



Class – X – Civics
Ch. – 7 – Lecture Notes
“Outcomes of Democracy”

How do we access democracy’s outcomes?

- **Democracy is the better form of government when compared with dictatorship or any other alternative.**
- We felt that democracy was better because of it:
 - (i) Promotes equality among citizens;
 - (ii) Enhances the dignity of the individual;
 - (iii) Improves the quality of decision – making;
 - (iv) Provides a method to resolve conflicts; and
 - (v) Allows room to correct mistakes.
- Democracy is seen to be good in principle but felt to be not so good in its practice.
- This dilemma invites us to think hard about the outcomes of the democracy.
- Our interest in and fascination for democracy often push us into taking a position that democracy can address all socio-economic and political problem.
- **The first step towards thinking carefully about the outcomes of democracy is to recognize that democracy is just a form of government.**
- It can only create conditions for achieving something.
- The citizens have to take advantage of those conditions and achieve those goals.

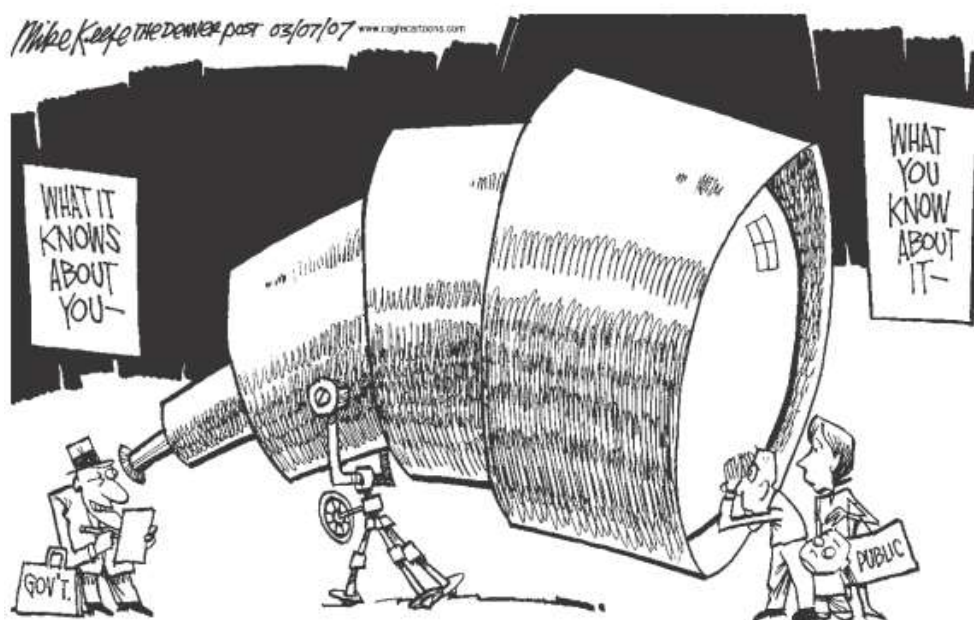




Accountable, responsive and legitimate government:

- The most basic outcome of democracy should be that it produces a government that is accountable to the citizens, and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens.
- **Democracy is based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation.**
- The actual performance of democracies shows a mixed record on this.
- Democracies have had greater success in setting up regular and free elections and in setting up conditions for open public debate.
- But most democracies fall short of elections that provide a fair chance to everyone and in subjecting every decision to public debate.
- Democratic governments do not have a very good record when it comes to sharing information with citizens.
- All one can say in favour of democratic regimes is that they are much better than any non-democratic regime in these respects.
- In substantive terms it may be reasonable to expect from democracy a government that is attentive to the needs and demands of the people and is largely free of corruption.
- The record of democracies is not impressive on these two counts.
- Democracies often frustrate the needs of the people and often ignore the demands of a majority of its population.
- The routine tales of corruption are enough to convince us that democracy is not free of this evil.
- There is one respect in which democratic government is certainly better than its alternatives: **democratic government is legitimate government.**
- It may be slow, less efficient, not always very responsive or clean. But a democratic government is people's own government. That is why there is an overwhelming support for the idea of democracy all over the world.

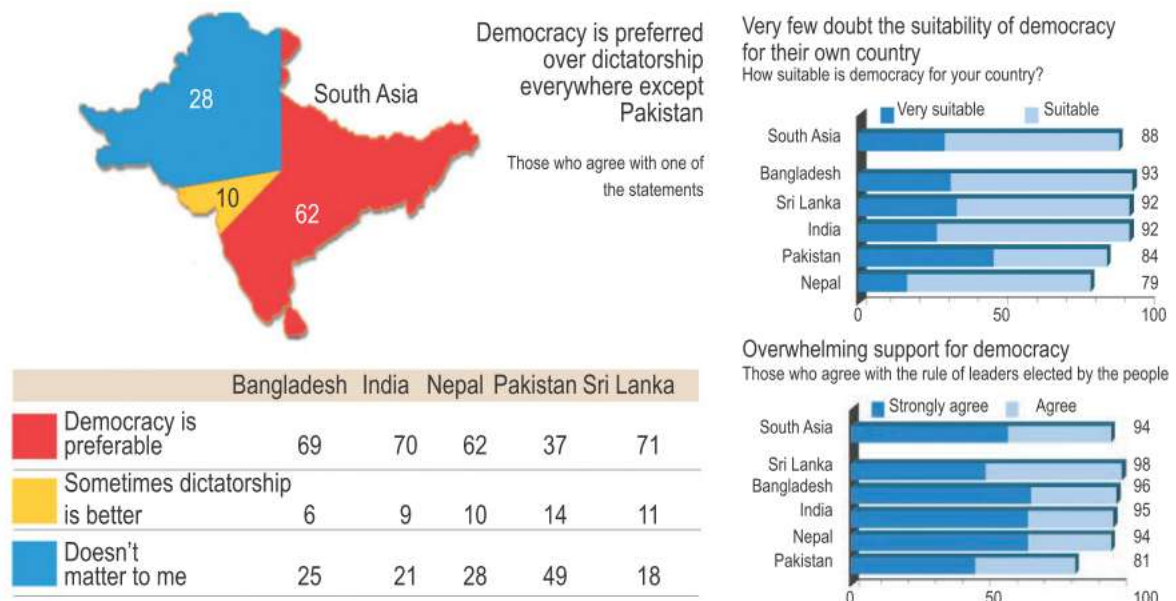
Governmental Secrecy





Economic growth and development:

- If you consider all democracies and all dictatorships for the fifty years between 1950 and 2000, **dictatorships have slightly higher rate of economic growth.**
- The inability of democracy to achieve higher economic development worries us. But this alone cannot be reason to reject democracy.
- However, the difference in the rates of economic development between less developed countries with dictatorships and democracies is negligible.
- When we find such significant difference in the rates of economic growth between countries under dictatorship and democracy, it is better to prefer democracy as it has several other positive outcomes.



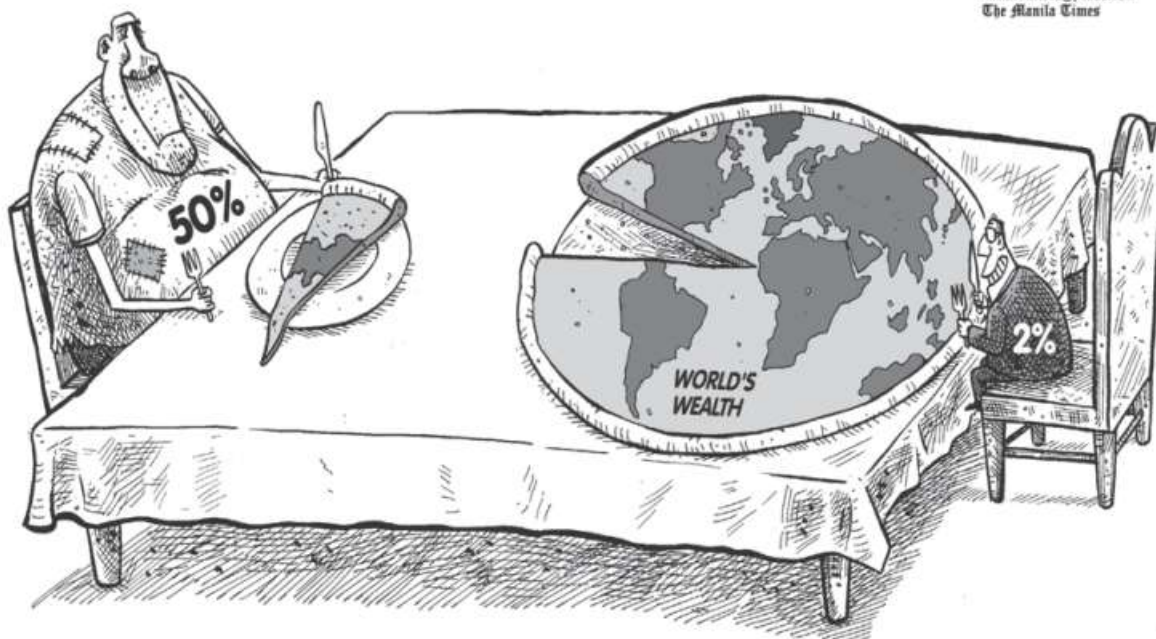
Reduction of inequality and poverty:

- Perhaps more than development, it is reasonable to expect democracies to reduce economic disparities.
- **Democracies are based on political equality.**
- Parallel to the process of bringing individuals into the political arena on an equal footing, we find growing economic inequalities.
- **A small number of ultra-rich enjoy a highly disproportionate share of wealth and incomes.**
- Not only that, their share in the total income of the country has been increasing. Those at the bottom of the society have very little to depend upon.
- Sometimes they find it difficult to meet their basic needs of life, such as food, clothing, house, education and health.
- In actual life, democracies do not appear to be very successful in reducing economic inequalities.
- The poor constitute a large proportion of our voters and no party will like to lose their votes.



World's Wealth Owned by a Few

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Accommodation of social diversity:

- It will be fair expectation that democracy should produce a harmonious social life.
- Ability to handle social differences, divisions, and conflicts is thus a definite plus point of democratic regimes.
- **Two conditions in order to achieve the outcome:**
 - (i) It is necessary to understand that democracy is not simply rule by majority opinion.
 - The majority always needs to work with the minority so that governments function to represent the general view.
 - Majority and minority opinions are not permanent.
 - (ii) It is also necessary that rule by majority does not become rule by majority community in terms of religion or race or linguistic group, etc.
 - Rule by majority means that in case of every decision or in case of every election, different persons and groups may and can form a majority.
 - **Democracy remains democracy only as long as every citizen has a chance of being in majority at some point of time.**
 - If someone is barred from being in majority on the basis of birth, then the democratic rule ceases to be accommodative for that person or group.



Enemies



Greeting



The two images depict two different kinds of effects democratic politics can have on social divisions. Take one example for each image and write a paragraph each on the outcome of democratic politics in both situations.

Dignity and freedom of the citizens:

- Democracy stands much superior to any other form of government in promoting dignity and freedom of the individual.
- **The passion for respect and freedom are the basis of democracy.**
- This has been achieved in various degrees in various democracies.
- Most societies across the world were historically male dominated societies.
- Long struggles by women have created some sensitivity today that respect to and equal treatment of women are necessary ingredients of a democratic society.
- **Democracy in India has strengthened the claims of the disadvantaged and discriminated castes for equal status and equal opportunity.**
- Expectations from democracy also function as the criteria for judging and democratic country.
- As people get some benefits of democracy, they ask for more and want to make democracy even better.
- Most individuals today believe that their vote makes a difference to the way the government is run and to their own self-interest.