

# Future of Democracy in Pakistan

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Case in point: Military has

ruled the country for 38 years.

Afterwards, indirectly influencing democracy from behind the close doors.

## c- Econo Economic crisis

Case in point: According

to Economic survey of Pakistan

(2023-2024) fiscal deficit is 488

Billion USD.

d- Illiteracy - Lack of Political awareness.

case in point:- Literacy

rate in Pakistan is 59%, with males at 71% and females at 48%, only 67% children complete elementary education. (The Nation)

e- Unbridled Media

b- Pakistan's democracy a

Political tool for power

Menace of Terrorism

case in Point: According

to report of NACTA, From

2001 to 2022 Pakistan lost

83 thousand lives and 35 trillion rupee

financial loss owing to terrorism.

5- Suggestions to achieve

Thriving future of Democracy

a- Strengthening the political parties

b- Need of Assertive and

independent judiciary.

c- Rise of Urban-middle class  
case in point: The Wall Street Journal asserted that Pakistan has 42% of middle class.

d- The need for grand national dialogue.

e- More administrative units for effective governance.

f- Economic uplift of country.

g- Participation of youth in political process.

Quaid e Azam asserted; Democracy is in our blood, it is in our marrow.

b Conclusion

# The Essay

Emphasizing the importance of Democracy; Noam Chomsky had advocated; In this possibly terminal phase of human existence, freedom and democracy are just more than ideals to be followed rather its necessary for survival. Democracy is sustained in a country with a democratic process and its acceptance. The trajectory of democracy in Pakistan has faced many challenges, since its creation in 1947. Some of these include; prolonged military interference, absent of political culture, economic crisis, terrorism and role of democracy as fuel

of power. amidst of these threats to democracy, there are certain suggestions to thrive the future of democracy in Pakistan. These include national political dialogue, strengthening the political parties, economic uplift and participation of youth in political process. There is no second <sup>opinion that democracy is</sup> pre-requisite for Pakistan to earn respectable status in the world. By taking pivotal steps, Pakistan can become true democratic state in the world.

The renowned philosopher John Dewey had rightly stated "The cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy". Democracy is a

process not state. It empowered the citizens to bring about changes through participation and persuade the powerful act for greater good. It has ability to accomodate changes from below through expansion of voting rights and protection of civil liberties. Democracy has vital role in transforming the world from power of monarchy and empire to popular rule and self-determination.

Before proceeding, firstly this essay will discuss the past and present condition of democracy in Pakistan.

The creation of

Pakistan was the result of political and democratic struggle. The founder of country was great democratic statesman. He envisioned democratic Pakistan. His death was fine blow to political process of Pakistan. First prime minister of Pakistan Liaqat Ali Khan was elected from east Pakistan. He was not acceptable to west Pakistan and ultimately eliminated from the scene. He did not have enough time to focus his attention on development of democracy. Later conspiracies, undemocratic value invited military rule in country for 38 years. In 2008 democratic government formed after 9 years of martial law.

There was smooth transfer of power from 2008 to 2024. But current democracy is facing many challenges which have not let the true democracy to prevail. and culminate in election rigging allegations and protests have troubled the democratic process.

First major threat to democratic process in Pakistan is distorted political culture. The clouds of uncertainty are hovering over democratic culture. military interventions have distorted the political culture. democracy looks like something exist, but that thing doesn't exist. political parties apart from military have



major role in this manner. They are the necessities of democracy. Political culture can not flourish unless political parties are established on firm basis.

Another factor that has been meaner to the democracy is the influence of military, as this remains a major stakeholder in politics. Military has ruled the country for 38 years with four military coups. Afterward, it has influenced the democracy indirectly through influencing the decision making behind the close doors. It is threat continuously hanging over government on one hand and encouraging the undemocratic

forces on the other hand.

Similarly, economic crisis in other major threat to democracy. As it has hindered to the government performance and delivery of services. A major sector of population is living life of impoverishment. Economic crisis is contributed by persistent dependence on IMF bailouts, budget deficit, fiscal deficit. According to Economic Survey of Pakistan (2023-2024), fiscal deficit is 484 Billion USD. This economic uncertainty has widened the gap between government and public and has been crucial factor in exacerbating the democracy of Pakistan.

Adding little to these factors, is illiteracy including lack of political awareness.

A report by "The Nation" indicated that literacy rate in Pakistan is currently 59% with 71% male and 48% female literacy. It further added that only 67% children complete the elementary education. This is alarming situation, as illiterate people are unaware of democratic norms and major portion of educated people also lack political awareness. So it seems unreasonable to expect culmination of democracy in nation with such heart-breaking statistics.

Another factor is unbridled media posing threat to democracy. Free media has significant role in thriving the political process. But media is subjected to certain rules and ethics. In Pakistan the media scarcely follows these rules and ethics. Media in face of increasing rating and capturing the attention of viewers, distort the facts and misinform people. It pursues yellow journalism and put aside. whereas <sup>constructive</sup> criticism is positive, under castigation cause wrath of public and resultanty they desire a democratic change as undemocratic one.

Besides, Pakistan's democracy is a political ~~side~~ tool for power. This tool used by prominent social groups to maintain the prestige and wealth. The panoply of power comprising top tiers of political, Bureaucrats, business folk and military figures.

The civil and military leadership compete for power, but eventually cooperate to maintain their status quo. In

Why nations fail, James Robinson argued that nations do not succeed or fail due to geography but because of inclusive institutions within them. These inclusive institutions concentrate power in hands

of few elites with less constraint on power. economic institutions are used to extract resources from rest of society. political institution allow them to control power. This thesis indicate how powerful groups use social economic and political structure to take advantage

Lastly, Terrorism is major threat to people around the globe. The world is intimidated of the menace of terrorism. Its afflictions are pervasive. The recent attack <sup>on</sup> of chimer-wobed in Balochistan and wobed from Punjab have demonstrated the deep rooted bases of Terrorists in country. It has led to security

distrust among masses and  
severe blow to status of  
Pakistan at international level.

A report of NACTA have  
assessed that Terrorism has  
caused 87000 deaths from  
2001 to 2022 and 35 billion  
dollar loss to financial sector.

The social, political and  
economic effects of terrorism  
are depicting the turbulent  
situation for government and people.

First way to achieve  
the thriving future of democracy  
in Pakistan is to strengthen  
the political parties. These are  
the basic institutions of democracy  
and provide foundation to  
edifice of democracy. Political  
parties have to reorganize

and work in democratic lines. These have to establish their roots at grass root level. Currently political parties are not really political because their less than support from establishment than public

The politics that is being witnessed during election disappears once government is elected. Political parties must ensure intra-party elections. Well organized parties with duly elected party officials would lay the foundation of true democracy.

Secondly independent and assertive judiciary is the need of the hour. They must ensure rule of law and justice within society.



They provide platform to common to get addressed of their issues. They must ensure that no law could be made that violate rights and democratic norms of state. Judiciary must be free of all seen and unseen restrictions.

In addition, the rise of large and more assertive urban middle has essential role in democratic consolidation.

The Wall Street Journal has asserted that Pakistan has 47% urban middle class

population. This sector of society must play role in country's politics by aligning governance with demographic changes. Francis Fukuyama argued

in his book "Political order and Political decay" that vibrant middle class and urbanism have considerable impact on implementing democracy in state. When middle class emerge in state its economic participation and political consciousness increase. The economically self-sufficient class demands political space, which act as pressure to build rhetoric of democracy.

Another major way to prosper future of democracy is the need of grand national dialogue. In this, <sup>regard</sup> all the stakeholders come together to create a new charter of democracy. There should be commitment of all political leaders to embed democracy in its

integrity and the practice of democratic norms, intra party elections and regular audit of party funds. They must commit not to disrupt the political process. They should not shy away from talking to each other.

Furthermore, All the political parties in opposition and government should focus on making more structural/administrative units for effective governance. One way is to turn 39 administrative units into province as stated by Ajzaq Syed in his article "Rewiring Democracy" in Dawn newspaper. These are many examples as; Afghanistan has 34 provinces with population one-sixth of Pakistan. Turkey

has 81 % population  
which is one-third of  
Pakistan. The advantage of  
Smaller provinces is that  
the service delivery can  
be better assured. Since this  
need constitutional amendment  
so political leaders must  
make genuine efforts in this  
manner.

In addition to  
this economic uplift is very  
essential to uphold the  
democratic culture in society.  
Economic growth bring prosperity  
to life of common. Government  
must focus on local industries  
to increase the exports and  
reduce the imports. Spending  
of government officials must

be curb. employment rate should  
be increasing <sup>ed</sup> job the  
economic uplift of country.  
Economically culminating society  
will be closer and participate  
in political process in  
more effective way.

Lastly, participation of  
youth in political process  
should be encouraged. A large  
section of society comprises  
of youth. It is observed  
from history that youth  
had played important role  
in creation of Pakistan by  
participating mass awareness and  
opinion formation. So is the  
time now. There is enormous  
talent available in country.  
academics, journalists, political

activists seized public servants  
 (both civil and military) who  
 have extraordinary knowledge  
 and commitment can inspire  
 and mobilize the youth. They  
 would have to inculcate the  
 youth about true change  
 and rigorous efforts to  
 hold the democracy in  
 Pakistan.

To sum up, there is  
 no skeptical view that the  
 democracy has paramount significance  
 for the future of Pakistan.  
 But its track record shows  
 that it depicts gloomy picture  
 Pakistan has been deprived  
 of true democratic values.  
 having the major role by  
 both military and test

tube politician. dynastic, <sup>politics</sup> and  
power politics, intolerance and  
violence in politics has  
aggravated the democratic process.  
Quaid-e-Azam told his fellow  
members in 1947 that; I do not  
know what the ultimate shape of  
constitution is going to be,  
but I am sure it will be  
democratic. He added democracy  
is in our blood, it is in  
our marrow. His philosophies  
are the basis of future government.  
Unfortunately for future of  
democracy, there is no solid  
base in past. Democracy is  
the product of wishes of  
people and not the desire of  
an elite few. Despite of  
all the threats to it, there  
is hope to have prosper

future of democracy in  
Pakistan. For democracy evolve  
like beautiful tree, it may  
take decade to grow and  
spread out its branches to  
provide shade to people. There  
are no short cuts, patience is  
another name of democracy. For  
the better future of democracy.  
All the stakeholders must  
take crucial steps now, to  
provide its beautiful results  
to next generation.