

ISSUE BRIEF

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South Asia's Political Parties Need Internal Reforms to Revitalize Regional Democracy

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Introduction

Nearly 50 percent of the world's countries will see voters head to the polls in 2024 in what has become known as the "year of elections,"¹ and South Asia leads the way, representing nearly half of the world's voters this year. India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Maldives, and Bhutan have already held their general elections. Sri Lanka's presidential election is scheduled for this fall. Only Nepal, which held its last national elections in 2022, is not joining this year's voting festivities.

These elections come at a precarious time for South Asia's democratic standing. Prominent democracy indices, including Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem),² Freedom House,³ and the Atlantic Council's Freedom and Prosperity Indexes,⁴ show most of the region going in the wrong direction. Recent elections in South Asia's most populous nations illuminate this trend. Narendra Modi's surprise setback⁵ buoyed faith⁶ in India's democracy, but the reelection rhetoric⁷ and tactics⁸ of the Bharatiya

The Freedom and Prosperity Center aims to increase the well-being of people everywhere and especially that of the poor and marginalized in developing countries through unbiased, data-based research on the relationship between prosperity and economic, political, and legal freedoms, in support of sound policy choices.

- 1 "2024: Year of Elections," *The Guardian*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/series/2024--year-of-elections>.
- 2 V-Dem Institute, "Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)," accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.v-dem.net/>.
- 3 Freedom House, "Freedom in the World," accessed August 12, 2024, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world>.
- 4 Atlantic Council, "Freedom and Prosperity Indexes," accessed August 12, 2024, <https://freedom-and-prosperity-indexes.atlanticcouncil.org/>.
- 5 "Modi to Take Oath as Prime Minister After Election Setback," *Bloomberg*, June 9, 2024, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-06-09/modi-to-take-oath-as-prime-minister-after-election-setback>.
- 6 "India Election 2024: Modi and the BJP," *Vox*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.vox.com/world-politics/353785/india-election-2024-modi-bjp>.
- 7 "Modi's Anti-Muslim Rhetoric During India's Election Campaign," *Foreign Policy*, May 28, 2024, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/05/28/modi-india-election-campaign-rhetoric-anti-muslim/>.
- 8 "Why India's Democracy is Dying," *Journal of Democracy*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://journalofdemocracy.org/articles/why-indias-democracy-is-dying/#:~:text=While%20India's%20formal%20institutions%20of,assemble%20freely%20without%20fear%20of.>

Janata Party (BJP) highlight worrying trends.⁹ The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party showed remarkable resilience¹⁰ but could not overcome the military's supremacy¹¹ in Pakistan's politics. In Bangladesh, the recently deposed Awami League (AL) cruised to victory in an election boycotted by the opposition and deemed "not free or fair"¹² by the US State Department. Although Bhutan's and the Maldives' elections were largely without controversy, the region's democratic landscape remains pockmarked.

As South Asia's democracies show signs of dysfunction, citizens are disengaging. In all five of South Asia's completed elections this year, voter turnout was down. In the most recent wave of the World Values Survey (2017-2022),¹³ which included Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and the Maldives, less than 15 percent of respondents said they were "very interested" in politics and only small minorities had participated in political activities such as engaging with online political organizations, signing a petition, or joining a political demonstration. Large majorities reported no party membership. Less than a fifth of respondents in each country surveyed said people had "a great deal" of say in what the government does. Across South Asia, it appears that democracy is not delivering.

South Asia's political parties are contributing to the problem. The region's oldest and most institutionalized political parties have lost their vigor. Many key parties that have historically relied on the popularity of family dynasties are losing ground, failing to cultivate dynamic leaders, generate innovative ideas, or respond to citizen needs. World Values Survey data show that majorities in South Asia's surveyed countries had "not very much" or "no" confidence in political parties. The weakening of the region's main parties—many of which have been integral to winning and sustaining democracy in their countries—has corresponded with South Asia's democratic stagnation.

Nevertheless, these same parties are an essential part of the solution to the region's political problems. Despite evidence of atrophy, most of the leading parties still possess strong organizational characteristics and a core base of support. Internal reforms are needed to revive citizen-centered political competition, demonstrate that democracy delivers, and revitalize public faith in representative government.

The State of Parties in South Asia

South Asia's strong tradition of democracy has been upheld by a small number of well-established political parties that have dominated politics. The Indian National Congress, founded in 1885 as a country-wide movement, is the region's oldest active party. Throughout the 1940s, '50s, and '60s, other key parties emerged, including Pakistan's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League, Sri Lanka's Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and United National Party (UNP), Bangladesh's AL, and Nepal's Nepali Congress. Other nominally newer parties have been around for decades: the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) was established in 1978, India's BJP in 1980 (with roots¹⁴ much earlier), the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in 1993, and Pakistan's PTI in 1996.

Across the Global South—comparing South Asia, Africa, the Americas, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East—South Asia's parties are structurally strong. According to 2023 data from V-Dem, South Asia's parties are the most organized at the national level, are near the top on party discipline, and have the deepest degree of institutionalization, which combines various attributes, including links to civil society, party cadres, and ideological coherence.

Despite these positive characteristics, many of South Asia's parties have stagnated. According to Pew Research Center, the median age¹⁵ for national leaders around the world is 62. In South Asia's seven states, only the Maldives and Bhutan have elected leaders younger than average. Most of the region's leaders are above 70 and have been recurring figures in their countries' politics for decades. No major parties have primaries to select candidates, insulating these choices from public scrutiny. Internal mechanisms for meritocratic advancement or policy innovation are often limited. Many South Asian politicians have become exorbitantly wealthy and corruption scandals are common. Finally, clientelistic politics are excluding much of the public from state goods in many countries.

9 "India's Leadership Change After Modi's Coalition," *The Washington Post*, June 16, 2024, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/06/16/india-modi-coalition-leadership-change/>.

10 "Pakistan Election Results: Imran Khan, PTI, and the Military," *Time*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://time.com/6693147/pakistan-election-results-imran-khan-pti-military/>.

11 "Pakistan Election Results: Coalition Dynamics with Sharif and Khan," *Foreign Policy*, February 14, 2024, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/02/14/pakistan-election-results-coalition-sharif-khan-pmln/>.

12 U.S. Department of State, "Parliamentary Elections in Bangladesh," accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.state.gov/parliamentary-elections-in-bangladesh/>.

13 "World Values Survey," accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp>.

14 "The Powerful Group Shaping the Rise of Hindu Nationalism in India," *NPR*, May 3, 2019, <https://www.npr.org/2019/05/03/706808616/the-powerful-group-shaping-the-rise-of-hindu-nationalism-in-india>.

15 "As Biden and Trump Seek Reelection, Who Are the Oldest and Youngest Current World Leaders?" *Pew Research Center*, May 1, 2024, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/05/01/as-biden-and-trump-seek-reelection-who-are-the-oldest-and-youngest-current-world-leaders/#:~:text=The%20median%20age%20of%20current,who%20are%20in%20their%2080s.>

The Importance of Political Parties to South Asia's Democratic Trajectory

Among Global South countries, South Asia's democracy scores are middling. According to V-Dem data, the region's liberal and electoral democracy scores are above those of Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia but behind those of the Americas, and they have fallen slightly over the last fifteen years. At the country level, the region's most populous countries—India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh—have been in decline recently on both indicators and are rated¹⁶ in the second-lowest category of “electoral autocracies.” Nepal, the Maldives, and Sri Lanka are rated “electoral democracies,”¹⁷ which have fair elections, but “liberal principles” are “not satisfied.” Only tiny Bhutan rates as a “liberal democracy”—the highest category—but it stands at the cusp of demotion. According to Freedom House, all of South Asia's countries are “partly free.”¹⁸

The Atlantic Council's Freedom and Prosperity Indexes¹⁹ offer a similar outlook. Out of the six South Asian countries measured—Maldives is not included in the indexes—Bhutan falls into the “moderate freedom” category, while India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal are all rated as countries with “low freedom.” Of the three subindexes measured in the Freedom Index—economic, political, and legal freedom—South Asian countries have historically performed the best on political freedom, a testament to the numerous long-standing, institutionalized multiparty systems throughout the region. However, all six countries have seen their political freedom decline in recent years. India's and Bangladesh's scores have dropped since 2013, while Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan have all experienced consistent declines starting between 2017 and 2019.

The rhetoric and actions of South Asia's political parties are pivotal drivers of the region's middling democratic performance. Ruling parties play a primary role in preserving the foundations of liberal and electoral democracy, which include constitutionally protected civil liberties, strong rule of law, free media, transparent and inclusive elections, an independent judiciary, and effective checks and balances. Furthermore, parties' rhetoric can bolster or undermine social cohesion and their policy platforms can strengthen or weaken democratic institutions. In India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, which have seen the steepest declines, the ruling parties have insufficiently protected the

political and civic spaces and interparty hostility has eroded democratic norms.

However, a country's democratic performance is not solely based on the actions of the ruling party; it is an emergent feature of the party system, which includes other parties in the governing coalition and opposition. Opposition parties that do not actively affirm democratic processes and principles or fail to innovate in the face of democratic backsliding are part of the problem. Similarly, liberal-minded ruling parties that become ideologically and structurally brittle are vulnerable to internal autocratization and defeat. Moreover, parties that descend into mutual intolerance reinforce divisions in the population.

What Ails South Asia's Major Political Parties?

India

The Indian National Congress (INC) has been at the forefront of India's political scene since the country gained independence in 1947, boasting eight of the country's fifteen prime ministers and holding power as recently as 2014.²⁰ But the past decade has seen the INC's presence in Indian national politics diminished, losing the Lok Sabha—India's directly elected lower house of Parliament—to Narendra Modi and the BJP. While the INC's decline began prior to the emergence of the BJP as a national party, its internal rigidity and an inability to establish a clear platform have hampered the party's success in recent years, allowing the BJP to increase its political influence with few checks.

INC leadership remains dynastic and centralized around the Gandhi family. Party leaders Jawaharlal Nehru and his daughter, Indira Gandhi, dominated Indian politics for the first thirty years after independence. Today, Indira's daughter-in-law and grandchildren—Sonia Gandhi and her children, Rahul and Priyanka—are leading party figures. Sonia or Rahul held the title of INC president each year between 1998 and 2022, and Rahul was nominated by the INC as the official opposition leader in Parliament in 2024. Priyanka is likely to enter Parliament in 2024 as well, contesting a seat vacated²¹ by Rahul, who won seats in two separate constituencies. Continued dominance by the Gandhi family has obstructed newer voices and perspectives within the party, hindering the ability of the party to modernize.

16 V-Dem Institute, “Democracy Reports,” accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.v-dem.net/publications/democracy-reports/>.

17 V-Dem Institute, “V-Dem Working Paper 2017:47,” accessed August 12, 2024, https://www.v-dem.net/media/publications/v-dem_working_paper_2017_47.pdf.

18 <https://freedom-and-prosperity-indexes.atlanticcouncil.org/>

19 Atlantic Council, *Freedom and Prosperity Indexes*.

20 “Prime Ministers of India,” *Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.pmsangrahalaya.gov.in/prime-ministers-of-india>.

21 “Why India's Citizenship Amendment Act is a Blow to Constitutional Values,” *Amnesty International*, March 2024, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/03/india-citizenship-amendment-act-is-a-blow-to-indian-constitutional-values-and-international-standards/>.

The INC has also struggled to assert secularism, one of its self-professed core values.²² Historically, the party has embraced and defended India's diverse religious traditions. In recent years, however, as the Hindu nationalist BJP has grown increasingly popular, the INC's secularism has become less vociferous. The party was absent during deadly protests of the Citizenship Amendment Act, which notably excluded²³ Muslim migrants from receiving amnesty, and failed to speak out against the bulldozing of a Muslim-majority neighborhood in Delhi.²⁴

While India has a number of regional parties holding seats in the Lok Sabha, only the INC and BJP contest widely on a national level. As the INC weakened, falling from 206 Lok Sabha seats in 2009 to 44 in 2014 and 52 in 2019, the BJP grew, winning majorities in 2014 and 2019 as opposition waned. Yet the past decade of BJP majority rule oversaw a stark decline in India's political freedom—India's political rights score decreased more than thirty-two points in the Atlantic Council's Freedom Index²⁵—the fourth-largest drop worldwide, while its legislative constraints on the executive score dropped by nearly twenty-four points, the fourteenth-largest drop worldwide.

Despite the BJP's dominance, the 2024 national elections present an opportunity to reestablish a strong multiparty system. In a win for coalitional governance, the BJP surprisingly captured just 240 of the Lok Sabha's 543 seats, falling 32 seats short of a majority. The BJP is now showing signs of factionalism and internal dissent. As Johns Hopkins professor Devesh Kapur argued, "increasing centralization, declining intra-party democracy, and the cutting-to-size of regional leaders who were not subserviently loyal to the national leader all took their toll."²⁶ These elections showed that Indian voters value a multiparty system and desire the return of strong political freedoms. The INC, which has been buoyed by these largely unexpected results, should capitalize on its momentum to promote more diverse party leadership and reestablish its commitment to religious pluralism.

Bangladesh

On August 5, Bangladesh's ruling party, the Awami League, was overthrown in a popular uprising. The government's violent response to initially small student protests—and its refusal to take accountability afterward—created widespread public

anger, which combined with long-standing economic and political discontent to produce a broad-based revolution. However, the AL's unresponsiveness did not begin with the protests and is not unique in Bangladesh's party system. During fifteen years of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's rule, both the AL and Bangladesh Nationalist Party have become more insular and inflexible, which has fed negative dynamics in the country's democracy.

The AL and BNP are dynastic and personalistic parties. Sheikh Hasina, who has been president of the AL since 1981, is the daughter of Bangladesh's liberation hero, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. She will likely continue to lead the party from exile in India. On the other side, the BNP's ailing chairwoman, Khaleda Zia, is the widow of the party's founder and former prime minister. Their son, Tarique Rahman, is the acting chairperson and appointed successor. Loyalty to family dynasty has become a central ethos of each party, leaving little room for open dissent. This dynamic was dramatically displayed during the Hasina government's deadly response to protests, which drew no public opposition from party members.

The parties' foreordained top positions illuminate limited internal processes of democracy. At the senior level, a small coterie of counselors, party officials, and family members advise the party heads. The party elites choose election candidates, who are typically from notable families, with parliamentary seats often passed within families across generations. Despite having a female prime minister for nearly all of the last thirty-three years, women are often marginalized in the parties. The defining hierarchies of Bangladeshi politics—age, gender, and family—exclude numerous alternative perspectives on policy and strategy inside the parties.

The rigid hierarchies of Bangladesh's parties have weakened democracy. Prior to January's parliamentary elections, a focus group²⁷ participant said, "No political party has impressed me in Bangladesh, so I haven't decided whether I will vote or not. It would be better if there was an option to vote 'none of the above.'" In an April 2023 national survey,²⁸ nearly 90 percent of respondents said there was a large gap between the political elites and the people, and over a third of the public said²⁹ they wanted to see new political parties. Ultimately, Bangladesh's parliamentary elections drew only 40 percent voter turnout, down

22 "Indian National Congress: Our Values," *Indian National Congress*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://inc.in/our-values>.

23 "Congress's History Proves that Soft Hindutva Doesn't Work," *The Wire*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://thewire.in/history/congress-history-proves-that-soft-hindutva-doesnt-work>.

24 "India Election Results: Modi's BJP and NDA Secure Lok Sabha Victory," *Foreign Policy*, June 4, 2024, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2024/06/04/india-election-results-modi-bjp-nda-lok-sabha/>.

25 Atlantic Council, *Freedom and Prosperity Indexes*.

26 "India's Leadership Change and Election Results," *BBC News*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cjmmg4pm0m4o>.

27 "Survey Research for Bangladesh 2023: Dissatisfaction with Country's Direction," *International Republican Institute*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.iri.org/news/survey-research-for-bangladesh-2023-dissatisfaction-with-country-direction/>.

28 *International Republican Institute*, "Survey Research for Bangladesh 2023."

29 *International Republican Institute*, "Survey Research for Bangladesh 2023."

over 45 percent from the 2008 election. The protest movement that produced Bangladesh's "second liberation" revealed weaknesses for both parties. For the AL, its inability to grasp popular sentiment and intolerance of public and internal dissent led to its downfall. For the BNP, this successful revolution contrasts with its own inability to mobilize citizens before and after the January elections. Bangladesh's sudden democratic opening will likely redound to the benefit of the opposition, but this revolution was nonpartisan. Both the AL and BNP need to infuse more egalitarianism into their structures to better respond to public demands for responsive politics or risk citizens again taking matters into their own hands.

Pakistan

In February, Pakistani voters demonstrated their commitment to democracy. Despite the election's outcome being widely seen as predetermined, voters rallied behind independent candidates supported by former Prime Minister Imran Khan's PTI. This unexpected turn of events was a clear rejection of the military's preferred election outcome and of the country's oldest and most institutionalized parties. This should serve as a wake-up call for party elites, who now need to address important party deficits.

One challenge for the political parties is the persistent lack of internal democratic processes. PML-N and PPP, which have some internal mechanisms for party democracy, have come under fire for their centralized decision-making structures and dynastic, family-based politics. These entrenched power structures have severely hampered the parties' abilities to address their constituents' concerns, effectively engage with citizens, and develop and implement comprehensive policies. Furthermore, party structures have hindered their capacities to foster new leaders and attract young voters, undermining their long-term viability. Due to these weaknesses, PML-N and PPP have become predominantly regional parties.

Pakistan's parties also lack sufficient women's representation. While the February elections saw a record number of women running for seats, there is still a noticeable absence of women voting, highlighting another critical deficiency in the political parties' inclusivity and responsiveness. Pakistan's parties are not fully committed to nominating female candidates for positions of power beyond quota requirements. Consequently, women across Pakistan continue to be underrepresented and underserved by their political leaders. Despite the Pakistani population's strong desire for democracy, the country's weakened political parties have struggled to provide citizens with elected representatives who genuinely act in the public interest. This

destructive dynamic has undermined the public's perception of political institutions' and actors' legitimacy. A June 2023 survey³⁰ by *Gallup Pakistan* revealed that only 39 percent of Pakistanis approved of the country's politicians. The lack of internal political party democracy and the parties' resistance to internal reform are significant factors contributing to this cycle.

Despite these challenges, there is still a path toward improving party performance. Some leaders are expressing dissatisfaction with the state of their parties and acknowledging the need for reform and modernization. The PPP and PML-N's historical significance in Pakistan's democratic struggle amplifies the urgent need for internal reform, which will be essential for regaining citizens' trust and fulfilling the democratic aspirations of the Pakistani people.

Sri Lanka

Over the last decade, Sri Lankan voters have consistently punished political parties for their inability to ensure government accountability and transparency. During the Aragalaya protests³¹ in March 2022, protestors dramatically stormed the presidential palace over severe economic mismanagement, forcing Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, and the cabinet to resign. The protesters demanded economic reform, constitutional amendments, investigations into political malpractice, and the strengthening of democratic institutions. The movement was the culmination of years of brewing citizen discontent. The 2015 government of President Maithripala Sirisena was given a popular mandate to control corruption, decentralize power, and ensure transitional justice. His failure led to the downfall of the UNP and SLFP unity government. In parliamentary elections in 2020, the UNP, Sri Lanka's oldest political party, won no seats and SLFP managed only one. This significant loss for both parties clearly reflected the public's discontent and demand for change.

Following the Aragalaya protests and their aftermath, political party reform has become more urgent. Historically, individual personalities have heavily influenced the UNP and SLFP, leading to factionalism and instability. A lack of internal party democracy has impeded their abilities to improve their organizational capacities to effectively engage with the public and develop citizen-responsive platforms. Furthermore, there is a lack of meaningful opportunities for women and young people to engage with the parties, as they are predominantly led by male and aging politicians, offering limited prospects for new voices to progress within their ranks.

30 "Gallup Pakistan Survey Results," *Gallup Pakistan*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.gallup.com.pk/post/35354>.

31 "Beyond the Protests: Sri Lanka's Aragalaya Movement and Uncertain Future," *Freedom House*, August 12, 2024, <https://freedomhouse.org/article/beyond-protests-sri-lankas-aragalaya-movement-and-uncertain-future>.

Citizens are blaming Sri Lanka's parties for the country's unresponsive democracy. From 2011 to 2024, survey data³² show that trust in political parties dropped thirty-eight points to 19 percent, which occurred alongside thirty-seven point and forty-one point reductions in trust in the national government and Parliament, respectively. The parties' inability to incorporate internal democratic structures and processes has led to a disconnect with the public, causing the parties to be implicated in the political system's failures to fulfill the public's fundamental needs.

In the forthcoming months, Sri Lankans will have their first opportunity since 2020 to shape the future of their country at the ballot box. The upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections are a moment for political parties to listen and respond to the people's aspirations and present a potential turning point in Sri Lankan politics. Political parties face complex political challenges, including escalating polarization, economic hurdles, and deep social fractionalization, but the possibility of positive change is within reach. Whether these political parties and their leaders are able to navigate these challenges and reform their internal democracy will be pivotal in determining their capacities to retain or regain the trust of their constituents.

Rejuvenating Parties and Democracy in South Asia

South Asia's political parties need rehabilitation. The region's democratic indicators have stagnated or declined as many of its key parties have atrophied. Despite a storied history of fighting for democracy, many of South Asia's oldest parties have become dynastic, rigid, and insular, exacerbating citizens' frustration and disillusion with democratic performance. More dynamic political parties will be integral to restoring citizens' belief that democracy can deliver.

South Asia's political parties should refocus on the basics of institutional development. Internal democracy, which is defined³³ as the institutionalized rules and procedures that prevent the control of internal elections and party functioning by individual

leaders or cliques, is vital. Elements of internal party democracy include mechanisms for the resolution of conflict, internal elections for party positions, meritocratic advancement within the party, inclusive party congresses where members can influence party decisions, decentralized and empowered local branches, and transparent and inclusive candidate-selection procedures.

Parties should also develop data-driven strategies for platform development, election messaging, and governing. They should conduct or utilize public opinion research to develop citizen-responsive policies and messages. Annual strategic planning and iterative scenario planning can help parties set goals and adapt to changing circumstances. Intraparty democracy will enhance these efforts, ensuring that a diverse set of voices and perspectives analyzes data and informs strategy development.

Finding interparty consensus is also crucial. Internally rigid parties often become externally intransigent. Long-serving leaders are often wedded to personalized interparty hostilities that turn off all but their most ardent party supporters. Most citizens want compromise and accommodation rather than self-interested machinations and bellicose rhetoric. Parties should emphasize moderation, accept the legitimacy of their opponents, and seek forums for dialogue and cooperation.

The strength of democracy and the strength of parties are tied together. Parties³⁴ are the main vehicles for political representation, the foundational element of the government, and the essential channel for democratic accountability. When democracies fail to deliver, parties are rightfully blamed. Too often, the region's parties have deployed historical narratives, parochial grievances, and insults rather than citizen-responsive politics. Concentrating on internal democracy, data-driven strategies, and interparty consensus will right-track South Asia's party systems, lay the foundation for better democratic performance, and rejuvenate citizens' faith in democracy.

32 "Survey on Democracy and Reconciliation," *Center for Policy Alternatives*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://www.cpalanka.org/survey-on-democracy-and-reconciliation/>.

33 "A Framework for Democratic Party Building: Handbook," *ACE Project*, accessed August 12, 2024, <https://aceproject.org/ero-en/misc/a-framework-for-democratic-party-building-handbook/>.

34 *ACE Project*, "Framework for Democratic Party Building."

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