

Challenges of Democracy

Democracy in theory and practical is of the people, by the people and for the people. It has been declared in the preamble of Indian constitution that India is a democratic state. This is the largest democratic country of the world. On the basis of the new world survey, 71 crore voters are in the India. In the previous chapter, we have seen the development of democracy in the world in the last 100 years. In one-fourth part of the world, still there is no democratic system of governance. No other form of government is parallel to this. There is a system in democracy that people can select the government according to their own wish. Democracy is a type of governance, a principle of a social system, special type of mentality/mind set and an ideal economy.

Now the question arises — which form of government will be called democratic?

Whether elected ruler in democracy can do everything according to their wish or work the democratic government within the limits.

There are some challenges too in the democracy over which we

Maowadi leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachand' and his allies want to adopt the principles of cabinet system of Britain and India in Nepal too, which the people of Nepal cannot accept. In countries like Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand head of state is like a rubber stamp. India has adopted similar ruling system but here the president is not a rubber stamp. This is not at all possible in Nepal.

have to think seriously. Different countries have different challenges in front of them. These challenges are not like the ordinary/common problems. We generally call those problems as challenges which are important but can be solved too.

Those countries which do not have democratic system, it's challenging to create a platform for the formation of democratic government.

Northern Ireland where Catholic and Protestants turned violent, Tony Blair succeeded in forming a coalition government for years ago but that too is now about to break.

For example in our neighbouring country Nepal after the abolition of monarchy, democracy is still in experimental stage.

Prachand along with all Maoist leaders should understand that in democracy and combined government, that too in a coalition government it is impossible to impose one's own view.

Most of the established democracy systems have challenges of their own. It includes the implementation of democratic rule among all people, all social events and in different organisations/institutions. To make local government more powerful, to implement the principles of federal to government of union into practice to give reasonable share to women and minorities etc. are some of these challenges.

In the parliament of Nepal, Madan Kumar Nepal, of Communist part of Nepal, United Marxist and Leninist was elected new Prime Minister. He got support of 21 political parties among 24. Nepal was made a democratic country by abolishing 240 years old monarchy. Country needed to strengthen her democracy.

Third challenge is to strengthen democracy. This challenge is present before democratic system in one form or the other. To strengthening the work structure of democratic institutes means that people's control get increased.

At present even in India democracy is facing great challenges. Indian democracy is representative democracy in which government is run by the representatives of the people. Indian democracy has three parts-legislative, executive and judiciary. Legislative is responsible towards executive and executive is responsible towards judiciary. For the success of any democracy, independent and unbiased role of judiciary is a widely accepted truth. Success of democracy in America and Britain is the success of their judiciary to a great extent.

Among the writer of American constitution one Alexander Hamilton said that legislative should have energy, farsightedness in executive and judiciary should have faith towards truth and patience.

In Indian democracy there are many long term and new contemporary problems, which attract our attention. All these problems need to be addressed beyond narrow political party lines. Among these problems, inflation unemployment, economic recession, global warming, climatic change, foreign policy, internal security, decency etc. are many burning topics, on which sincere debate is required. There should be extensive discussion on those forces which are becoming a threat to the unity and integrity of the country. This threat is not only due to terrorism, isolationist of North-East or Naxal activities and illegal refugees but also due to economic offence. Illegal inflow of foreign currency, deposit of huge amount by Indians, corruption at higher and judicial posts, inequality and misbalance are the challenges of Indian democracy.

Internal conflicts of centres and states come as a hindrance in the smooth working to face terrorism, people welfare projects (education, caste biasness, gender-bias, women exploitation, child labour and social malpractice/evils etc.), whereas to achieve any expected goal it is necessary to have good understanding and adjustment. There is need to find a final effective solution to check population.

The major challenges of democracy include huge election expenditure of lok-sabha and rajya-sabha election, distribution of tickets to candidates and transparency of elections. Caste and creed, regional parties and politics of alliance also play important role. In absence of clear majority, small regional parties get combined to form government. Election of those representatives who have criminal background, is a different challenge for the democracy.

In the 15th lok-sabha elections United Progressive Alliance (UPA) got victory over 265 seats among 543 seats. Although they performed better than expected they were still little less than the complete majority 272, whereas congress got 202 seats only. Then also it had to face the pressure of Dravida and Trinamul congress.

The political parties involved in Alliance simply do as for their own selfish interests and obligations which results in poor control of government and administration. In the new lok sabha the number of billionaire MPs has reached its highest. Increase in number of MPs having criminal image in all parties is a challenge for democracy.

In the election of Nigeria, the counting officer knowingly increased the number of votes of a candidate and declared him elected. Afterwards the court found that 5 lakhs votes of second candidate were also registered wrongly in favour of the winning candidate.

Participation of women in the politics of Britain is 19.3 %, in America 16.3 %, in Italy 16.01 %, in Ireland 14.2 % and in France it is 13.9%.

Involvement of women in democracy is also a matter of discussion. In the National Education policy maximum priorities have been given to eradicate the illiteracy among women, to remove the hurdles in

education and to keep them enrolled in elementary education. As a result along with other fields, in politics too the participation of women is apparently increasing. After the 15th Lok-sabha election participation of women has increased more than 10 percent. The parliament has still not passed the women reservation bill which provides 33 % reservation to women, but women on their own credit has brought India near the developed countries.

Today's women is working shoulder to shoulder with men for the progress of the country. They are in farming, in space and serving also as pilot. In spite of this they are ignored. For rural women government has kept the provision of reservation in panchayati Raj system. Even today in villages women who are elected as Panch and sarpanch, are working mainly under the influence of men of their family. It is seen that in village panchayat or nagar parishads in place of women their husbands sons are using their influence. Indirectly this is also a major challenge before Indian democracy.

Till now we have seen the challenges of democracy in Indian context. Let's have a glance at the challenges of democracy in Bihar. Like other states of India, in Bihar also healthy democracy is established. Other than this, here challenges are present at regional and local level. Even today corruption, casteism, feminism etc. play decisive role. In recent decades a trend came into practice that any seat that lies vacant due to death of a representative is given to their relatives. This shows the short coming of Indian democracy.

During 2009 of Bihar legislative Assembly the ruling party JD (U) announced that no relatives will be given ticket in the by election. This led to internal conflicts in JD (U).

Now it has to be observed, whether JD (U) remains firm on its stand regarding distribution of ticket or surrenders. Some leaders and political parties are enjoying power for years because of caste based politics. Coming general election of 2010 in Bihar will reveal whether caste based vote bank will be effective or not. It has been seen that those leaders who have made a secured fort based on vole bank didn't take any interest in the development of common people after coming into power. These leaders try to give benefit personally or in group to only selected caste groups or people from government level. This pattern of politics is hampering Bihar. Political corruption and crime, bureaucracy, loots, economic backwardness, lack of education, natural disaster, poor condition of women, and corruption at panchayats and block levels are all the challenges before democracy in Bihar.

Different types of challenges:

Example and context	In this case your description on challenges of democracy.
Chilli: Government of General Panache defeated in election, but still there is control of army on many organisation.	(Example): Control of citizen on every government organisation, to conduct first multi-party election, to call elected leaders into the country.
Poland: After the first success of Solidarity military rules were implemented and banned over Solidarity.	
Ghana: Attained freedom and Enkruma was elected president.	

Example and context	In this case your description on challenges of democracy.
Myanmar: Suu Kyi under house arrest for more than 15 years, military rule approved internationally.	
International organisation: The only left over super power America is not bothered about United Nations and takes decision on its own.	
Mexico: After defeat of P.R.E. the second freedom in 2000.	
Election: Defeated candidate's complaint against electoral malpractices.	
China: Communist Party opt economic reforms but keeps exclusive rights on political authority.	
Pakistan: General Musharraf conducted referendum and complaint about irregularities in the electoral roll.	
Iraq: New government fails to establish its authority, communal violence at large scale.	
South Africa: Retirement of Mandela from active politics, pressure on his successor Mbeki to withdraw the favours given to white minorities.	
American Guantanamo Bay : Secretary general of United Nation Organisation considers it as a violation of international law, denial of U.S to U.N. resolution.	

Example and context	In this case your description on challenges of democracy.
Saudi Arab: No permission given to women to participate in public activities, no freedom to religious minorities.	
Yugoslavia: In Kosovo region racial tension between Serbs and Albanians; disintegration of Yugoslavia.	
Belgium: Constitutional reforms took place on large scale but Dutch people still unsatisfied, demanding for more autonomy.	
Srilanka: Peace talks adjourned between government and LTTE, outbreak of violence.	
America Citizen Rights: Equal rights given to black people but still they are poor, less educated and less unpowered.	
Northern Ireland: Domestic violence ended but there is lack of faith between Catholics and Protestants.	
Nepal: Elections to be held for the formation of constituent assembly, unrest in terai, maowadis still not surrendered their arms.	
Bolivia: Supporters of Bal-Sangharsh, Morales became Prime Minister. Multinational companies had threatened that.....? will Go Prision!	

Different types of challenges:

Now, when you have written all the challenges let's put them in broad categories. Some important features of democratic politics are mentioned below. In the previous table you have been told about some challenges of one or more countries. You can write these challenges in the boxes given below. Besides also mention one example in each boxes from India. If you do not find any suitable example against the mentioned challenges, then you may make separate categories and can put them there.

Constitutional structure	
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Democratic rights	
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Functions of organisations/institution	
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Election	
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Unitary Decentralisation	
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Encompassing / Incorporating Diversity.	
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Political Organisation	
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Any Other category	
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Any Other category	
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Come, let's make new division of these categories. This time, for these we will make those standards as base. For all these categories at least search one example from India.

Challenges to make base	
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Challenges to extension	
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Challenges to provide deep rooted strength to democracy	
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Now, let's think only about India and focus on challenges prevailing in the contemporary India. Make a list of five challenges which need immediate attention. Prioritize these challenge according to their importance. Give one example of those challenges which are not included in your priority list. Give reasons as well.

Priorities	Challenges of Democracy	Example	Reason of priority
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

Political Reforms :

Every Challenge has Possibility of reforms. We discuss these challenges only because we think it is possible to reach its solution. There are solutions to every challenge of democracy. If challenges of all countries are not similar then it does not mean there can be common solution to these different problems. We can make some proposal for nation-wide reforms. But it may be possible that real challenger of reformation is not of national level. Some important matters can be tackled at state or local level. It may be attractive to make law for political reformation but restriction on this is also compulsory. Law made carefully will discourage wrong political practices and

will encourage good works, but merely inducting these lawfully constitutional changes can't solve the challenges of democracy. Political reforms can truly be made by political workers, party, movements and politically aware citizens. Many a times legal changes have reverse impact, for example- many states have strictly prohibited the persons to contest elections having more than two children, due to these many men and women are devoid of this opportunity in democracy, whereas government was not wishing so.

To support good works of political workers legal changes are needed those are the best law which enable people to bring democratic reforms.

Law regarding right to information is a good example of making people aware and informed of democracy. This law checks corruption. Therefore, political reforms should mainly focus on strengthening democratic functioning.

The proposal of democratic reforms relying on democratic movements, organisations and media have greater possibility of being successful.

Questions

Objective Question:

I. Choose the right option

1. Success of democracy depends on

- a) Disinterest of citizens.
- b) Illegal activities of citizens.
- c) active participation of the citizens
- d) secure the benefits of their caste by the citizens

2. Participation of women in democracy before 15th Lok Sabha Election —

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| (a) 10% | (b) 15% |
| (c) 33% | (d) 50% |

3. Democracy is a government of the people, for the people and by the people; - is stated by

(a) Aristotle	(b) Abraham Lincoln
(c) Rousseau	(d) Green

4. On the basis of the new world survey the number of voters in India is about

(a) 90 crore	(b) 71 crore
(c) 75 crore	(d) 95 crore

5. Bad effect of feeling of regionalism is-

(a) Separation from our region	(b) national interest
(c) National Integration	(d) Separationalism

II. Fill in the blanks.

1. Indian democracy isdemocracy. (Representative/Unitary)
2. In judiciary one should have faith in(Truth/violence)
3. In India politics there is a demand to give% of reservation to the women. (33/15)
4. Presently governance of Nepal is..... (democratic/monarchy).
5. In 15th lok sabha election UPA got victory gotseats. (265/543)

Very short answer:

1. Democracy is the rule of the people, by the people and for the people. How?
2. How is democracy is affected by the internal conflict between national and state government?
3. What is feminism?
4. Clarify the meaning of economic offence.
5. Right to Information Act is the keeper of democracy. How?

Short Answer Questions

1. What do you understand by democracy?
2. How does collision politics affect democracy?
3. Which type of governance does Nepal have? What are the obstacles in the way of establishing democracy there?
4. Is lack of education a challenge for democracy?
5. Terrorism is a challenge of democracy. How?

Long- Answer Questions.

1. At present what are the challenges of democracy in Indian politics? Illustrate with examples.
2. How much supporting is participation of women in politics of Bihar in the development of democracy?
3. How does feminism and castiesm in Bihar affect democracy?
4. Can elected rulers do anything they want?
5. How is the role of judiciary a challenge in democracy? What is the solution/ way of its reformation? What measures can change it?
6. Is terrorism a challenge to democracy? Enumerate it.

