracted flocks of foreign investors that create GDP growth and wealth in the country. Simply put, by focusing on the former one gets the benefits of the latter.

Point 3 - Supporting view 1

Wealth creation may be critical but the political structure that forges the sovereignty of the country which declares the independence of the country and the rights of its people in this political state is equally imperative for the government to exercise as the people need to have the political rights to exist as a freeman in this global world. Essentially, the government is tasked to protect citizens' rights. For example, a country like the United States is a poignant example of the government protecting the political rights of the people thereby giving individuals a sense of pride and personal freedom. A number of important laws are designed to ensure the political rights of racial and ethnic minorities, and the most recent national elections demonstrated increased participation by women and minority candidates. The Congress elected in 2018 included the first Native American women members, the first Muslim women, and record numbers of black, Hispanic, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and women lawmakers. Therefore, the other critical responsibility of a government is to maintain the political rights of its people.

Point 4 - Supporting view 2

Besides political rights and identity of the people, social development is also a key task for the government as the social way of life to build a socially stable environment for the people. In terms of law and enforcement, the government must ensure the rule of law in the country as this would provide a safe environment for individuals, families and businesses to thrive. For example, locals and foreigners alike behave well in Singapore and avoid committing crimes as they know they will be easily discovered via the vast surveillance systems once they do so. Unlike in other countries where you can get away from petty crimes by being apologetic or slipping some bills on the greasy hands of officers, doing so is no dice in Singapore. No one is definitely above the law here. Therefore, another critical responsibility of a government is to maintain law and order for the country.

Point 5 - Supporting View 3

Lastly, the government has the key responsibility to uphold the cultural heritage of the people as this forms the identity of the state which builds a common sense of belonging that gives the people a sense of national pride. In a way, cultural heritage is likened to the soul of a nation. These historical and archaic forces serve to provide individuals and families with a grounded sense of identity and rootedness to the land. Consequently, this instilled sense of identity ensures national pride and commitment towards the betterment of society as individuals act as state bearers that spearhead the future of society. For example, in Taiwan, much emphasis is placed on the preservation and protection of its cultural heritage with its origins in the early part of the twentieth century, though arguably it was not until the 1980s when it became enshrined in a system of national protection. However, in line with the maturing of Taiwan's democracy, the regulatory and policy frameworks for cultural heritage at the national and local level are now well established. To engage with heritage is also to engage with questions of identity not just in the historical sense but in terms of how the people of Taiwan understand their 'sense of place', how they see their role in the world and how they see the future with the encroaching influence of China.

Conclusion

It is difficult to agree with the view that the key responsibility of the government is to create wealth as the rule of a country requires the government to place emphasis on many aspects of development in the nation building process. As the responsibility of the government to the people is a heavy and noble task, it is still imperative to place a priority on this process and this may lead to a misguided perception that wealth creation is the key responsibility. In reality, the government cannot ignore the need to balance all its responsibilities as all are intertwined and linked to each other, justifying the view that the key responsibility of government is not only to create wealth.