

### ③ POLITICAL SYS OF TURKING

#### ① ROLE OF MILITARY IN TURKISH POLITICS:-

##### INTRODUCTION:-

Military has always been very much active in politics since the time of the ottoman empire. Even after the fall of the ottoman empire the military has shown its influence in politics. Military has caused 6 coups in the country since 1960s, because military think itself as a guardian of the country and constitution for instance.

(i) On 27 May 1960 first coup happened when Cevdet gzel was arrested and tried for treason.

(ii) On March 12, 1971 military intervened and PM was forced to resign.

(iii) At another time in 1980 Sep 12 when right and left groups were in conflict with each other military intervened causing the arrest and execution of many citizens.

(iv) Then on 28 Feb 1997 again military tried to capture political process by pressurizing PM to resign in NSC.

(iv) In April 27, 2007 an E-memorandum was released on the website of military which was the general staff statement that turned out to cause election crisis in Turkey.

(v) Last incident of this nature happened in July 15, 2006 2006 when a group of military personnel tried to attempt a coup but this attempt was failed as the people of Turkey resisted.

The role of military in Turkish politics can be visualized in the following headings.

## THE MILITARY AND THE STATE: THE OTTOMAN LEGACY:

In Ottoman Empire a very powerful military force named as Janissaries was present, this force was elite force of Ottoman Empire. But after the defeat in the battle of Vienna the eyes of the rulers of Ottoman Empire opened and they realized they need some reforms in the institution of military, and are inferior to the Europe. When all reforms were being introduced the Janissaries felt it as a threat to their status and started rebellion causing the political instability. Though Sultan Mehmed IV probably succeeded to replace this centuries old Army by a modernized Turkish elite Army.

After the WWI the ottoman empire collapsed and only Army institution remained in power which tries modernization and westernization of the country on secular terms. Army took the control of country and after the treaty of Lausanne the military formed the modern Turkey being secular, westernized and modern under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) Pasha.

## 2: THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY AFTER THE CREATION OF THE KEMALIST REPUBLIC.

As the military was a secular institution in the country at that time so it became the guardian of the secular constitution of the country. After the first world war, Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) emerged as the country's political and military leader. In the first year of the Republic, MK sought to exclude army from the open involvement of party politics for which he passed a law in 1923. However, Ataturk's removal of the army from politics was never quite complete, because he also saw the role of army as the guardian of the secular republic.

Whenever the army felt that the republic and its principles to be threatened,

The army has in the past taken responsibility for its protection. This principle was written into the Turkish Armed Services Internal Service Code. It states that "the duty of the army forces is to protect and safeguard the Turkish Republic as stipulated by the Constitution. These characteristics of the military, however, caused a dilemma for Turkey-EU relations as the EU's principles are completely opposed to military involvement in politics. This was the reason why the EU had been pushing Turkey to reform its civil-military relations as specified in the Copenhagen criteria.

## THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE MILITARY FOLLOWING EU REFORMS.

Although the democratizing of civil-military relations are not directly mentioned in the Copenhagen criteria, the military as an institution should be subordinate to the political criteria. Following the acceptance of Turkey as a candidate country in 1999, Turkey agreed to the fulfilment of the Copenhagen political criteria in order to start accession negotiations. As a result, the democratizing of civil-military relations has become one of the most important conditions of the political criteria for Turkey's full membership in the EU. The democratic control of military.

After the acceptance of Turkey as a candidate country, the main criticism outlined in EU documents, namely the Accession Partnership Documents and Regular Reports, were generally in regards to the institutional aspect of democratic control. In this respect the status of the chief army of the General staff under the PM, the role of the National Security Council in Turkish political life and the lack of an effective civilian control over the military budget constitute main reform areas.

#### 4: REFORMS UNDERTAKEN: FROM NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL TO MILITARY COURTS.

The NFC was established after the 1960 Military intervention in order to legitimize the place of army in politics. The council of NFC was composed of the President of the Republic, the PM, the chief of the general staff, the ministers of foreign affairs, internal affairs and defence as well as the top military commanders. Thus, the military was able to make it self politically more active & effective.

However, in the process of moving towards EU membership, the power of the

NSC has been restricted and it became just an advisory body. With the modification of Article 118 of the constitution, the role of NSC was diminished. As to the 1982 const., NSC was responsible for the drafting of national security and foreign policy. Moreover, the pass of the Council of Auditors has been authorized to audit accounts.

The removal of military representatives from the civilian board is the third area of the reform process. As part of 6th Harmonization Package of 19 July 2003, military representatives on the Higher Education Board and Higher Broadcasting Board were also drawn.

The final area of the reform process concern its amendments of military courts. The jurisdiction of State Security Courts has been removed. Moreover, the trial of civilians in military court was abolished as the part of 7th Harmonization Package. Eventually, the state security courts were totally abolished in 2004.

Here the autonomy of the military in Turkey has been diminished by means of EU reforms. As a result, the NSC is no more an executive body, and has an advisory position; the transparency of defense expenditures has been enhanced and the role of military court has been limited.

## 5: PROBLEMS REGARDING THE POSITION OF MILITARY.

- Firstly, the military representatives continue to make their views on variety of topics through speeches, their influence on the media and through formal declarations. For instance, during the presidential election in 2007, the army was able to influence politics. As the generals objected to Abdullah Gül, the AKP candidate, they placed a message on the defense ministry's website, threatening intervention. This "e-coup" caused political chaos in Turkey, which resulted in a new general election.

- The second problem is that the chief of the Turkish general staff is still directly responsible to the PM, contrary to the EU practices, which represents that the political influence of military is still present in Turkey.

## 6: CONCLUSION:

There is no doubt that EU candidacy has contributed to the democratization of civil-military relations. But full civilian control can only be maintained with full implementation of recent reforms.