



DEMOCRACY IN A THIRD-WORLD COUNTRY

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Social studies during my younger years had a single concept or definition of democracy. Democracy then, as it is now, is a government of the people, by the people and for the people. In its purest form, democracy may yet be the ideal form of government that all nations in the world need. It definitely is a much better alternative to a communist form of government, with democracy having non-despotic rulers who serve at the behest of the people that vote them into position. Ideally, tyrants do not belong in democratic rule. Democratic officials keenly observe the principle that they are put in government not to impose their will on the people but rather to serve the people.

From <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/democracy>, we take the following meanings of democracy, which is: a system or form of rule by representatives elected into power as empowered by the people; a social or political party ruled by every one of its members; the exercise of social egalitarianism; a social state or circumstance where there exists equality and absence of social and economic distinctions; ordinary people, esp. as a unit exercising political influence. By and large, a democratic form of government in which the people hold supreme power which they use to govern themselves or to govern through elected representatives. Many nations of the planet subscribe to the very principles of democracy, with the world's most powerful nations unflinchingly recognized for being pioneers in this form of governance. For everyone, to be recognized as being under democratic influence is tantamount to being in a strong status among all. For a country to attain democracy is equivalent to having achieved a degree of maturity and effect on others.

My own country has had a long and painful history of democracy with false starts and uncertainties. We began as a young upstart on democracy, with American-style democracy that merely allowed us to have elections regularly. But those who were voted into power were the educated few, the elite rich, or the more widely-recognized parties. Military, although initially meant to be in subservience to civilian government, easily became a powerful component as they became controllable by influential politicians who had dared use military might as a way of exerting power over the people.

Despite the decades it has had to optimize democracy on a much deeper level, my nation has had to undergo a lot of bloodshed, senseless killings and martyr-like deaths from many who dared rise up and question politics in order to get their voices heard and the desire for true democracy to clamor loudly within the hearts of more people. The journey to democracy has been difficult and full of woes, but what we need to remember is that power rests in us, and we deserve the leaders we catapult into power. May we use that power wisely!

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Define democracy in your own words.
2. Does your country have a democratic form of government? If not, how will you compare your country's form of government to a democratic one?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a democratic form of government?
4. How can powerful nations help developing countries optimize democracy?
5. If you were born under a communistic regime, would you struggle to migrate to a country that enjoys democracy? Why or why not?