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Q. No. 1: Explain the Pakistan Political System. Also describe, Is Pakistan a system of Monarch or Re-Public?

INDTRODUCTION

Pakistan is the second largest Muslim country in terms of population and its status as a declared nuclear power, being the only Muslim nation to have that status, plays a part in its international role. It is an active member of the United Nations and an important member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The politics in Pakistan takes place within the framework under which the country is established by the constitution. Pakistan is an Islamic and federal parliamentary republic with Islam being its state religion and is classified as a nation-state in South Asia.

Governing Body

The Prime Minister of Pakistan solely leads the executive government which is independent of the state parliament. A bicameral parliament that is composed of two chambers– the Senate (upper house) and the National Assembly (lower house). The Judicature branch forms with the composition of the Supreme Court as an apex court, alongside with the high courts and other inferior courts. The judiciary's function is to interpret the constitution and federal laws and regulations. The President of Pakistan is a ceremonial figurehead who represents the unity of the nation-state; the presidency is a vital part of the Parliament

Territories

Pakistan is subdivided into 4 provinces, 2 territories, and 1 capital territory. Each province has a Provincial Assembly, a directly elected legislature. Members are elected for five-year terms. Each Assembly elects a Chief Minister, who then selects the ministers of his or her cabinet.

The Parliament

The bicameral federal legislature consists of the Senate (upper house) and National Assembly (lower house). According to Article 50 of the Constitution, the National Assembly, the Senate and the President together make up a body known as the Majlis-i-Shoora (Council of Advisers).



The President of Pakistan

The President of Pakistan is the ceremonial Head of the State and a figurehead who is a civilian Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Armed Forces as per the Constitution of Pakistan and a leader of the nation.

The President is kept informed by the Prime Minister on all the matters of internal and foreign policy as well as on all legislative proposals. Constitution of Pakistan vest the President the powers of granting the pardons, reprieves, and the control of the military; however, all appointments at higher commands of the military must be made by President on a "required and necessary" on consultation and approval from the Prime Minister. In addition, the constitution prohibits the President from exercising the authority of running the government.

The Senate

The Senate is a permanent legislative body with equal representation from each of the four provinces, elected by the members of their respective provincial assemblies. There are representatives from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and from Islamabad Capital Territory. The Chairman of the Senate, under the constitution, is next in line to act as President should the office become vacant and until such time as a new president can be formally elected.

Both the Senate and the National Assembly can initiate and pass legislation except for finance bills. Only the National Assembly can approve the federal budget and all finance bills. In the case of other bills, the President may prevent passage unless the legislature in joint sitting overrules the

President by a majority of members of both houses present and voting. Unlike the National Assembly, the Senate cannot be dissolved by the President.

National Assembly of Pakistan

Members of the National Assembly are elected by universal adult suffrage (eighteen years of age). Seats are allocated to each of the four provinces, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, and Islamabad Capital Territory on the basis of population. National Assembly members serve for the parliamentary term, which is five years, unless they die or resign sooner, or unless the National Assembly is dissolved.

Although the vast majority of the members are Muslim, about 5% of the seats are reserved for minorities, including Christians, Hindus, and Sikhs. There are also 50+ special seats for women now, and women are selected by their respective party heads.

The Jurisdiction

The Judiciary includes the Supreme Court, Provincial High Courts, District & Sessions Courts, Civil and Magistrate Courts exercising civil and criminal jurisdiction. Some Federal and Provincial Courts and tribunals such as Services Court, Income Tax & Excise Court, Banking Court and Boards of Revenue's Tribunals are established in all provinces as well.

Supreme Court

The Supreme Court has original, appellate, and advisory jurisdiction. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is appointed by the President; the other Supreme Court judges are appointed by the President after consultation with the Chief Justice. The Chief Justice and other Judges of the Supreme Court may remain in office until age of sixty-eight years.

Monarchy or Republic

Pakistan is a semi-secular, Islamic federal parliamentary republic with Islam as the state religion. Pakistan is a nuclear power. The country's nuclear weapons program was established in 1972. Chief of state is the president, head of government is the prime minister.

Q. No. 2: Discuss the current situation of Pakistan Politics.

Latest Situation of Pakistan

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan is facing arguably the biggest challenge of his political career, as the opposition seeks to remove him from office in a vote of no confidence.

The country's lawmakers have convened on Thursday to begin debating the motion as Mr Khan's future appears to be hanging by a thread. A vote is due by Monday.

In recent days there has been a flurry of activity - and what some argue were tactics straight out of Machiavelli's playbook - which resulted in several Khan allies deserting his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, tilting the scales firmly in the opposition's favour.

A simple majority of 172 in the 342-seat National Assembly against the former cricket legend would cut short his tenure as PM. On Wednesday, the magic number was breached when his main coalition ally, the MQM, joined the opposition. It means on paper the opposition now commands 175 votes to the government's 164.

There have been only two previous instances in Pakistan's political history when sitting prime ministers faced a vote of no confidence, and both times Benazir Bhutto, in 1989, and Shaukat Aziz, in 2006, emerged unscathed.

But the current parliamentary calculus clearly points towards a heavy defeat for Mr Khan, even if his own party dissidents take no part.

The government is seeking a Supreme Court ruling that would not only bar dissident

PTI members from voting under an anti-defection law, but also disqualify them from parliament for life.

Meanwhile, the PM and his cabinet members are putting on a brave face, meeting allies and saying they're confident of victory.

Imran Khan may have missed his chance to offer concessions to his allies, and even if he "miraculously manages to ride out the storm", he will be in a very precarious position.

Do the opposition have a plan?

As his rivals' jostle to get rid of him, Mr Khan may feel he deserves more credit for what he's done in office.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the PTI did a reasonable job in providing aid to the poor, observers believe.

Pakistan's Covid statistics also bear scrutiny - a country of 220 million people recorded just 1.5 million cases and 30,000 deaths; a staggeringly low number compared with the devastation in neighbouring India last year.

however, the government's signature universal healthcare programme - launched in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces - was its biggest success.

"In terms of attracting the electorate for the upcoming polls, this could be their big slogan. Some people may not have experienced Covid-related tragedy but a programme like a health card could have big ramifications for present and future," she says.

What, then, could the opposition offer, if they do manage to topple the government in a country where no prime minister has ever completed a full five-year term?

Could this hastily cobbled-together coalition provide solutions to Pakistan's deep structural, economic and societal issues?

"The opposition seems opportunistic, "Unfortunately, in our country, because our rules of transitions are not set, every time somebody is in power, those outside think it is fair to destabilise them."

The only plan the opposition has is to topple the government but they have not done any homework about what might happen next - nor do they appear concerned about that. "Pakistan is heading towards a prolonged period of political instability, for at least a year and a half,"

The opposition has no plan beyond removing Imran Khan.

"They will be forced to take unpopular decisions and for which they will suffer a political cost, which will be a challenge for them,"

"However, no matter who wins, ultimately, the losers will be Pakistani citizens. The entire next election cycle will continue to be volatile, deeply polarising and we won't have any level of stability until after the elections."

The End