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## **1) Discuss the Political Culture in Pakistan:**

### **Introduction:**

Despite having been filtered through the sieve of constitutional evolution, the salient attributes of Pakistan's political culture are a mirror reflection of the predecessor British legacy. Unlike other British colonies that soon after independence got themselves out from the bulwark of colonialism to become a stable polity, Pakistan's political culture remains conflictual rather than consensual. It is saddening to note that Pakistan's political culture is an amalgamation of many factors: dynastic politics, aristocracy, institutional inequality, weak opposition, and passive public participation, making it more prone to undemocratic forces to hold the reign. For these reasons, since its inception, the land of pure has fallen into the quagmire of undemocratic practices, further hampering the country's political, social, and economic upswing. Currently, Pakistan's political culture has turned aggressive. Instead of working for the country's betterment, politicians are often seen playing blame games on their counterparts. In brief, the power lust of politicians has overpowered the country's national interest. However, united efforts on government, opposition, and public parts are indispensable to root out all undemocratic traits to make the country's political culture consensual. This answer comprehensively discusses Pakistan's political culture and the best available suggestions to strengthen civilian rule.

***"It is only with united effort and faith in our destiny that we shall be able to translate the Pakistan of our dreams into reality." (Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah)***

### **Dynastic politics and aristocratic influence:**

A dynastic succession of political leadership is a common feature of Pakistan's political culture since its creation. Instead of commencing a genuinely democratic way of selecting an administrator, every political party passes the rule to their beneficiaries, which is a prominent trait of the British Monarchy. There are multiple examples of such a case; whether it is Pakistan People's Party (PPP) or the Pakistan Muslim League (N), every party works on the same agenda. It is one of the reasons behind the country's least political growth for decades. Furthermore, this aspect of Pakistan's political culture has also stigmatized political leadership's efficiency.

On the one hand, many untrained people get free access to critical political positions; on the other hand, whereas the deserving ones stay far out from mainstream politics. Nonetheless, power thirst overpowers the national interests in Pakistan. Notwithstanding, to facilitate a genuinely democratic political culture in the country, these practices need to be addressed at the grassroots level. In addition to it, the selection of public representatives based on a fair electoral process is mandatory for the proper functioning of democracy in the country.

In the same manner, aristocrats have influenced Pakistan's political culture more exhaustively than any other element. By feudalists and industrialists, power politics has seen to be part and parcel of the country's political culture. It is the case when society's elite faction, according to their whims and wishes, manipulates the constitutional laws; they leave a power vacuum for undemocratic elements.

Not only has this but politicians and bureaucrats also become puppets in the hands of the aristocrats for maximum benefits. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, the balance of justice also inclines towards money and power. In actual practice, however, Pakistan's political culture oscillates between democratic ideals and aristocratic reality. The prevailing corrupt practices in the country, including undue political favors, lack of justice, tax evasion, and money laundering, nepotism, and bribery, present anecdotes of the country's spoiled political culture due to the vicious cycle of power politics. Thenceforth, it is unavoidable for the state to eradicate all such pursuits to make the country's political culture robust.

### **Institutional imbalance and centralization of power:**

The institutional imbalance is another most authoritative feature of the country's political culture. Two institutions: military and Bureaucracy, being a pronounced British legacy, have played a dominating role in the country's politics from the beginning. The extraneous interference of both the institutions has spurred undemocratic practices countrywide. Unluckily, Pakistan has borne the brunt of an unbalanced institutional set up in the face of a delinquent constitution-making process, multiple military coups, and revocation of two constitutions. In contrast, another part of the problem lies with the highly entrenched centralized administrative system, leaving powers undistributed, fights between the local political representatives and deputy commissioners remain on fire. Therefore, it is correct to say, the unfair military and bureaucracy nexus, along with the implicit centralization of powers, has sailed the country's ship on the verge of a long-lasting political crisis, the after-effects of which can be felt by its entire political system. The only remedy for this trouble lies in the heart of an impartial and independent institutional setup countrywide. Above all, decentralization of powers can lower government burden and assure political stability in the country.

### **Weak opposition and passive public participation:**

Likewise, in a row, the country's weak opposition has eroded the beauty of democracy in Pakistan. Apart from working in the country's interest, the opposition parties keep themselves busy accusing the government and plotting controversies against each other. The friction between the government and the opposition often remains under the limelight across media outlets. Many times, Senate and National assembly sessions fall prey to their dissents. Not only has this, but the public's passive role in political affairs also become a dilemma across Pakistan. Due to a lack of awareness, people do not participate in elections. That is why the graph of voters' turn out drops in every election, which is unhealthy for democracy. Undoubtedly, both factors have damaged the essence of democracy in Pakistan. However, the opposition's positive and state-oriented role and active public participation are the need of an hour for securing political stability in Pakistan.

### **Critical Analysis:**

A country's political culture has been crucial to grab either FDI or national media's attention. The more it becomes conducive, the more a country becomes politically stable. However, the political culture of Pakistan has been heterogeneous. Undemocratic norms, dynamic politics, aristocratic influence, and institutional imbalances make the country's political culture susceptible and volatile. To make the country a modern polity and nib the social evils in the bud, active role of the public, the proper role of media, and genuine democratic norms are a must.

### **Conclusion:**

In a nutshell, Pakistan's political culture is not consensual due to various factors, putting severe implications on the country's political, social, development; which, eventually, halts the country's economic growth. Above all, the rigorous and undemocratic practices in politics have bred a volatile

political environment, turning public trust and the country's overall growth into ashes. However, by enforcing constitutional laws in their true spirit, an adequately working government can turn the tide and put the nation on the right track. Moreover, both government and opposition's positive and proactive attitude and active public participation in political affairs are pivotal for transforming the country into a truly welfare state. Last but not least, to make the country a truly democratic polity, the people of Pakistan have to break the unseen shackles of British imperialism engraved deep in the entire political system.

### **Characteristics of Political Culture of Pakistan:**

The main features of political culture in Pakistan can be listed as follow:

#### **Passive Role of People:**

In the first place though Pakistan opted for democratic system in which all the citizens were expected to play some role in the political process but the people have remained relatively passive. The real power in Pakistan is wielded by the feudal lords, big industrialists and some active leaders who exercise great power and receive the benefits of the system. These leaders have been able to successfully give a projection that since they played a major role in the attainment of independence; they alone possess the capacity to provide fruits of freedom to the people. The lack of education and political experience among the common people has also promoted this feeling. The presence of poverty, disease and lack of education has also greatly handicapped large section of society from taking active part in the political process.

#### **Dynastic party system:**

The lack of effective party system in Pakistan has greatly undermined the role of people in political process. No doubt, Pakistan adopted party system on the pattern of Westminster system, but these parties could not work in true spirit and gradually suffered a decline because they refuse to hold intraparty elections and opted for dynastic succession of the leadership. Moreover, no political party gained popular support in all the provinces resulting in the promotion of provincialism at the expense of nationalism. In short it can be said that lack of organized and competitive party system in Pakistan has greatly affected the political culture.

#### **Weak Opposition:**

Lack of effective opposition has also greatly influenced the political culture of Pakistan. Generally the ruling parties in Pakistan have tried to project the opposition parties as a threat to the national security. Even when the opposition parties were permitted to operate in the country they were not able to post any serious competition. Opposition parties have not played an active role in the legislative assemblies, but waited for their turn in power. No government can truly tread on the right path unless a united opposition played an active role. In Pakistan, weak opposition parties have failed to keep an effective check on the despotic powers of the government.

#### **Role of Military Leaders:**

The prominent role played by the military leaders in Pakistan has also influenced the political culture of our country. The military staged four successful coups and overthrew civilian government within few years. This became possible because the civilian leaders failed to come up to the expectations of the people in bringing about meaningful social, economic and political reforms. This encouraged the

military leaders to assume power on the plea of saving the country from the internal disaster and disintegration. At the time of assuming power the military leaders held out promises of providing stability, prosperity and welfare of the people and promised to return to democratic rule at the earliest. However, actually once they were entrenched in power they tried to perpetuate military rule. Even when not in direct power, military in Pakistan hold considerable sway in the formulation of foreign and defense policies. This naturally had an adverse effect on the political culture of Pakistan.

### **Violence:**

The growing violence in Pakistan has adversely affected its political culture. As the democratic norms could not take proper roots, people try to bring about the necessary changes through violent methods.

The first Prime Minister of Pakistan Liaqat Ali Khan was assassinated. Similarly Benazir Bhutto also suffered the same fate. This trend is certainly not in keeping with the true democratic culture.

### **Money:**

In Pakistan money plays an important role in the political culture and process. The wealthy sections of the society are able to influence the political parties as well as the government and managed to get those in power who are willing to promote their interests. This often leads to the neglect of the interests of the common people, which is not a healthy trend.

### **Centralization of Power:**

Pakistan has adopted centralized process of decision-making, which naturally results in the neglect of the people at the lower levels and gives rise to frustration. Instead of associating the people with the decision making process at various levels, the political leaders have opposed decentralization on the plea that grant of greater powers to the lower units would pose a threat to the unity and integrity of the country. Ironically, the local government institutions were bolstered during the military rules while the democratic governments refused to transfer to the local governments.

## **2) Discuss the Civil Society associated with the growth of democracy:**

By civil society I mean the entire range of organized groups and institutions that are independent of the state, voluntary, and at least to some extent self-generating and self-reliant. This of course includes non-governmental organizations like the ones in this room, but also independent mass media, think tanks, universities, and social and religious groups.

To be part of civil society, groups must meet some other conditions as well. In a democracy, civil society groups have respect for the law, for the rights of individuals, and for the rights of other groups to express their interests and opinions. Part of what the word "civil" implies is tolerance and the accommodation of pluralism and diversity.

Civil society groups may establish ties to political parties and the state, but they must retain their independence, and they do not seek political power for themselves.

Often in transitions, groups arise that seek to monopolize the lives and thinking of their members. These groups do not tolerate the right of their members to dissent, and they do not respect other groups that disagree with them. Some of these groups may merely be fronts for political parties or movements that seek to win control of the state.

These groups are not part of civil society and they do not contribute to building a democracy.

What, then, can the independent, voluntary, law-abiding, tolerant and pluralistic organizations of civil society do to build and maintain democracy?

The first and most basic role of civil society is to limit and control the power of the state. Of course, any democracy needs a well-functioning and authoritative state. But when a country is emerging from decades of dictatorship, it also needs to find ways to check, monitor, and restrain the power of political leaders and state officials.

Civil society actors should watch how state officials use their powers. They should raise public concern about any abuse of power. They should lobby for access to information, including freedom of information laws, and rules and institutions to control corruption.

This constitutes a second important function of civil society: to expose the corrupt conduct of public officials and lobby for good governance reforms. Even where anti-corruption laws and bodies exist, they cannot function effectively without the active support and participation of civil society.

A third function of civil society is to promote political participation. NGOs can do this by educating people about their rights and obligations as democratic citizens, and encouraging them to listen to election campaigns and vote in elections. NGOs can also help develop citizens' skills to work with one another to solve common problems, to debate public issues, and express their views.

Fourth, civil society organizations can help to develop the other values of democratic life: tolerance, moderation, compromise, and respect for opposing points of view. Without this deeper culture of accommodation, democracy cannot be stable. These values cannot simply be taught; they must also be experienced through practice. We have outstanding examples from other countries of NGOs—especially women's groups—that have cultivated these values in young people and adults through various programs that practice participation and debate.

Fifth, civil society also can help to develop programs for democratic civic education in the schools as well. After dictatorship, comprehensive reforms are needed to revise the curricula, rewrite the textbooks, and retrain teachers in order to educate young people about the crimes of the past and teach them the principles and values of democracy. This is too important a task to leave only to officials in the education ministry. Civil society must be involved as a constructive partner and advocate for democracy and human rights training.

Sixth, civil society is an arena for the expression of diverse interests, and one role for civil society organizations is to lobby for the needs and concerns of their members, as women, students, farmers, environmentalists, trade unionists, lawyers, doctors, and so on. NGOs and interest groups can present their views to parliament and provincial councils, by contacting individual members and testifying before parliamentary committees. They can also establish a dialogue with relevant government ministries and agencies to lobby for their interests and concerns. It is not only the resourceful and well organized who can have their voices heard. Over time, groups that have historically been oppressed and confined to the margins of society can organize to assert their rights and defend their interests as well.

A seventh way civil society can strengthen democracy is to provide new forms of interest and solidarity that cut across old forms of tribal, linguistic, religious, and other identity ties. Democracy cannot be stable if people only associate with others of the same religion or identity. When people of different religions and ethnic identities come together on the basis of their common interests as

women, artists, doctors, students, workers, farmers, lawyers, human rights activists, environmentalists, and so on, civic life becomes richer, more complex, and more tolerant.

Eighth, civil society can provide a training ground for future political leaders. NGOs and other groups can help to identify and train new types of leaders who have dealt with important public issues and can be recruited to run for political office at all levels and to serve in provincial and national cabinets. Experience from other countries shows that civil society is a particularly important arena from which to recruit and train future women leaders.

Ninth, civil society can help to inform the public about important public issues. This is not only the role of the mass media, but of NGOs which can provide forums for debating public policies and disseminating information about issues before parliament that affect the interests of different groups, or of society at large.

Tenth, civil society organizations can play an important role in mediating and helping to resolve conflict. In other countries, NGOs have developed formal programs and training of trainers to relieve political and ethnic conflict and teach groups to solve their disputes through bargaining and accommodation.

Eleventh, civil society organizations have a vital role to play in monitoring the conduct of elections. This requires a broad coalition of organizations, unconnected to political parties or candidates, that deploys neutral monitors at all the different polling stations to ensure that the voting and vote counting is entirely free, fair, peaceful, and transparent. It is very hard to have credible and fair elections in a new democracy unless civil society groups play this role.

Finally, I want to stress that civil society is not simply in tension with the state. Because civil society is independent of the state doesn't mean that it must always criticize and oppose the state. In fact, by making the state at all levels more accountable, responsive, inclusive, and effective—and hence more legitimate—a vigorous civil society strengthens citizens' respect for the state and promotes their positive engagement with it.

A democratic state cannot be stable unless it is effective and legitimate, with the respect and support of its citizens. Civil society is a check, a monitor, but also a vital partner in the quest for this kind of positive relationship between the democratic state and its citizens.

### **3) Explain the effect of the Chinese government's language policy in Pakistan:**

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a multimillion dollar project between Pakistan and China through which both countries aim to develop bilateral economic, cultural, social and military ties. However, none of the 68+ Pakistani languages are being used for information creation and dissemination in the operationalization of the project. In its current form, the project only enables participation by speakers of two languages, English and Mandarin Chinese, which have been adopted as official languages for the project. This is a missed opportunity for both countries to benefit their multilingual populations. With proper language policy development and implementation, this project could become an ideal multilingual economic model of South-South cooperation, where a multilingual workforce is engaged, recognized and benefits.

## **CPEC and Language Use**

CPEC has many benefits for both Pakistan and China. However, the project has also posed a serious question for both countries: What languages are people going to use to communicate with each other? In correspondence with an official of the CPEC, I was told that there are three types of scenarios happening at the CPEC:

- Chinese officials and stakeholders communicating with Chinese workers through Mandarin or other Chinese languages
- Chinese officials, stakeholders and workers communicating with Pakistani worker through English, Urdu, or through interpreters
- Pakistani officials, stakeholders and workers communicating with each other using English, Urdu, or any of the other local languages

Although Mandarin is used by the Chinese, and Urdu and other Pakistani languages by Pakistanis, English dominates the operationalization of the CPEC project for policy development and implementation with Mandarin taking the second place. Evidence of this comes from the use of English and, to a lesser degree, Mandarin in the production and dissemination of the information related to the CPEC. The Long Term Plan for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor 2017-2030 states:

This Agreement is copied in duplicate, each of which is written in Chinese and English, and both versions have the same meaning and will have the equal effect.

## **Urdu learning in China**

Both China and Pakistan are trying to promote each other's languages at different levels. These language exchange initiatives, some of which started long before the inauguration of the CPEC, are led by governmental agencies (e.g., embassies) and private institutes.

Considering the importance of relations between Pakistan and China, different initiatives have been taken by the Chinese authorities to promote Urdu at multiple levels in China. One of these endeavors is the promotion of Urdu in education through major and minor courses that are mostly taught by Urdu-speaking Pakistani faculty and are offered by multiple universities in China. In an attempt to increase the number of Urdu speakers in China, several works have been translated from Urdu to Mandarin and Urdu language courses are being delivered at different institutions.

Peking University, in particular, has undertaken considerable work in this regard where efforts are being made to increase resources for Mandarin and Urdu language learners. After establishing the first Urdu Department in 1950 to offer basic Urdu language courses and translating multiple works from Urdu to Mandarin, the institute developed the first ever Mandarin-Urdu dictionary in the 1980s. Similarly, Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU) has been teaching Urdu language courses since 2007. In order to provide an interactive Urdu language acquisition atmosphere, BFSU has been organizing various competitions in calligraphy and speech to familiarize Chinese students with Pakistani culture and history. Recently, Urdu Departments were established at Xi'an International Studies University and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies. We also see a lot of videos circulating on social media like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp etc. where Chinese speakers of Urdu share their views in Urdu on contemporary topics like COVID-19, Pakistani culture and cuisine, tourism in Pakistan, and the Sino-Pak friendship in general.

The two main reasons for the popularity of Urdu in China since the CPEC inauguration are economic and cultural benefits. In terms of economy, many Urdu learners see either employment opportunities

or chances of starting their own businesses. Since Chinese companies doing businesses with Pakistani counterparts need people that can help in communication between the two parties, learning Urdu can provide job opportunities for many as translators, Urdu language teachers, bilingual contract writers, and managers. Similarly, knowing Urdu can also help run businesses like import/export, manufacturing, and educational institutions (similar considerations with regard to Arabic in China are discussed here). On the other hand, attraction towards Pakistani culture, its tourist and religious destinations, food, and people are other reasons for the popularity of Urdu in China.

There are a lot of debates and discussions on the economic and military benefits of the CPEC project for both Pakistan and China. Although a few voices are also heard discussing the language issue related to CPEC, most of these articles portray the imposition of Chinese languages and the suppression of Urdu. None of the work done in this area looks at language issues through the lens of economic benefits for both countries in terms of increasing employment, enhancing people-to-people relations, developing cultural exchanges and promoting each other's languages.

It is time to rethink multilingual language policies beyond established truths.

### **Article about Language Policy:**

The successful implementation of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) International Agreement and its major aim to benefit the unemployed and marginalized youth; would depend largely on the type of language policy that it adopts. This would determine whether it is an 'elitist' policy that is exclusive, and only caters to members of 'major' language communities in Pakistan and China; or a 'cultivation' policy that is inclusive and enables speakers of all language communities, including 'minority' or local languages to participate in developmental projects. This type of language policy in international trade agreements, is based on the principal of democracy, and allows all participants to have an equal opportunity to access various types of jobs and new business ventures generated at all levels in various sectors at different stages of development.

CPEC projects are expected to extend through various regions in Pakistan from Gilgit to Gwadar as well as in China. The CPEC will help China and Pakistan in connecting to markets in Europe, Asia, and other countries in the region. It is expected that the agreement will create around 700,000 direct jobs if the planned projects are implemented effectively by 2030. This unique opportunity for economic development of Pakistan, and opportunities for employment to the large population of unemployed youth; has raised the hope of all stakeholders that comprise policy makers, research scholars and the young citizens of Pakistan.

CPEC Project requires resources both in terms of physical infrastructure; as well as Human Resource Development (HRD) envisaged along with their timeline. The political, economic, and social implications of this partnership at various phases of the CPEC International Agreement, also needs consideration. The government of Pakistan has already set up an Institutional Framework for CPEC in this regard.

This Framework apart from major committees on physical infrastructure mainly OBOR, Industrial plants to create energy and business centers; comprises two main sub-committees on social development that focus on people to people exchanges through media and cultural programs; and transfer of knowledge through academic training. A number of initiatives are being undertaken through hosting numerous cultural events, and setting up of exchange programs with China for knowledge transfer necessary for economic advancement.

Pakistan is a multilingual state and the target population is very diverse and large; it may be virtually next to impossible to teach such a large number of people Mandarin

In addition, various initiatives are being undertaken by universities and colleges to teach Mandarin. However, unplanned attempts to teach Mandarin being made by Pakistan may result in a loss of revenue and energy; keeping in view the fact that Pakistan is a multilingual state and the target population is very diverse and large; it may be virtually next to impossible to train such a large number of language learners to learn Mandarin.

In order to achieve a critical awareness, power relations, including issues of status and role of languages; the CPEC language policy needs to be carefully planned. Apart from studies on the academic and knowledge transfer, as well as cultural awareness programs, through exchange visits; and cultural events; there is currently no official published study on CPEC language policy that is available. It is highly recommended that the government should start planning a language policy with the help of research studies by university scholars who have expertise in the field. This is vital as the absence of a 'de-jure' language policy would lead to a 'de-facto' language policy, which may be haphazard; when misunderstandings may arise at different levels due to breakdown of communication during meetings and negotiations; leading to wastage of time, energy and funds.

As per experts in language policy for international agreements, this would require a language policy terms of the selection of link languages, corpus planning, and acquisition planning as well as an analysis of 'the present language situation', that would include language background of speakers in different domains in partner countries, and the status and role of different languages in multilingual countries such as China and Pakistan; conducting a 'language needs assessment' in the socio-economic and cultural context of stakeholders, such as owners or employers at -the higher levels, managers and supervisors at mid-levels, and skilled and unskilled workers at lower levels, involved with the developmental projects; to study the personal and social 'identity' and of all stakeholders and local communities alongside OBOR or Silk Route; to assess if they have high or low ethno linguistic vitality; and finally to study the attitudes and motivation of stakeholders to learn the link languages, and use it with collaborative partners.

The planning of a language policy for international agreements is necessary for successful implementation of CPEC. In addition, this may be a unique opportunity to develop Urdu — the national language of Pakistan — as an international language, especially with OBOR passing through where Urdu/ Hindi is the national language; as well as in providing state support to our marginalized local languages; especially for millions of our illiterate population of which the majority are women; especially in the rural domains where 'mutual intelligibility,' with Urdu could be low.

If this is not done, there is a possibility of endangering our Pakistani languages; and above all, the hazardous outcomes that benefits of CPEC may go the urban educated elites and not the ordinary citizens; thus maintaining the status quo.

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