

## Features of Real Democracy

### Outline:

#### 1- Introduction

Real democracy involves direct participation of citizens into political decisions through different mechanisms. It fosters connectivity, accountability and trust. However, real democracy also facing certain challenges which need to be addressed.

- 2- Overview of Real Democracy
- 3- Current scenario of Real Democracy in the World
- 4- Features of Real Democracy
  - (A) Guarantors of Civil Liberties
    - (a) Case in point: Active Citizen Participation
  - (B) Accountability Across the Board
    - (b) Case in point: Analysis of Simon Johnson
  - (C) Rule of Law
    - (c) Case in point: The Bedrock of Democracy by Kenne
  - (D) Providers of Inclusive Political system
    - (d) Case in point: Why Nations Fail by Robinson
  - (E) Independent Judiciary
    - (e) Case in point: Separation of Powers
  - (F) Freedom of Expression
    - (f) Case in point: Unbiased Media
  - (G) Free and Fair Elections
    - (g) Case in point: Peaceful Transition of Powers

Why nations fail is about institutional efficiency and not inclusivity of political system



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- 5- Challenges to Real Democracy
- (A) Rise in Authoritarianism  
(a) Case in point: How Democracies Die by Stephen Litaly
- (B) Rise of Nationalism  
(b) Case in point: Arun Aditroy on Hypernationalism
- (C) Illiteracy Breeds Ground for Undemocratic powers  
(c) Case in point: Less citizen participation
- (D) Biased Media  
(d) Case in point: Political Engineering
- 6- Suggestions to Tackle Challenges
- (A) Keeps an eye on Undemocratic Powers
- (B) Promote literacy and Education
- (C) Accountability of Media Houses
- (D) Ensure inclusive political system
- 7- Conclusion

Include institutional balance as an argument in the suggestions



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"As I would not be a slave,  
so I would not be a master." These  
words of the US former President Abraham  
Lincoln described ~~the~~ his idea of  
democracy. Real democracy, unlike  
representative democracy, involves  
direct citizen's partnership in  
formulation and implementation of  
policies and in political processes.

~~In representative dem~~ In today's  
world, representative democracy is  
everywhere but real democracy in  
true spirit can be seldom seen.

In most part of the world

These are certain features of  
real democracy which include  
guarantee of civil liberties, accountab-  
-ility across the board and  
rule of law. Moreover, it involves



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inclusive political system, independent judiciary and freedom of expression. Free and fair election is another feature of real democracy. These features of real democracy are threatened by certain challenges including rise in authoritarianism, rise of nationalism, illiteracy and biased media. These threats can be curbed by keeping an eye on undemocratic powers, promoting literacy and education, and accountability of media houses. It can also be tackled by ensuring inclusive political system. Real democracy is the active and direct participation of citizens in political processes. It fosters inclusivity and accountability. However, it is facing certain challenges that need to be addressed.

Repetition

Real democracy is the active participation of citizens into political process and formulation of policies. Unlike representative democracy where citizens elect their representatives and they formulate policies on their behalf of voters, real democracy involves direct



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participation. The direct participation is made through different mechanisms such as referendums, town-hall meetings, civil assemblies and online platforms. For instance, Brexit in 2016 of England was done through referendum. The English people directly voted in favour of Brexit.

The current scenario of real democracy in world is that it is not functioning everywhere. It can be seen that representative democratic system is adopted by many countries but real democracy is not thriving in true spirit. As per report of the Economical Unit Annual Survey, only 8% countries are enjoying fruit of real democracy. This report also revealed that 38% countries are under hybrid democracy and 22% countries are under autocratic regimes.

Following paragraphs will shed light on the features of real democracy.

Firstly, real democracy is the guarantor of civil liberties.



It provides an environment to the people or citizens in which they can enjoy their freedom. Real democracy is direct involvement of citizens into democratic processes. The citizens actively participate and made choices of their own.

Secondly, real democracy makes the accountability across the board possible.

There is no selected accountability. According to Simon Johnson, a political activist, in real democratic country, institutions keep an eyes on each other and made themselves accountable before the law. People everywhere try to grab powers for the sake of their interests but it is responsibility of democratic country to control them, otherwise watch your nation fails.

Thirdly, there is a rule of law in real democracy. The laws are above anything and every institution comes under the law. Kennedy in his book "The Bedrock of Democracy" argues that the rule of law is integral component in flourishing democratic system. The judiciary should made the independent decisions irrespective of the political winds are blowing in any side.



Moreover, real democracy is the  
← provides of inclusive political systems.

Inclusive political system is a  
system in which people of different  
interests and political views thrive together.

Real democracy is all about co-existing,  
not muscling each other. In a book, "Why  
Nation Fails", the author remarks that  
inclusive institutions create job opportunities,  
innovations and foster economic sustainability.

Those nations having inclusive political  
systems are better performer in political  
and economical domain while have extractive  
institutions are pushing towards verge of  
failure in both domains.

Besides provider of inclusive political  
system, real democracy have independent  
judiciary. Independent judiciary does not  
influence by any other institutions. The  
US system of separation of powers  
are included in the constitution for  
the sake of independent judiciary. The  
executive, legislature and judiciary are  
completely work in different domains  
and their functions do not influence  
each other. However, there is also a  
check and balance system to keep  
an eye on each other. In this way,  
independent judiciary is feature  
of real democracy.

Additionally freedom of expression  
is integral feature of real democracy.  
Real democratic country has independent



media which makes unbiased opinion on any matter. People are free to express their views on social media and criticize on government's policies. The freedom of expression is basic right of any citizen which constitution provides and real democracy protects this right.

Lastly, free and fair elections are another characteristic of real democracy. The peaceful transition of power between two democratic governments is possible through transparent elections. Free and fair elections are done under the independent electoral institutions and people freely elect their representatives by using freedom of expression. Hence, free and fair election is feature of real democracy.

The ~~features~~ real democracy ~~is~~ **is** threatened by certain challenges which are explained below.

Firstly, the rise of authoritarianism in the world is challenging the spirit of real democracy. There are 22% countries under authoritarianism as per report aforementioned.

The author argues in the book "How Democracies Die" that rise of authoritarian regimes in the world are threat to democracy. These regimes reject the democratic values and encourage the extremism. Democracy is not only the set of democratic institutions but also



a culture of tolerance and mutual respect. In this way, rise in authoritarianism is threat to real democracy.

Secondly, rise of nationalism is another challenge for real democracy to thrive. The nationalism allows people to become over possessive about their nationality and in a result, they can not accept others. It deteriorates the social fabric of society. Arun Aditya, an Indian author, considers nationalism threat to the democratic government. In India is becoming a hyper nationalist state and social unrest is prevailing there. The dominant Hinduvata ideology has left little space for other ideologies to survive. Hence, rise of nationalism is challenge to democracy.

Thirdly, illiteracy breeds the ground for undemocratic powers to fill the vacuum. Democracy demands active and responsible participation of citizens. If citizens are literate, they can decide better decisions. Illiteracy leads to the less citizen participation in political process and support undemocratic moves. Education and democracy go hand in hand. So, illiteracy is challenge to democracy.

Lastly, the biased media is challenge for real democracy. The biased media shaped the public opinion for particular interests and do



propaganda for others. This is called political engineering. It is dangerous for the real democracy as opinion of majority becomes dimmed. The narrative of specific group flourish on surface which purposely damage the truest meaning of democracy.

Substantiate the argument

The above mentioned challenges can need to be addressed. Following are some suggestions to tackle these challenges.

Foremost suggestion is to keep an eye on undemocratic powers by various mechanism. The undemocratic powers include foreign interference, overpowering of one institution and hybrid regimes. All these powers need to be checked.

Secondly, the government should promote literacy and education. The educated citizens can not become tool of undemocratic powers and are well aware of democracy.

They participate in democratic processes and share their opinion which lead country to on way of democracy.

Thirdly, there should be accountability of media houses and they should promote state narrative and safeguard national interests. The media houses become unguided missiles if there is no accountability. Therefore, it is mandatory to make them accountable.

Lastly, the government must ensure inclusive political system. Inclusive political system provides



Space for opposition to criticize the governmental policies. The criticism is an essence of democracy. An inclusive political system includes all political parties to participate in formulation of policies. Democratic governments channel through political parties to present different interests and opinions. So, there should be assurance of inclusive political system.

In a nutshell, real democracy is the active and direct participation of citizens into political system. Real democracy fosters accountability, economic equality and inclusiveness. The real democracy is guarantor of civil liberties, uphold the rule of law and provide freedom of expression. There are certain challenges to real democracy which needs to be addressed in order to flourish real democracy.

Concluding paragraph is very short in length