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Democracies are not performing well in the contemporary world.

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democracy are illiterate and unaware of their rights

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A quarter-century ago, at the end of the Cold War, it appeared that totalitarianism had at last been vanquished and liberal democracy had won the great ideological battle of the 20th century. Today, it is democracy that finds itself battered and weakened.

Democracy is a rule by all the people. It is a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representative. In a democratic government, there is free and fair election, freedom of expression and speech, access to information, provision of fundamental rights to its citizen, and independent institutions. Democracy was considered one of the best forms of government; however, today democracies are not performing well as indicated by various indicators owing to multiple reasons. In different democratic countries, elections are not free and fair, and are being manipulated in various ways for personal interests. Minorities are under threats and their rights are not given due attention in many democracies. Similarly, media is not independent and is being hijacked by the elite class most of the democratic

governments. Moreover, in certain democracies
Judiciary is not independent and
is being politicized by the politicians
to settle their political scores with
opponents. Furthermore, military intervention
in politics and democratic institutions
reflecting weak separation of power,
which is the basic foundation of a
democracy. In addition to this, declining
political rights and civil liberties of
citizens in various democratic states
depict a grim picture of democracy.
In majority of democratic countries,
masses are illiterate and unaware
of their political rights, which is considered
one of the most important causes
of democracies' dysfunction in the world.
Likewise, autocrates are working relentlessly
to undermine democratic institutions and
principles, and further their own practices
which is why democracies are not
performing well currently. Providing education
to its citizens can help revive democracy
and make it work well. Similarly,
strengthening democratic institutions, and
system of checks and balance can also
T.S help in this regard. Democracies in the
contemporary world are not performing well
due to certain reasons. There is a dire need
of some prompt measures that should be
taken to make democracies flourish.

Democracy is a system of

government in which laws, leadership, and significant initiatives of a state or other political entity are determined directly or indirectly by the people. Historically, this group was often a minority such as all male adults in ancient Athens or all sufficiently propertied male adults in 19th century Britain. However, this concept has evolved to encompass all or nearly all adult citizens in the modern era. According to Cambridge Dictionary, it is a belief in freedom and equality between people, or a system of government based on this belief, in which powers is either held by elected representatives or directly by people themselves. It is a way of governing which depends on the will of the people.

Like all other forms of government, democracy has its fundamentals, without which it cannot flourish in any state. For instance, free and fair elections are the pre-requisite for a democracy. Similarly, in a true democratic country, free media, newspaper and television are essential for creating political awareness among general public as democracy is people by the people. Moreover, literate masses is another precondition of a real democracy so that informed decisions are made and leadership being

chosen wisely. Furthermore, freedom of speech and expression, particularly on societal and political issues is the critical essence of a true democracy. Also, an impartial judiciary is of the main pillars of a real democratic state. All these characteristics constitute a government which works for the welfare of the people, and people live a prosperous and peaceful life in it.

To begin with, elections are not free and fair, and are manipulated in different ways that shows that democracies are not performing well. Free and fair elections are the essence of a democratic government. However, in many democratic countries elections are not free and fair, and are predetermined. Free elections make sure that the winning candidates are the real representatives of the masses. Various stages of the election process are manipulated by the powerful class which make ^{sure} ~~let~~ that the desired candidate wins the elections. Fraudulent voting practices like ballot stuffing, tampering voting machines and changing elections result are common in majority of democratic states. For this end, those power may restrict voter registration and access to information, and voters

or candidates may face violence, threats or intimidation. For instance, in Armenia and Kyrgyzstan, heavily flawed voting highlighted the continuing erosion of democratic norms surrounding the elections. The dominant parties in both countries relied on harassment of the opposition, voter intimidation and misuse of administrative resources to maintain a grip on power. In Honduras after an early presidential vote count favored the opposition candidate, a belatedly ~~del~~ updated total handed victory to the incumbent, prompting protests, curfews and calls for new election. Thus, democracies are not performing well as shown by the failure to conduct free and fair elections.

Similarly, minorities are under threat as the rights are being ~~is~~ denied and not given due attention in many democracies. Rights of minorities are essential in a democratic setup as they ensure equality, justice and inclusivity. Minorities are not considered equal to other citizens and are being prosecuted in many democratic countries. They are not fully free to practice their religion. They are being discriminated in different democratic societies. For instance, in Myanmar, the politically dominant military conducted a brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya minority, pushing out some 600,000 people and killing thousands of others. In 2007, France imposed a

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banned on hijab which muslims women were wearing. In 2023, a vigilante mob attacked at least five churches in Faisalabad, Pakistan, after allegations of blasphemy were made against two Christian residents of Jaranwala. These incidents show the grim picture of minorities rights in democratic states that reflects decline in democracy functioning.

Likewise, media is not free as being hijacked by the elite class in democratic states indicating poor performance of democracies. Free and independent media is vital for the proper functioning of a democracy. However, in many democratic countries media is not free. It is used by the politicians and other powerful classes for their own interests. Journalists and civil society activists are not free and they are threatened if they speak against the powerful elites. Media channels get banned and journalists face imprisonment if they try to expose the corrupt leaders or other officials. For instance, in Mexico, state surveillance was started aimed at journalists and civil society activists who threatened to expose government corruption and other wrongdoings. In Tanzania, the government of President John Magufuli stepped up shuttering of media outlets and arresting citizens for posting critical views on social media. Therefore,

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this compromised media freedom is indicating poor performance of democracies.

Moreover, there is a continuous decline in political rights and civil liberties in most democracies which shows democracies' failure. Political rights and civil liberties are fundamental components of a democracy. However, in most democratic states these are denied. Citizens are not allowed to participate in voting by detaining them in jails and prisons. Similarly, candidates are declared not eligible to take part in election on baseless allegations. Also, citizens are not allowed to organize meetings where they can discuss solutions to the problems they are facing. There are bans on various organizations. There is no freedom of speech and expression in most democracies. Peaceful protests and demonstrations are not allowed in most democratic countries. Recently in Pakistan, Pakhtun Tahafuz movement, an organization to protect the rights and liberties of Pakhtuns, has been banned by the state. This shows the dark image of civil liberties in a democracy. Therefore, democracies are failing as shown by the decline in political rights and civil liberties of citizens in democratic states. Furthermore, judiciaries in many

democratic governments are not independent as they are being politicized which leads to biased verdicts and injustices. An independent judiciary is the backbone of a democratic system, ensuring that the rule of law prevails and protecting citizen's rights and freedoms. However, in majority of democratic systems, judiciary is not independent. Courts are politicized favouring their party of choice in decisions. Power politicians do not follow court orders and can alter court's decisions. Even speak openly about judges criticizing them. Judges are appointed by politicians on personal choice and not on merit or ability. Various reforms are brought to limit the power of judiciary. Political parties use courts for settling scores with opponents parties leaders. For instance, in Cambodia, the politicized Supreme Court dissolved the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party, and party leader Kem Sokha was charged with treason. Similarly, in Bolivia, the constitutional court, which had been elected through a highly politicized process, struck down term limits that would have prevented incumbent leader Evo Morales from seeking reelection. Voters had rejected the lifting of term limits in a 2016 referendum. Thus, in many democracies courts are not independent showing decline of democracy.

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In addition to this, there are frequent military interventions in politics and political institutions that reflect weakness of democratic institutions and no legal constraints on police, military and other institutions of authority. In a well functioning democracy, institutions are strong and there is a robust system of checks and balance which prevents institutions meddling. Today, in many democratic states, military intervenes in politics and democratic institutions undermining democracies. They intervene judiciary and election process to bring politicians of their choice. Army uses force to remove the government which works against its will. For instance, Zimbabwe's president Robert Mugabe was compelled to resign in November under pressure from military. Also, in Maldives, the military was used to block opposition efforts to remove the speaker of parliament, and a number of lawmakers were ousted for defecting from the ruling party. Therefore, frequent military interventions in politics in democratic state show democratic inefficiency.

Additionally, all the citizens are not equal before law in most of the democratic countries which represents poor functioning of democracies. Equality before law is a fundamental

principle of a democracy, ensuring that all individuals are treated fairly and justly regardless of their status, background or identity. However, in today's democratic states, this principle is not observed because laws are only for poor and those having no connection with powerful elites. Poor are punished and prosecuted while the rich enjoy impunity from these things when they commit wrongs. Similarly, laws do not protect the poor equally as they do the rich. Fair and transparent legal procedures are not conducted equally against all. This results in inequalities, social injustice, and declining trust of public in state institutions. The Kursar Road incident is a glaring example in this regard. On August 19, 2024, in Karachi, a speeding SUV driven by Natasha Danish, the wife of a prominent industrialist, collide with many vehicles, resulting in the death of a 23 year old Anna Arif. Natasha was given impunity from all the legal procedures on the pretext that she had been forgiven by the victim's family. This shows that equality before law is written in documents only. Therefore, democracies are not performing well as shown by the poor rule of law in many democratic states.

Last but not the least, there is weak accountability of elected government

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reflecting that democracies are not functioning properly. Accountability is the essence of democracy which those in power responsible for their actions. However, accountability is weak in today's democracies allowing those in power to do what they want to. This leads to corruption which in turn causes socio-economic inequalities.

In many democracies, there is low transparency, high levels of corruption, limited press freedom and weakened institutional checks and balances, which all represent weak accountability in these democracies. There is misuse of public funds and ineffective governance in many democratic government.

For instance, a massive corruption investigation in Brazil uncovered bribes exceeding \$2 billion linked to state controlled oil company, Petrobras.

Numerous politicians and executive were implicated, demonstrating deep seated corruption and a lack of accountability. Similarly, in 2016, the Panama Papers implicated high-ranking Pakistani officials, exposing issues of tax evasion, offshores holding and a lack of accountability in political elite. Thus, democracies are not performing well as indicated by the lack of accountability in democratic governments.

Illiterate masses are one of the main reasons due to which democracies are not performing well. Education of the masses is an important pre-requisite

for democracy to flourish because democracy is by the people. It is the masses who decide future of the country. However, citizens in majority of democratic states are uneducated and unaware of their rights. They cannot take informed decisions and cannot hold responsible their leaders for undemocratic actions. This leads to poor performance of democracies as there is no fear of public criticism for the actions taken by political leaders. Political leaders do whatever they want for self-interest. Illiteracy leads to decreased civic engagement which is essential for a democracy to perform well. A report by World Bank shows that 25% of democratic countries have literacy rates well below 80%. One of the biggest democratic countries, India, has literacy rate of 74%. Thus, illiteracy and unawareness of masses are responsible for the poor performance of democracies.

Similarly, autocrats are working relentlessly to undermine democratic institutions and principles, while the major democratic powers like the US show unwillingness to support and promote democracy. In order to further their own practices and ideologies, the world's leading autocracies China and Russia are supporting those countries which are copying their behavior and adopting their disdain

for democracy. Vladimir Putin, Russia's President, has carried out disinformation campaigns before elections in countries including U.S., France and Germany, cultivated ties to xenophobic political parties across Europe, threatened or invaded its closed neighbours and served as an alternative source of military aid for Middle Eastern Dictatorships. Meanwhile, United States is no longer interested in its commitment to promoting and supporting democracy. The Obama administration continued to democratic ideals in its foreign policy statements, but its actions often fell short, reflecting a reduced estimation of the U.S. ability to influence world events and of the American public's willingness to back such efforts. Likewise, Trump's trips abroad rarely featured any mention of the word "democracy". Therefore, democracies are declining due to autocrats efforts to further their own interest and weak support of democracy by major democracy supporters.

In order to make democracies work properly, it is necessary to provide education to the masses of democratic states so that they can make informed decisions. Democracies cannot perform well without literate citizens. Education will make them able to think critically, participate in democratic processes, and hold accountable elected officials. State should provide free education to all its citizens. Scholarship and financial

assistance programs should be initiated in democratic states so that all the masses get education. Awareness campaigns and seminars be arranged in developing democratic countries about the importance of education. Also, curricula should include civic education and political knowledge so that every citizen is able to understand democratic processes. Thus, educating masses of democratic countries is an important step to make democracy flourish.

Moreover, democratic institutions should be strengthened for the revival of democracy. Strong democratic institutions are a key to a true democracy. Democratic institutions could be strengthened by bringing various institutional reforms, implementing a robust system of checks and balances, and ensuring transparency and accountability. Judiciary can be made strong and independent by reducing political influence, this will enable judiciary to act as a check on other branches of government. Likewise, legislature can be strengthened by increasing its powers to investigate and question government actions. The role of independent oversight bodies, such as audit institutions and anti-corruption departments, should be strengthened to monitor government actions. To enhance accountability and transparency,

laws on public access to information should be enforced to enable citizens to understand government actions which will prevent politicians from undemocratic actions fearing accountability. Freedom of press and protection of journalists should be ensured. Therefore, to revive democracy, it is advised to strengthen democratic institutions by bringing various reforms and applying a system of checks and balance.

To conclude, it can be said that democracies are poorly functioning in this era owing to multiple reasons. However, democracy can be revived by taking certain steps. Elections are not free and fair in most of the democratic countries. Similarly, Media in many democratic systems is not free and independent as being hijacked by the elite class for their personal use. In the same way, declining political rights and civil liberties in most of the world's democratic states show the decline of democracy. Moreover, minorities are not safe and their rights are being ignored in democratic government which shows failure of democracies. Furthermore, frequent military interventions in politics reflect weak democratic institutions. In addition to this, all citizens in democracies are not equal before law representing democracies

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Poor functioning. Illiterate masses of democratic countries is a major factor contributing to the poor functioning of democracies in today's world. Also, autocracies efforts to undermine democracy and diminished support for democracy from major democratic states are other reasons for the decline of democracy. Educating masses and strengthening democratic institutions could help revive true democracy. Democracy can regain its original form and can flourish to perform well if these steps are taken in true letter and spirit.