

Title: Democracy in Pakistan: Hopes and Hurdles

Outline

1) Introduction

Democracy is a pre-requisite towards a peaceful and prosperous Pakistan. Hopeful measures such as the 18th amendment pave path towards strengthening democratic norms in the country. However, the young quasi-democracy faces a number of challenges because of the historical burdens colonialism and then dictatorship. It is imperative that Pakistan strengthens her political arena, achieve good governance and educate the masses to attain democracy in the future.

2) Hopes for a democratic Pakistan in the future.

- (a) Constitutional amendments protecting democracy.
~ 18th amendment, Article 6 of constitution
- (b) Decentralization of power from federal to provincial governments.
~ 7th NFC award, concurrent list dissolved
- (c) Continuous civilian regime for 15 years
~ How Democracy Ends by David Runciman and independence
- (d) Strengthening of democratic institutions in Pakistan
~ ECP, Judiciary
- (e) Politically aware and active civil society with social media

3) Hurdles towards achievement of democracy in Pakistan

- (a) Substandard education system
~ 22 million out of school children
~ Education, Freedom and Inequalities by Shalwid Siddiqui
- (b) Censorship and threats to media personell
~ 53 Journalists killed, Arshad Sharif case
- (c) Weak local government system in Pakistan
~ Local poll delaying tactics in Sindh

(d) Weak democratic institutions with poor governance
~ Pakistan beyond the crisis state

(e) Non-democratic mainstream political parties

(f) Rising threat of terrorism
~ TTP attacks on security personnel

4) Way forward for prevailing democracy in Pakistan

(a) Improve education system
~ Increase GPF allocation to education sector

(b) Promote free media and freedom of speech at large

(c) Strengthen local institutions

(d) Apply good governance in public institutions

(e) Enforce a requirement for internal democracy within political parties
~ PPP, PMLN, PTI

(f) Curb extremist groups raising heads in Pakistan (BLA, TTP)
~ military operations such as Zarb-e-Azab and Radd-ul-Fasaad.

5) Conclusion