

**Revision Notes**  
**Chapter - 1**  
**DEMOCRACY IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD**

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**Two Tales of Democracy :**

**Chile -**

Salvador Allende Was president of Chile, a south American country. He was pro poor and workers. He was opposed from rich, landlords. Even America was unhappy with him

There was military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet, in which Allende was killed. Pinochet rules Chile for almost 18 years in autocratic style. Finally democracy returned to Chile when Michelle Bachelet was elected as President.

**Poland -**

Poland was ruled by Polish United workers Party, a non democratic communist government. Some workers led by Lech Walesa went on strike for their just demands. Initially government negotiated but later the ruler General Jeruzesky imposed martial law in the country. He was backed by Soviet Russia.

Polish people continued their struggle and finally Lech Walesa was elected democratically as the President of Poland.

**Two Features of Democracy**

- Democracy, hence, is a form of government that allows people to choose their own leaders.
- People have the freedom to express their views, freedom to organize and freedom to protest against injustice.
- **The March of Democracy** has met with setbacks and successes throughout history.
- In 1900 there were only a few democratic states. After the Second World War, in 1950, more countries were added. The newly independent nations of Asia chose democracy. In 1975 colonies in Africa had become independent and most of them chose



democracy as a form of government. A giant leap was taken in 1991. The fall of the Soviet Union created 15 new states and more democracies.

### **Phases in the Expansion of Democracy**

- By 2005, 140 countries have held multi-party elections. More than 80 countries have made advances towards democracy since 1980.
- Still there are many countries where people cannot elect their leaders. In Myanmar the elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi has been imprisoned by the military rulers (1990). No amount of international support has helped in her release.
- After second world war many colonial nations were freed and most of them adopted democratic style of government.
- Some of the democratic experiments were not successful.

### **Democracy at Global Level**

- Is it possible to have democracy at global level? Not at present.
- The UN, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are global associations of the world. They attempt to maintain peace and security among the countries of the world. They give loans and money to governments.
- They are not fully democratic. Five countries — US, UK, France, China and Russia — have the veto power in the Security Council.
- International Monetary Fund (IMF) is controlled by wealthy ten nations and President of world bank has been always an American. This is against democratic principles.

### **Promotion of Democracy**

- Many powerful countries like the United States of America believe that democracy should be promoted in the world — even by force.
- Powerful countries have launched attacks on non-democratic countries.
- Iraq is the biggest example. USA and its allies attacked and occupied Iraq without UN sanction, on the pretext of Iraq possessing nuclear weapons. They have even held forced elections.
- The urge for democracy should come from the people and should not be imposed.

