

Democratic Unrest in Pakistan - Causes and Consequences

1. Introduction

- HOOK

- Background

- Thesis Statement: Democratic unrest in Pakistan arises from civil-military tensions, electoral disputes, judicial intervention, and economic crises. This unrest weakens institutions and reduces public trust in democracy.

2. Causes of Democratic Unrest in Pakistan

2.1 Civil-Military Imbalance

- 1958, 1977 and 1999 military coups
- 2014 PTI dharna - power struggles
- 2016 - 2018 civil-military tensions.

2.2 Extreme Political Polarization

- 1988 - 1999 cycle of Benazir vs Nawaz rivalry.
- 2014 - halted parliamentary functions
- 2022 - no confidence crisis.

2.3 Electoral Disputes and Controversial Mandates

- 1977, 2013 and 2024 elections.

2.4 Judicial-Political Confrontations

- Courts become arenas for political battles.
- Frequent disqualification of leaders intensify instability.

2.5 Economic Instability

- Lack of economic direction under repeated government changes.
- 2018 - 2022 and 2022 - 2023 economic crisis.

3. Consequences of Democratic Unrest

3.1 Frequent Government Collapse

- Parliament becomes dysfunctional due to boycotts, dissolutions, and power struggles.

3.2 Economic Damage

- Stock market shocks during 2007 emergency, 2014 protests, 2022 political crisis
- IMF program repeatedly stalled.

3.3 Rise of Street Politics

- PAT-PTI joint protests, replaced parliamentary debate with street agitation.

3.4 Erosion of Public Trust

- Declining trust in parliament, political parties and elections.
- Repetitive disqualifications and arrests.

3.5 Strained Federal-Provincial Relations

- PTI dissolution of Punjab and KP assemblies - 2023.
- Sindh - Federal conflicts over NFC and policymaking.

4. Conclusion.