

(The dilemma of regressive democracy in Pakistan: reasons and solution)

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(I)

Introduction:

↳ Thesis Statement:

Since its inception, Pakistan had faced the dilemma of regressive democracy. This regressive democracy had been backed by several reasons, including the absence of insightful leadership, extra constitutional adventures and futile role of judiciary. However, through reasserting civilian supremacy, judicial independence and strengthening parliamentary democracy and electoral process, Pakistan can become a democratic state in a true sense.

(II)

Historical Background of Democracy

(II)

Efforts of Pakistan's leadership for crude democracy:

1- Qaid-e Azam and Liaquat Ali Khan strived hard for creation of constitution

1- Objective resolution

2- 1st constituent assembly

2- Muhammad Ali Bogra formula somehow paved the way toward democratic supremacy.

3- Adoption of Government of India act 1935 as an Interim constitution.

(III)

Reasons of democratic failure in Pakistan:

A- Democratic failure in Pakistan was primarily caused due to absence of top leadership

1- Death of Qaid-e-Azam

2- Assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan.

DATE: ___/___/___

B- Extra constitutional adventures were the prime reasons behind regressive democracy.

1. Martial law imposed by Ayub Khan
2. Martial law imposition by Gen. Pervez Musharraf

C- Covering illegal policies of political leaders and military rulers under doctrine of necessity by the judiciary.

1. Tammuzudin vs State Case
2. Dasu vs State Case.

D- Regressive democracy in Pakistan is marked by political polarization.

1. Zero sum games in ^{the} democratic era
2. Illegal use of government institutions for political gain

E- Weak Parliamentary institutions and governance in Pakistan has reinforced regressive democracy.

1. Dynastic politics in Pakistan
2. Delegitimized electoral process

G- Civil military imbalance remained a driving force behind regressive democracy in Pakistan.

- 1- Fall of Dhaka.

H- Initial burden after independence remained a barrier to crude democracy.

- 1- Absence of industrial bases
- 2- Influx of immigrants.

(III) Remedial measures for ensuring crude democracy

A- Decentralization of military from politics

- 1- Role of military in India

B- Independent judiciary can ensure democracy

- 1- Independent judiciary in United States

DATE: ___/___/___

C- Promotion of Political pluralism and consensus building
can empower democracy.

D- Reforms related to accountability and rule of laws
can strengthen democracy.

E- Economic and social reforms can ensure public participation
in democratic arena.

(IV) Conclusion

~~Democracy is a process~~

DATE: / /

"Democracies may die at the hands of generals but of electoral leaders- presidents or prime ministers who subverts the very process that brought them to power". It has been professed by one of the greatest professor of science, "Daniel Ziblatt" in his remarkable book "How democracies die". However, the democratic upheaval of Pakistan presents contrasting yet bleak image of regressive democracy backed by illegal actions of both the generals and electoral leadership. Since its inception Pakistan had faced the dilemma of regressive democracy. The regressive democracy had been backed by several reasons including the absence of insightful leadership, extra constitutional adventures on futile role of judiciary. However, through reasserting civilian supremacy, judicial independence and strengthening parliamentary democracy, Pakistan can become a democratic state in true sense. The visionary leadership of newly emerged state tried their best to ensure democracy but several external and internal factors impeded their vision. The leadership vacuum after the death of Quaid-e-Azam and Liaquat Ali Khan marked the failure of democracy. In addition to this, extra constitutional adventures due to lust of power added to democratic failure. Furthermore, judicial support to extra constitutional adventures also affected the democracy. Along with it, political polarization also reinforced democratic dilemma in Pakistan. However remedial measurements including decentralization of military, promotion of political pluralism, reforms related to rule of law & economic wellbeing can ensure true democracy.

DATE: / /

Furthermore, the succeeding paragraphs would further edify the democratic regression in Pakistan.

The visionary leadership of Pakistan after the independence tried hard to ensure democracy and rule of law in the country. The first governor general of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah supported by president Liaquat Ali Khan ensured democracy by adopting Government of India act 1935 as an interim constitution. Though, the newly emerged state had to manage several urgent issues but their prime goal remained the democratic wellbeing. Liaquat Ali Khan, after the death of Quaid-e-Azam boosted his struggles for formulation of constitution for Pakistan. "The formation of first constitutional assembly" is a gleaming example of Liaquat Ali Khan's vision of the democratic state. In addition to formation of the first constitutional assembly, "The objective resolution" passed under his supervision set the precedent of constitution making which later become preamble of the latter constitutions (1956, 1962, 1976). However, these struggles for constitution seemed lacking after the assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan. Hence, the visionary leadership of Pakistan tried hard to ensure democracy & rule of law.

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In a nutshell, Pakistan, since its inception was challenged with democratic upheaval, several reasons enforced the democratic regression including leadership vacuum, extra constitutional adventures and judicial backing of the illegal acts. The early burden after the Independence, failure of democratic institutions, Political Polarization and civil-military relations further amplified the regression of democracy. The current situation of Pakistan's democratic environment has been clearly depicted by a visionary writer and remarkable analyst, Dr Eqbal Ahmed. According to him, "In Pakistan, the state has always been stronger than society - and that imbalance has crushed democracy." It is interesting to note whether Pakistan will make itself free from military influence or not? because Pakistan's democracy has been so fragile that every informal whisper echoes louder than civilian vote.