

# Democracy Report, 2022

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**In news**– V-Dem Institute at Sweden’s University of Gothenburg has released the Democracy Report, 2022 recently. The study was titled as ‘Democracy Report 2022: Autocratisation Changing Nature’.

## About the report & its findings-

- The V-Dem Institute, led by Professor Staffan I. Lindberg, is an independent research institute and the Headquarters of the V-Dem project.
- The institute is based at the Department of Political Science at the University of **Gothenburg in Sweden**.
- **V-Dem’s conceptual scheme takes into account not only the electoral dimension (free and fair elections) but also the liberal principle that a democracy must protect “individual and minority rights against both the tyranny of the state and the tyranny of the majority”.**
- **It has classified countries into four regime types based on their score in the Liberal Democratic Index (LDI): Liberal Democracy, Electoral Democracy, Electoral Autocracy, and Closed Autocracy.**
- While **Sweden topped the LDI index**, other Scandinavian countries such as **Denmark and Norway**, along with **Costa Rica and New Zealand** make up the top five in liberal democracy rankings.
- It has found that autocratisation is spreading rapidly, with a record of 33 countries autocratising, resulting in **4 new autocracies: Chad, Guinea, Mali and Myanmar**.
- While the **number of liberal democracies** stood at 42 in 2012, their number has **shrunk to their lowest level in over 25 years**, with just 34 countries and 13% of the world population living in liberal democracies.
- **Closed autocracies, or dictatorships, rose from 25 to 30 between 2020 and 2021.**

- While the world today has 89 democracies and 90 autocracies, electoral autocracy remains the most common regime type, followed by Electoral democracies.
- **As per the report, one of the biggest drivers of autocratisation is “toxic polarisation”** – defined as a phenomenon that erodes respect of counter-arguments and associated aspects of the deliberative component of democracy.
- **The report identified “misinformation”** as a key tool deployed by autocratising governments to sharpen polarization followed by **repression of civil society and censorship of media.**
- The freedom of expression declined in a record 35 countries in 2021.

### **Status of India-**

- It has noted that **India is one of the top ten ‘autocratisers’ in the world**, the V-Dem (Varieties of Democracy) report **classifies India as an autocracy (‘electoral autocracy’)** rather than a democracy.
- **It is ranked 93rd** on the liberal democracy index, out of 179 countries and **figures in the “bottom 50%” of countries.**
- It has slipped **further down in the Electoral Democracy Index, to 100**, and even lower in the Deliberative Component Index, at 102.
- **In South Asia, India is ranked below Sri Lanka (88), Nepal (71), and Bhutan (65) and above Pakistan (117) in the LDI.**
- The report notes that India is part of a broader global trend of an anti-plural political party driving a country’s autocratisation.