

Q. Political system of United Kingdom is more democratic as compared to United States. Critically analyze.

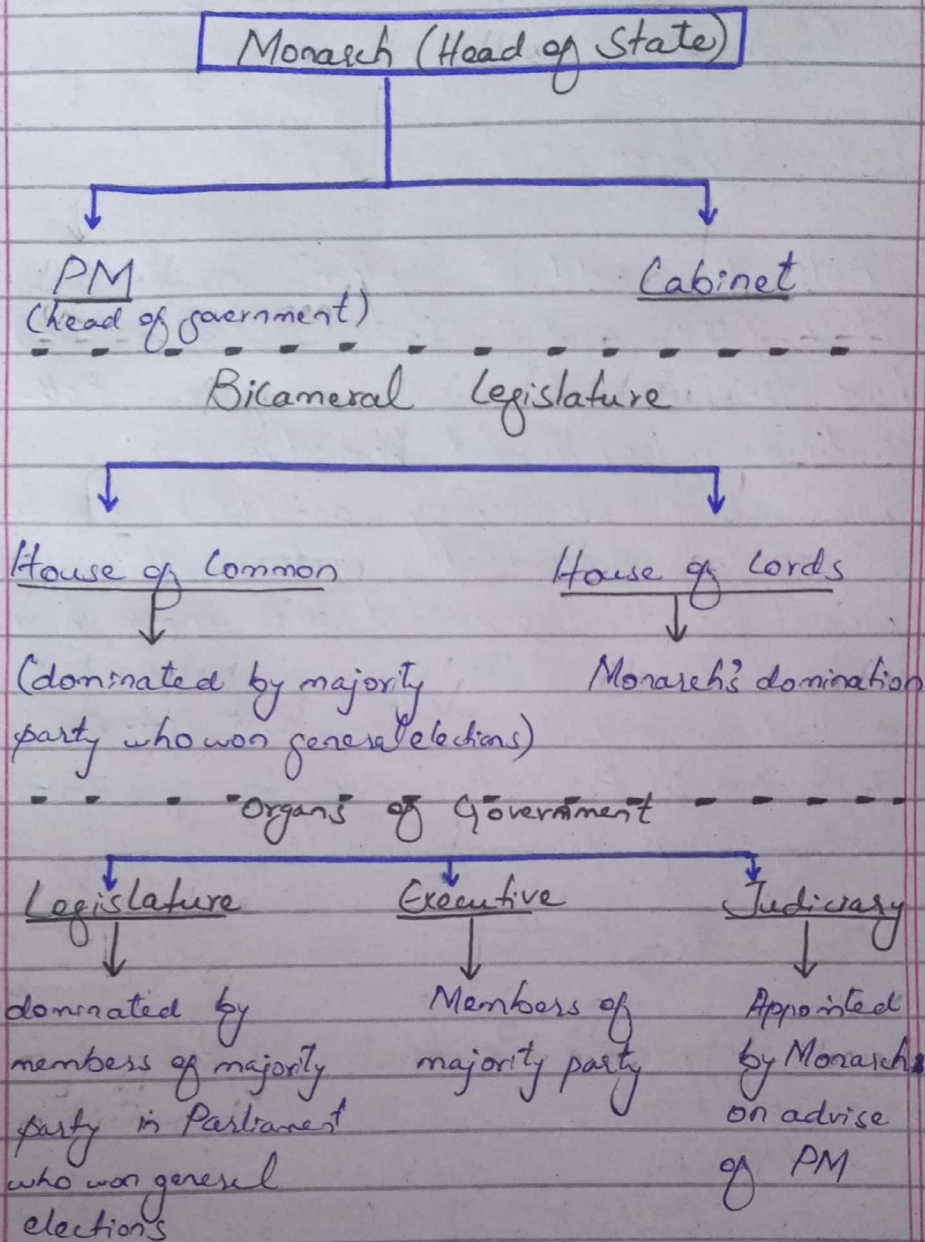
1- Introduction :

Both the political systems of United States (US) and United Kingdom (UK) have their strengths and weaknesses. Both of them often assert themselves as champions of democracy and each has a long history of promoting values. While, UK presents political government with monarch as head of state, unitary form of government, parliamentary form of government. US has federation, Presidential form of government, and system of checks and balances.

2- Democratic Features of United Kingdom's Political System :

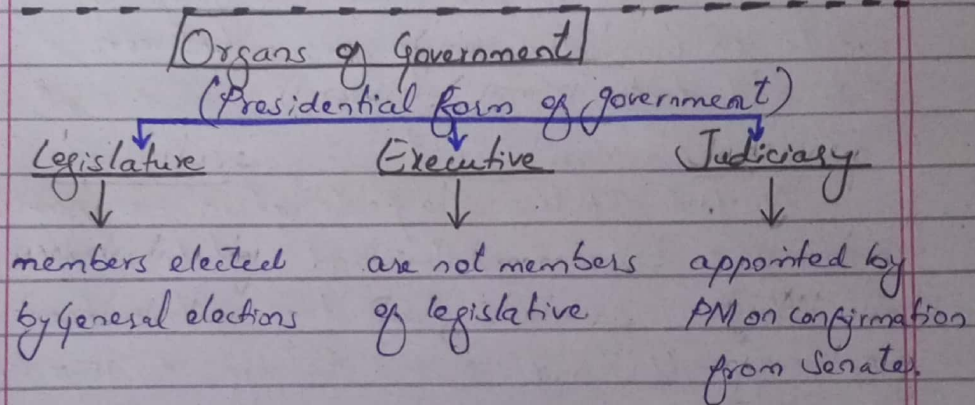
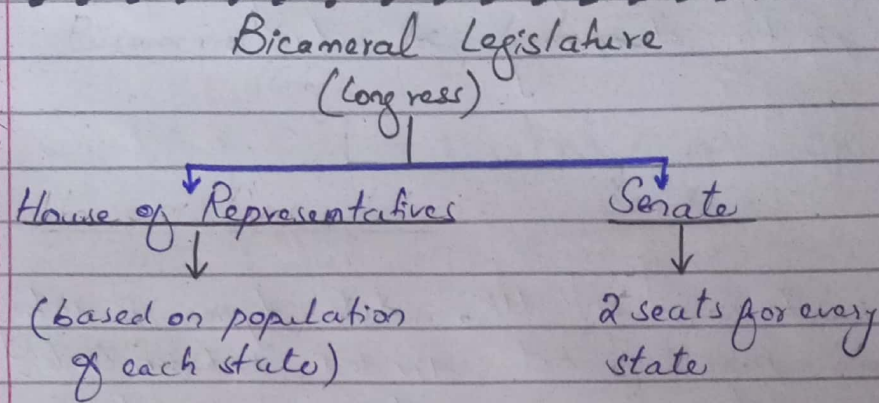
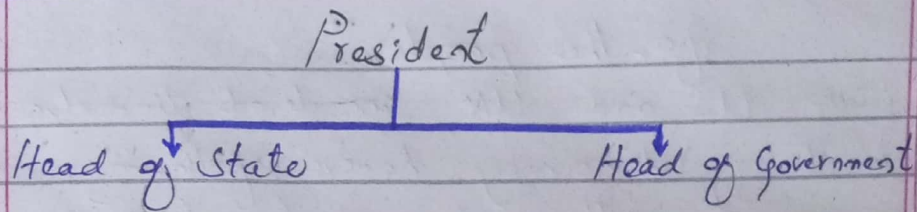
The history of political system of UK is complex and has evolved over centuries. Unlike many countries, UK does not have a single written constitution rather an unwritten constitution comprised of statutes, common law, conventions and constitutional documents. Even in contemporary times, most of the portion of UK constitution is unwritten and is partly written. Therefore, political system of UK does not derive from constitution

rather from previous developments.



3- Democratic Features of United States (US) Political System:

Unlike UK, US has written constitution and political system draws its power from constitution. The constitution of US is biggest in the world.



In comparison to constitution of UK, a single winner party cannot manipulate entire political system. There is a separate system of checks and balance so that each organ may keep an eye on other organ.

4. Critical Analysis: Who Ensures More Democracy?

Abraham Lincoln has well said that:
 "Democracy is the government of the people, by the people,

for the people." Both US and UK considered themselves practicing democracy however, following arguments will provide a layout of who is practicing democracy in actual:

i- Type of State :

a- Unitary System in UK :

In case of UK, state type is unitary i.e power is not divided between center and state. However, as true democratic state ensures division of power between center and states.

b- Federation in US :

United States is a federation i.e power is divided between center and states. All the citizens of US have two citizenships, one is of US and second belongs to respective states.

ii- Chances of Pluralism :

a- Limited Chances of Pluralism in UK political system :

In case of UK, chances of pluralism are limited as the majority party who won the general elections holds both executive and legislature. In theory, monarch is head of state while in practice he looks like a puppet to Prime Minister.

b- More Chances of Pluralism in US Political System :

In contrast to UK, chances of pluralism

in US political system are high. For instance, President will not be member of legislature. Similarly, cabinet members are not members of legislative assembly. Therefore, people have more chances of participation in government.

iii. Forms of Government:

a- Parliamentary system in UK: Source of Harmony Among Institutions:

UK follows parliamentary form of government and there is a well coordinating system between legislature, executive and judiciary. So, all can work together to ensure better service delivery to public.

b. Presidential System in US: System of Checks and Balance Ensures Transparency:

Unlike United Kingdom, US follows Presidential form of government where there is no coordination between organs of government. Despite of lack of coordination, this system is effective for ensuring transparency so that none of the institution misuses the power.

iv. Power of Judicial Review:

a- UK restricts judicial review:

In case of UK, as most of constitution is in the form of conventions or unwritten and it restricts judicial review.

Therefore, if Parliament of UK can pass a law which may be against

rights of people, judiciary cannot take review against it. Leslie Stephen highlighted the fact in "Science of Ethics" that if Parliament decided that all blue-eyed babies would be murdered, the preservation of blue-eyed babies would be illegal. Although, they would never pass such law."

b- US Judiciary : Power of Judicial Review: ✓

In case of US, Supreme Court has the power to declare the law "null and void" if it is against fundamental human rights and constitution. This power was first exercised in Marbury case 1901. Independence of judiciary is another factor which ensures democracy of a country.

v- Constitutional Framework :

a. Conventions, Common Law and Statutes in UK :

In United Kingdom, most of the constitution is in unwritten form and is in form of conventions, common laws and statutes.

Most of the rights are followed as customs and citizens usually find it insulting to breach the conventions.

b- Written Constitution of US :

The constitution of US is in written form and every citizen is aware of his rights and responsibilities. Written Constitution provides a framework for

legal system. Hence, it can be said that US observes democracy in true sense.

vi- Party System:

a- Multiple Party System in Case of UK:

The UK has multiple party system, with the Conservative and Labour Party historically being the two major parties. However, smaller parties like Liberal Democrats and others also play a role.

b- Two Party System in US:

The US has dominant two party system with the Democratic and Republican parties. This system provides voters with clear and distinct policies.

vii- Appointment of Senators:

a- Nobles' appointment in House of Lords:

Though the Parliament is sovereign in case of UK political system, however, upper house is dominated by Nobles which are appointed.

b- Elected Senators in Political System of US:

US senators have privilege over other countries as their senators are elected. This is another factor which adds up in practicing democracy.

viii- Role of Executive:

a- One party-show in Parliament of UK:

In case of UK, the chairman of party who has won the election will be head of government. He has influence over legislature as well as executive. Therefore, there are greater chances of abuse of power.

b- No coordination between Executive and Legislature in US :

In contrast to UK, executive in US who is both head of state and government has no connection with legislature. Even both keep an eye over each other not to abuse the power.

5- Remarks on Critical Analysis :

Political System of both countries have their strengths and weaknesses however, US ensures more democracy than United Kingdom in practice. As the political system of US ensures transparency, pluralism, checks and balances, power of judicial review so, it is worth mentioning that it assures democracy effectively.

6- Conclusion :

In a nut shell, United States and United Kingdom both assert themselves as champions of democracy and gave their arguments. However, in practice, US ensures democracy in an effective way and goes on to reduce the abuse of power.

