

The Challenges and Triumphs of Democracy in the 21st Century.

1- Introduction:

In contemporary 21st century, democracy has different challenges and triumphs from the history. Democracy has challenges like political instability, political polarization, and extremism. The challenges can be mitigated by taking positive measure.

2- Democracy: An overview

3- Triumphs of Democracy in 21st century:

- a- Ensurance of fundamental human rights and freedom
- b- Equal access to legislative processes
- c- Parliamentary sovereignty and judicial independence
- d- women and child's violence protection laws
- e- Women's empowerment

4- Challenges of Democracy in 21st century:

- a- political instability and political polarization
- b- Extremism & Extremism
- c- Corruption and inefficiency
- d- Growing economic and social inequalities among people

- 4- Economic crisis and State's failure to control
- 5- Growing terrorism and security concern
- 6- Civil war and insurgency due to unequal distribution of resources

5- ~~to~~ Suggestions to overcome challenges of Democracy:

- a- Address political instability
- b- Political parties should agree on agenda and they should resolve their personal grudges
- c- Embrace multiculturalism and cultural diversity
- d- International organizations should play their key role in strengthening democracy

6- Conclusion

It is universally acknowledged that in ancient times there was no rule and law. People were lived in tribes and they were beyond the concept of human rights. After some time, democracy was originated and human rights were introduced. The different phases of history witnessed the different challenges and successes of democracy. Similarly these are the challenges and triumphs of democracy in the 21st century. The triumphs of democracy in 21st century are ensurance of fundamental human rights, equal access to legislative processes, judicial independence, parliamentary sovereignty, women empowerment and implementation of women and child's protection laws. On the contrary the challenges of democracy in 21st century are political instability, political polarization, extremism, corruption, economic inequalities, economic crisis, terrorism, civil war and insurgency. However democratic challenges can be sort out by addressing political instability, consensus of political parties on one agenda, embrace multilateralism and effective role of international organizations.

In contemporary 21st century, democracy has different challenges and triumphs from the history. Democracy has challenges like political instability, political polarization, and extremism. The challenges can be mitigated by taking positive measures.

Democracy is an organized form of government in which people have power to elect their representatives. There are two types of democracy:

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Direct Democracy

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Representative Democracy

In direct democracy people have direct authority to decide legislation. While in representative democracy people choose governing officials through elections. There are different features of democracy like freedom of assembly, personal property, freedom of religion, voting rights and consent of governed. In 21st century democracy has triumphs and challenges as well. The national and international organizations made laws related to human rights and security concerns is major example of triumph of democracy. On the contrary democracy

also has to face severe challenges in the contemporary era. The national and international security hit by non-state actors like terrorist organizations is major challenge of democracy. Similarly social unrest and civil wars in different countries of world also witnesses challenge of democracy. Likewise unequal treatment of state with specific region is again undemocratic behavior in so called democratic states. The challenges can be resolved by taking positive measures.

The first and important triumph of democracy is the assurance of fundamental human rights. In the 21st century people have right to education, right to speech and right to property. All the democratic states ensure the fundamental rights of humans in their state. In Pakistan 18th constitutional amendment was passed in 2010. There were different provisions of 18th amendment and it also included assurance of democracy in the **Article 25A**, **Article 19A**, and **Article 10A**. These articles

ensure fundamental human rights. Article 25A is right to education, 19A, right to information, and 10A, right to fair trial. Hence the protection of fundamental human rights and freedom is the triumph of democracy in 21st century.

The second triumph of democracy in 21st century is the equal access to legislative processes. The countries who ~~stand~~ are true depiction of democracy, make ~~every~~ people's equal access to legislative processes. This means that all elected members participate in the legislative processes of the country. In **Denmark**, a minister frequently sets up an expert committee or a commission, to consider the need for legislation. Similarly a parliamentary inquiry can draw on international examples to propose legislative changes, as the constitutional legislative committee did in **New Zealand** when it reviewed the New Zealand constitution. Hence, This shows that common ministers and committee members participation in legislative process is

The triumph of democracy in 21st century.

Another important triumph of democracy in 21st century is Parliamentary sovereignty and judicial independence. The Parliamentary sovereignty is the supreme authority of all government institutions, including executive and judiciary. Similarly in any democratic state, judiciary is independent from the other branches of government. It means that courts are beyond the influence of other branches of government and partisan interests. The **European Court of Justice case Law on Judicial Independence** in

September 2020 is a prime example of triumph of democracy in 21st century. Article 2 of the **Treaty on European Union (TEU)** encompasses the clause of judicial independence. (Rafal Maniok, European Parliamentary Research Service). Hence, judicial independence and Parliamentary sovereignty are also triumphs of democracy in 21st century.

women and child's violence protection laws and their implementations are also triumphs of democracy in 21st century.

In contemporary era the growing sexual abuse against women and children is common phenomena. To address this issue, democratic states have made laws for the protection of women and children. Similarly international organizations also made laws regarding this content. In Pakistan laws related to women's protection included The Domestic Violence Bill (2009), The Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Act (2010), The protection Against Harassment of women in the workplace Act (2010) and The prevention of Anti-women practices Act (2011). These laws support protection of women in democratic state Pakistan. Similarly there are also laws formed for the protection of children's rights. The Council of Europe Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (2007) was instrumental body to consider various forms of sexual abuse and exploitation of children as offence. Hence, the formulation of child and women's protection laws are

Triumphs of democracy in 21st century.

women's empowerment is another significant triumph of democracy in 21st century. In the 20th century the issue of women's suffrage was raised and sort out by giving them right to vote. In the 21st century women's empowerment is important democratic issue. All democratic states consider women's empowerment, important in national progress and economic development of a country. This is the reason that women have quota in civil service and reserved seats in democratic states. The international organizations also play this key in this regard. The recent **USAID**'s vision to advance gender equality and women's empowerment is prominent example. The vision is based on a Gender Policy named, **The 2023 Gender Equality and women's Empowerment Policy**. So, women's empowerment is the prominent triumph of democracy in 21st century.

These are also challenges of democracy in 21st century. The most important challenge is political instability and political polarization. The political instability is the bursell of democracy. Similarly political polarization also impede democracy. The political parties have personal grudges and vendetta and on the basis of their personal conflict, democratic values are badly clashed. The political polarization is observed in many democratic states. In US politics, there is partisan polarization in congress. Indeed, a **Pew Research Center analysis** finds that, on average, Democrats and Republicans are farther apart ideologically today than at any time in the past 50 years. Similarly political instability can be seen in different democratic countries, presenting challenge to democracy. Pakistan is also witnessing severe political instability from previous some years. Hence, political polarization and political instability are presenting the challenges of democracy in the 21st century.

Another important challenge of democracy is extremism. The extremist groups in political affairs also hinder democratic values. From Brazil to the United States, Hungary to New Zealand, right-wing extremist ideas and groups are posing a grave threat to democratic societies. Extremists only rely on particular stance and ~~is~~ rigid to accept diversity.

So in this situation, joined consensus could not be achieved.

The extremist regime's good example is the **government of Afghan Taliban in Afghanistan**. Afghan Taliban's strict and extremist policies impede women to regulate their affairs. Women are not allowed to gain education and to earn there. Hence extremism is severe challenge of democracy in 21st century.