

Hurdles.

OUTLINE:

- 1) Introduction.
- 2) Hopes for democracy in Pakistan:
 - a) Chances of military coups in future are less
 - b) Pakistan's democracy still works on the principle of ^{developing} consensus among political parties which brings hope for the democratic system.
 - c) The government listens to the grievances of impoverished communities
 - d) National cohesion is still a ray of hope in the country.
 - e) Existence of better institutions still ensure democracy in Pakistan.
- 3) Hurdles in the pathway to democracy in Pakistan:
 - a) Current political landscape of Pakistan is a major hurdle to democracy.

ending

b) Power remains confined within a few hands.

c) The emotions of Pakistani people are connected with different political leaders.

d) Economic instability is the biggest hurdle for democracy in Pakistan.

e) New amendments will undermine democracy in Pakistan.

f) Religious intolerance is a threat to democracy in Pakistan.

4) Conclusion.

Quaid-e-Azam once said, "Democracy is in the blood of Muslims, who look upon complete equality of manhood and believe in fraternity, equality and liberty." Democracy in Pakistan has faced many obstacles in its path in the form of military coups, constitutional amendments and political instability. Despite all these problems, a ray of hope illuminates which would make Pakistan a stable democracy. There are less chances of military rule in the country. Moreover, the future holds better opportunities

to develop consensus between the opposition and the government. In addition, democracy in Pakistan might ensure national cohesion. Certainly, there exist a few hurdles. Current political landscape of Pakistan acts as a major impediment for a democratic system. Furthermore, power is limited within a few hands. Economic instability is also not suitable for sustaining an environment of democracy. Additionally, the people of Pakistan are emotionally inclined towards different political parties as well. Therefore, Pakistan's road to democracy is filled with hopes and hurdles.

It is hoped that chances of military dictatorship in future will be less.

A military coup/dictatorship is the military takeover of the government. Pakistan's political history has transitioned from dictatorship to democracy. Moreover, changes within the constitution have strengthened democracy in Pakistan. 18th amendment in the constitution has provided power to the Prime Minister and it has also provided provincial autonomy to the provinces of Pakistan. Therefore, the chances of military coup in Pakistan are less.

The democratic system of Pakistan still deserves the principle of developing consensus among political parties. Consensus among political parties plays a fundamental role in strengthening democracy. It is the rule of democracy to create inclusivity in crucial matters. Furthermore, political institutions in Pakistan do not pass any bill or law without the approval of opposition. According to a Pakistani lawyer, the recent constitutional debate on changing the powers of judiciary has been stalled due to opposition's disapproval. This shows that consensus is still very important for the Democratic Republic of Pakistan. Hence, the political parties still have the right to oppose government's decisions.

The poor class of Pakistan still has a voice. When people are not provided with basic necessities, they tend to hold protests. Fortunately, the political regime of Pakistan has shown sympathy towards the deprived class in Pakistan. Additionally, terrorism in Pakistan has comparatively been reduced. Mehran Lodhi has stated that the number of people getting recruited in Balochistan Liberation Army has reduced. The sole reason is that the government has started

... on the Balochi states TR.

the impoverished class & still has a voice in ~~the~~ its own country.

National unity is still a ray of hope for Pakistan, as it exists today. National unity brings the entire nation together for the progress of the state. Firstly, the institutions in Pakistan have provided provincial autonomy to all provinces. Secondly, equal resources have been allotted to the provinces which ensures democracy in the country. According to the 7th National Finance Commission, all provinces must be provided with equal resources through the divisible pool of money. Thereby, national cohesion in Pakistan keeps democracy intact.

There is hope that Pakistan's political institutions will ensure democracy in Pakistan. Robust institutions play a pivotal stability in a state. First, different democratic institutions were established after a few constitutional amendments. Second, these institutions provide a platform to political parties for discussing their grievances. 18th amendment in Constitution of Pakistan gave rise to institutions like Council of Common Interests which has been a platform to resolve intra- & inter-party disputes. Henceforth, existing institutions have the potential

to sustain democracy.

Despite the positive aspects of Pakistan's democracy, it also remains a source of concern for the people of Pakistan.

In other words, there are a few hurdles which block the pathway to democracy as well.

Pakistan's political current political situation is a major hurdle to democracy. A stable political fabric opens the door to economic wellbeing as well. Unluckily the Pakistani society remains politically polarized. Secondly, political parties have conflicting interests which directly undermine the principle of democracy.

According to Business Recorder, 9 out of 10 people lack confidence in Pakistan's political future. Consequently, the political landscape of Pakistan is an obstacle.

Unluckily, power lies within a few hands in Pakistan. In democratic societies, power is given acquired by a political party with majority votes. First, such actions undermine the very principle of democracy which talks about inclusivity in politics. Second, personal interests dominate the national interests. Aron Liewen says in his book, "Pakistan A Hard Country" that

Pakistan's opposition parties have always been disappointed with the ruling government due to dominating personal interests of the government's representatives. Hence, power remains confined to a few political parties in Pakistan.

Mostly, people of Pakistan are emotional about political figures. Interestingly, many people around the world are triggered by political discussions. The people of Pakistan get emotionally triggered by political rhetorics due to the absence of basic necessities in their lives. Consequently, this emotional connection with political leaders leads to intolerance towards people with different opinions. According to an Islamabad-based think tank, 80% of people in Pakistan are intolerant towards those who do not have the same emotions towards a political leaders. Therefore, people of Pakistan are have sentiments attached with political leaders.

Economic instability will also impede the pathway to democracy in Pakistan. Economic instability refers to the inability of incumbent government to fulfil the requirements of its citizens. Deprivation leads to feelings of inequality and alienation among people. Consequently,

this alienation has given rise to frequent protests in Pakistan. which pushes the government to take strict measures for stopping the citizens. ~~As~~ A Balochi activist has stated that they will have been neglected by the ~~govern~~ previous governments and they would do anything to ensure their economic wellbeing. Henceforth, economic instability is hinders the establishment of 'pure' democracy in Pakistan.

Unfortunately, newer constitutional amendments will put a dent to democracy in Pakistan. Constitutional amendments refer to the changes made in constitutions to fill in any gaps which ~~is~~ might be left unfilled. The recent constitutional amendment regarding the judiciary is sowing the seed of mistrust among the people. Furthermore, the opposition has ~~shown~~ vehemently opposed the decision. According to 26th amendment, the judiciary will be deprived of its power by the establishment of another Federal Constitutional Court. The court will replace the Supreme Court. Hence, the constitutional amendments will undermine democracy in Pakistan.

Unfortunately, there is religious intolerance in Pakistan as well. Religious intolerance refers to unacceptance towards other religions and sects. The people of Pakistan are extremely sensitive about religion and their practices. Furthermore, there have been instances where people have killed each other in the name of religion. A report published by United States Commission on International Religious Freedom says that instances of mob violence over religious issues are more common in Pakistan than anywhere else. These incidents curtail freedom of speech and create fear among people. Hence, such events undermine democratic principles.

Undoubtedly, democracy in Pakistan reflects hope for future while creating hurdles as well. It might take some time for Pakistan to transition from quasi-democratic practices to pure democratic ones. The current political structure of Pakistan gives lesser space to military rule to takeover. Moreover, the legislative bodies in Pakistan ^{still} follow the principle of consensus among political parties. In addition, national integration is a ray of hope for the democratic structure of Pakistan. Not

Still play a pivotal role in keeping democracy intact. Contrarily, there are a few hurdles which prevent the establishment of democracy in its true essence. People of Pakistan are emotionally inclined towards different political leaders. Moreover, economic instability also hinders democracy in Pakistan. Additionally, Pakistani people have become intolerant towards other religions. Recent constitutional amendment debates have the tendency to create impact Pakistan's democratic system. Despite all these hurdles, Pakistan can still embark a new journey to establish democracy in its perfect shape. This can be done by burying the hatchet with all the political factions, and keeping in mind the Quaid-e-Azam's vision to make Pakistan a democratic state. In this way, Pakistan can also regain the trust of its own citizens back.