

Essay:
Democracy in Pakistan: Hopes and Hurdles.

Outline:

A) Introduction

(a) - Democracy

(b) - Thesis statement

B) Evolution of Democracy in Pakistan

C) Hurdles of Democracy in Pakistan:

(a) Pakistan: an Orwellian state

(i) PIA ordered telecom companies to monitor 4m citizens.

(b) Lack of public interests in election

(i) 70% people didnot trust government institution

(c) Illiteracy

(i) Only 58% of mass of Pakistan is literate only.

(d) Instable economy

(i) Norway, Singapore and Germany efficiently invests in public services.

(e) Feudal structure of Pakistan

(i) Pakistan Kisan Conference 2007 Speakers declare "Feudals" as great hurdle for real democracy.

(f) Successive/Repeated military rule

(i) 1958-71 (Ayub Khan), 1977-88 (Zia-ul-Haq)

1999-2007 (Pervaiz Musharraf)

D) Hopes of Democracy in Pakistan:

(a) Increased women participation

(i) In 2008 - 73 women participated in elections

, 2013 - 135 " " "

2018 - 183 " " "

(b) Decline in Military intervention

(i) No direct military coup since 2008.

(c) Improved ECP performance

(i) 2017 elections reforms

(ii) 2019 dispute of two election commissioners and reaction of chief Election Commissioner.

(d) Increased awareness among masses

about their rights.

(i) Annual Aurat March

(ii) Baloch March

(e) Room for evolution of ^{new} political parties.

(i) Awaam Pakistan Party

(f) Smooth transfer of government through elections

(i) 2008 → 2013 (PML(N)) → 2018 (PTI)

(PML(N)) 2024 ← (PDM) 2022 ←

E) Recommendation

(a) Promote education by bringing 26m childrens into school.

(b) Stabilize economy through effective

utilization of CPEC opportunity.

(C) Decentralization of power.

(F) Conclusion.

The voice of people is the voice of God; democracy ensures that voice is heard clear and louder. Democracy evolved from the ancient Greece. Democracy as President Abraham Lincoln stated is; Government of the people, by the people and for the people. The major hurdles in the way of flourishing democracy in Pakistan is its illiterate mass. Repeated military rule, instable economy of Pakistan, and the feudal lords impedes democracy. State central government controls the citizens (Orwellian state) and the lack of public interest in the electoral process also did not allow the democracy to flourish in Pakistan. Besides above mentioned hurdles to Pakistan democracy, there are also some indicators that shows best future of

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democracy in Pakistan. Such as decline in the military rule, increased women participation, improved ECP performance and room for the evolution of new political parties.

This is a fact that there are several hurdles to democracy in Pakistan, but if it is allowed to flourish then it democracy have a potential to perform.

After the Independence of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah opted secular democracy for the Pakistan. After his death, there was no leader to implement democracy in Pakistan in true sense. In just 9 years between 1947-1956, four prime Ministers and four presidents (Governor-Generals) were changed. The first constitution of Pakistan was implemented in 1956, which gave parliamentary democracy to Pakistan. It was abrogated by General Ayub Khan in 1958. In 1962, he gave his own Constitution. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (first elected prime Minister) gave a sys Parliamentary

System in 1973 constitution of Pakistan. He was removed from his office in 1977 and Pakistan once again goes into the hand of Military rulers from 1977 - 1988. In 1988, Benazir Bhutto was ^{somehow} successful in restoration of democracy. But there again started a musical chair game between Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, which ended as a result of the imposition of Martial law in 1999. Musharraf Martial law was followed by PPP government in 2008, which brings good days for democracy in Pakistan. and surviving till now without any major hurdles. So, we can Democracy in Pakistan have seen both hurdles and hopes.

One of the major problem is Pakistan behaviour as Orwellian State. Orwellian state is such state where government controls lives of the people. Recently, Pakistan telecommunication Agency

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have ordered telecom companies to use "Mass surveillance system" to monitor the 4 million people of Pakistan. They will control the actions, speeches, and lives of people.

This much authority to an institution may lead to the concentration of power in one hand. Intelligence agencies may use it for their personal gains. Government can use it ~~for~~ against the opposition. Therefore, the Pakistan behaviour like Orwellian state impedes the nurturing of democracy.

Lack of public interest in electoral process is another major obstacle in the development of democracy. According to Gallup poll in Pakistan, about 70% people did not trust the government institution and electoral results. People as base of democracy cannot be involved in the democratic processes. This will result in the failure of democracy. Government must take steps to replace the people in-trust with trust on institution and reduce the gap. Hence, lack of public interest results in ~~low~~ low elections.

growth of democracy.

Thirdly, illiteracy stands as a challenge for development of democracy. According to Cambridge dictionary, illiteracy means inability to read, write, speak and listen. People are not democratic innately, they learn the democratic norms, values and attitudes through education. Illiterate persons are unable to learn these values. According to a report, only 58% people of Pakistan are able to write and read, and 80-90 m people are unable to know about their rights, can't make their representatives accountable and can't choose the right person as their leader. Hence, in such situation democracy cannot be observed in its real sense.

In addition to illiteracy, instable economy is another cause of failure to democracy in Pakistan. Stability of economy is directly proportional to political stability. Those countries which are

economically strong ^{can} ~~strong~~ efficiently invests in public services, social welfare, and people participation in electoral process etc such as Norway, Singapore, Germany and United State of America. Good economies guarantees healthy democracies. and instable economies cannot make a sound ground for democracies. Like Pakistan and Zimbabwe are economically unhealthy, that's why democracy is not flourished.

Futhermore, Feudal structure of pakistan, where Feudals controls the mass is another major hurdle in the way of democracy. Feudals is characterized by owning huge piece of land. He give this land to the people of ~~the~~ ~~their~~ his village where they grow crops, fruits and vegetables. He give less to the farmers and get the larger part of production from land. That's spea why the speakers of Pakistan kisan conference in 2007 declared the "Feudals" as great hurdles for democracy. Because he considered the peoples of his village as his jagir and even don't let them to get education. People living

under the Feudals have no freedom to give vote to their favourite candidate. Therefore, Feudal lords have limited the scope of Democracy in Pakistan.

Last but not the least, Indirect military intervention in the political and civilian sphere impedes the development of democracy. Pakistan have was ruled more by military dictators rather than by civilian government. After 2008, they are now indirectly intervening in the civilian machinery. Different civilian institutions have been runned by retired military officials like Major General Hafeez-ur-Rehman is acting / serving as a PTA chairman. With this, civilian government have no say to formulate Foreign policy against India, Afghanistan and United States. Their autocratic policies are against the democratic values, which in result hinders the progress of democracy.

In the above paragraphs, hurdles to democracy in Pakistan were discussed. In the coming paragraphs, hopes to the democracy in Pakistan will be discuss.

The first major hope for the growth of democracy in Pakistan is the involvement of women in democratic process. Women establishing 50 pc of population of Pakistan must be involved in the gearing of democracy. A report shows successive increase in the participation of women in general elections like only 73 women contested 2008 elections, while in 2013 and 2018, 135 and 183 women contested general elections respectively. In Election reforms act 2017, ECP was empowered to void the election ^{result} of constituency where female turnout is less than 10 pc. Also this act, ordered political parties to give 5 pc of their seats to female. These measures shows the willingness of governments to involve women in decision making process. So, women participation in democratic processes is a hope to blow the light of democracy in Pakistan.

Another major indicator that highlight hope for the better democracy is the decline in the military intervention. After the last

martial law which ended in 2008.

There occurs no direct military intervention in civilian government. There

are several reasons for it. Firstly

Martial law is not recognized in international community and secondly

Martial law government faced economic

sanctions. However, our military

officials have become so mature

that they are now involved

in anti-terrorist activities and

launched several operations like Operation

Zarb-e-Azab, Rad-ul-Fasad and more

recently is Azm-e-Istehkam. Such role

of establishment construct democracy.

Therefore, ~~we~~ ~~can~~ Pakistan have

witnessed the decrease of military

intervention.

Furthermore, the improvement in

the Election Commission of Pakistan

gave another hope to the future

of democracy. Election Commission of

Pakistan is authorized to contest

elections in Pakistan. Free and

Fair election is one of the

indicator ~~of~~ that shows that

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democracy is performing well. The Election reforms Act 2017, makes the Election Commission an independent body. Government and opposition upon ^{mutual} consultations will appoint Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners. These measures matured their behaviour and performance. As in 2019, there were two empty seats of Election Commissioners, upon which ^{consenses of} government and opposition cannot met for eight months. Suddenly, the government appointed two Election Commissioner with out consulting the opposition. Chief Election Commissioner cannot take their oath of office by saying that they are not according to the constitution. Therefore, performance of Election Commission can be agent to foster the democracy at large.

In addition to the improvement in Election Commission of Pakistan performance, the people have also aware of their rights. It is also an important pre-requisite

for the successful democracy. Baloch March and Annual Awaraz March shows that people are now awaring of their rights - Awared mass can make accountable their representatives. In short, the Awared people are the hope for the real democracy.

There is always a room for the ne evolution of new political parties. ^{Multi} Political parties shows the true spirit of democracy. ^{The} Democratic culture of Pakistan have always welcomed new political parties. More recently, Awam Pakistan Party is the new addition to the political parties in Pakistan. This shows that the Democracy in the Country is progressing.

Lastly, smooth transition of power through elections shows that democracy will now ^{watch} see the good days in Pakistan. For the first time in Pakistan history, power was smoothly transferred between Pakistan people's party and Pakistan

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Muslim League (N) in 2013. This trend was again followed in 2018 election in which power was transferred between PML(N) and PTI. Hence, the smooth transition of government proves that democracy have grown its branches in Pakistan.

Pakistan government needs to promote education in order to ensure true democratic system. Government should initiate scholarships programs in order to attract the students and alleviate poverty. Lower and middle class peoples must be incorporated in the education system and incorporated in the politics.

In conclusion, there are different hurdles and hopes for democracy in Pakistan. Challenges like feudal structure, illiterate mass, instable economy, indirect military rule and lack of public interest in elections have hinders the way of democracy in Pakistan. In contrast, some points like

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increased women participation,
improved performance of ECP, room
for evolution of new political parties,
and decreased role of military
in democratic government have
created hope for democracy. Keeping
this situation in mind, Pakistan
government should most educate
lower and middle class people and
inculcate them in politics. So,
Pakistan have seen both the
faces (hurdles & hopes) of Democracy,
and it is necessary to take
corrective measures against Hurdles
of Democracy to flourish it
in true sense.