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Democratic Unrest in Pakis- tan: Causes and Consequences.

A) Introduction

- a.a) Hook
- a.b) General statement
- a.c) Thesis statement

B) Causes of Democratic Unrest in Pakistan

- b.a) Historical overview
 - b.a.a) Death of Jinnah & Liaqat Ali Khan
- b.b) Delay in forming of constitution
- b.c) Uncomplete & short terms of elected govt
- b.d) More focus of leaders on recovering Pakistan economy
- b.e) Differences between civil and military officials
- b.f) Prolonged periods of military rules
- b.g) Ban on political activities & parties
- b.h) Ideological & Religious difference b/w Political parties & their followers
- b.i) Terrorism causing democratic unrest
- b.j) Political divide on ethnic & provin. and lines
- b.k) Lack of Literacy among people about democratic processes.

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C) Consequences of Democratic unrest in Pakistan:

- c.a) Weakening of Pol Institutions
- c.a) Political Polarization Strengthens
- c.b) Increase in foreign influence
- c.c) Non-state actors attract the pessimist youth
- c.d) Democratic unrest leads to weak economy
 - c.d.a) Decrease in foreign investment
 - c.d.b) Increase in import & decrease in export
 - c.d.c) Unfriendly environment for businesses
- c.e) Democratic unrest leads to low voter turnout
- c.f) Brain drain due to unproductive pol environment
- c.g) Less focus by govts to improve Education

D) Conclusion

- d.a) Summary
- d.b) Thesis Restated

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The Essay:

Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people. ~ Abraham Lincoln. This quote of the 16th president of United States of America emphasizes that state is only the mean and people are end. In Pakistan democracy has become a joke and political leaders and elites are only using it to come to power and fulfill their aims. Historically, Pakistan inherits the unrest in the shape of mass migration and economic fragility. After the death of Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan, there was no charismatic leadership and governments were constantly overthrown. In these circumstances, the more disciplined institution unconstitutionally took over the reins of the state and hence started civil military rift. During military rule, all the pillars of Democracy were weakened. Legislature, executive, judiciary became rubber stamps and puppets. Media, the fourth pillar of democracy was reduced to a mere skeleton. After the Islamization of Jinnah, the already ethnically divided country became divided on religious grounds and political parties and their followers were aligned accordingly. The death of pragmatic leaders, delays in the constitution making, weakening economy, short life of successive government, civil unrest.

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taly rift, prolonged period of military rule, political activities born ~~are~~ the causes of democratic unrest which has led to political polarization. Youth radicalization by non state actors, increase in foreign influence, deteriorating economy and low voter turnout.

When Pakistan came into being. It inherited numerous problems. Insufficient economic resources and mass migration. Out of 750 million rupees, Pakistan only got 500 million rupees after a delayed period of time. 6 million refugees migrated from India to Pakistan. Jinnah was dealing with all the issues and his terminal illness as well. In 1948 Jinnah died and in 1951 Liaqat Ali Khan was assassinated. These created a void of good leadership. Other governments that succeeded were lasted for very short periods.

The most significant feature of democracy is that government must complete their terms to effectively deliver to the needs of masses, and the govts lasted for months or merely 1-2 years. Most importantly, no elections had taken place on national level. So, the foundation for democratic unrest was laid since the very beginning.

Secondly, the most important feature of a democratic country is that it has a constitution. For the first 9 years, Pakistan had

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no constitution. According to Hamid Khan in his book "political and constitutional history of Pakistan", the reports of constituent assembly were rejected for constitution on the issue of electorate (separate or joint), minority representation, principle of representation issue raised by east Pakistan. All of these issues led to the delayed making of the constitution. This was a major failure for the Pakistan that called itself Parliamentary democracy. The situation was totally against the democratic norms.

Since the beginning Pakistan had security threats from its neighbouring countries. According to Anatol Lieven in his book "Pakistan a hard country", the military, a more disciplined institution had to look after the security of country so it automatically developed more say in the political affairs. Ayub Khan, the first native chief of armed forces was appointed on the civilian post of defence minister in 1952. As this institution started dominating the politics, political rift was developed between the democratic leaders and military officers which led to political unrest and hence democratic unrest.

In a democratic country, leaders are always elected by people. But for 75 years of

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Pakistan independence, it was ruled by non-elected military officials for 30 years. On 7 Oct 1958 martial law was imposed for the first time. He ruled for ten years. For half of his rule, political parties were banned - civil servants and politicians were targeted under EDO and POTA rules. Media was also partially banned. In 1965, people directly elected president. He was elected by a set number (80,000) of basic democrats which is against democratic norms. Then came Zia's rule, which was even more harsh than Ayub's rule. During Zia's rule religious differences among Sunni and Shia were widened. Political parties became divided along religious lines. During the 1985 of Zia's rule, voter turnout was extremely low 40-45%. According to Hamid Khan in his book, "constitutional and political history of Pakistan".

The base that was developed during Zia's rule of religious differences are prevailing till now. Sunni and Shia violence is on all time high. Jamaat-e-Islami, a religious political party has difference with PPP and other political parties. The division of voters along these lines have deteriorated the political processes. According to a book "Pakistan on the crossroads", PPP belongs to Shia sect, which is why it was more

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aligned towards Islam during its rule. That's foreign policy is also shaped accordingly. People belonging to Sunni sect are also more inclined towards PPP. So, the rule in democracy that rulers should only be elected on the basis of their performance and capability is not followed in Pakistan.

Terrorism is the main hurdle in democratic processes in Pakistan. Roots in 1979, during Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, is still sucking the veins of Pakistan. TTP, Tehreek-e-Taliban-Pakistan is a terrorist organization and wants to forcefully implement Shariah rule in Pakistan. It has been attacking civilians, pol leaders. Attacks by terrorist in political rallies has also been rampant. According to an article posted in UN's meeting for peace programme, since 2011 TTP has resurged, revised its manifesto and has increased its violence & attacks. It is deteriorating the democratic processes. People don't go to voting stations to cast their vote or participate in rallies due to fear of Blast.

In Pakistan, there is political divide along regional and provincial lines. There is no national integration in true sense which

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is the main essence of democracy. Different political parties rule different provinces. PML(N) → Punjab, PPP - Sindh, PTI, NWFP. The party at the centre focuses all the budget and development projects on one province which is against the essence of Democracy. Majority of times parties form coalition governments at the centre, which is not long lasting when one party falls apart, the whole government is dissolved. Continuity of term & continuity of governments is the spirit of democracy, which is not followed in Pakistan.

For a thriving democracy, the masses should be literate. Political literacy in Pakistan is low. During Bhutto era, political discussions were banned in educational institutions, it has led to unawareness among youth about politics. This is the reason youth is unaware of politics & consequently disinterested. Political leaders are chosen not on the basis of talent and skills but on the basis of patronage & clientism.

This democratic unrest has a lot of consequences for the country. Political institutions are further weakened. Legislature, executive and Judiciary are not in their best states in Pakistan. Through 26 and

and 21st amendment, Judiciary has lost its powers and will work according to the will of civilian institutions. This has deteriorated the quality of democracy in Pakistan, and as Aristotle had put it, it has become mobocracy now.

Political polarization further strengthens. It has dangerous consequences. It can divide the country along regional lines and can give rise to demand for separate countries. PTM (Pashtoon Tahafuz Movement) is the prominent example of it in KPK and BLA (Balochistan Liberation Army) in Balochistan.

When a country is internally weak, the scope of foreign influence multiplies. Pakistan, due to political instability, is economically weak as well and is dependent on other countries and international financial institution. IMF, during granting a Bail out to Pakistan, imposes its own set of rules & conditions which is against the democratic norm of any country. It violates the internal and external sovereignty of country.

The influence of non-state actors also increases. The unhelpful youth is radicalized by the terrorist organization & their recruitment rates increase. Foreign countries also start funding these terrorist organizations (India and BLA) to further spread violence & unrest.

Democratic unrest also leads to weak economy. In Pakistan, foreign investments are falling. According to Economic Survey of Pakistan, foreign investments are only 9% of the GDP. Due to unfriendly environment for businesses (high taxes & electricity bills), there is no large scale production on national level. Consequently, imports have surpassed exports & Pakistan is merely a trading country only with no practical vision for businesses.

History plays the role of witness that in absence of democratic rules & processes, voter turnout has always been low in Pakistan. In 1985 elections, voter turnout was only 48-50%, according to Hamid Khan in his book constitutional and political history of Pakistan.

Unpredictive democratic & political environment leads to unstable job market, which leads to brain drain. The

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section of intelligent and capable youth is leaving Pakistan and moving to foreign countries for better opportunities.

When the political environment is unstable, and leaders are too focused to remain in govt & not be overthrown by opposition parties, then all the developmental tasks take the back seat. Education, which makes successful nations, is least priority of Pakistani govt. In 2024-2025 Budget only 1.12% of GDP was allocated to it and 2025-2026 Budget only 0.8%. Which is far below the benchmark set by UN that 5% of GDP should be allocated to Education. Unproductive and low education ratio means unpredictable environment which is not the feature of democracy.

The historical problems of Weak economy, delay in constitution and Delay in elections have led to the democratic failure in Pakistan & consequently Political polarization, separation movements, foreign influence, weak economy & terrorist activities have increased.

Pakistan can come out of this dark phase if there are collective efforts on the part of leaders & people in the country.

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is run according to the constitutions.
Because the constitution of Pakistan
has all the aspects that ensure a dem-
ocratic environment within the coun-
try. Better educated youth would give
us effective and charismatic leaders
in future.