

Q Discuss parliamentary and Presidential forms of government highlighting their merits and demerits. Which political system suits Pakistan.

1) Introduction:

A modern democratic government may have a parliamentary or presidential pattern of government. The difference between the two hinges upon the principles governing the relations between the executive and legislative branches of government. If the executive and legislative branches are unified and coordinated under the control of some person, such as system is parliamentary. If the executive and legislative are independent on each other, such system is known as Presidential.

2) Discussing the parliamentary form of Government

3)

In parliamentary system a clear distinction is made between head of state and head of government. Here head of the state posses nominal or titular authority whereas the real authority rests with the government of which Prime Minister is the head. The President has a de jure authority, in which practically, he exercise nothing. The government is consituted from the majority party or combination of parties, agreed on certain fundamentals for the purpose of a coalition. The person elected is the Prime minister who chooses his own team of minister from among the members of the party.

3) Merits of parliamentary form of government

Parliamentary form of government is the most successful form of government.

It has certain merits which are described below

2) Source of cooperation between Executive and legislative Branches

Parliamentary system is the only so far form devised, which ensures harmonious cooperation between the executive and legislative branches of government.

Bryce J. in his book, "**Modern Democracies**"

emphasizes on the cooperation among the both branches.

b) Dual Role of Ministers

Ministers are heads of various administrative departments and at the same time they are the members of the majority party in the legislature. In latter capacity, they lead the legislature and provide parliament with the policy on the basis of which decisions are to be made.

c) No chances of conflict among authority and jurisdiction

Under parliamentary system, "from first to last" there is full collaboration between the law-making and money spending authorities, on one hand, and the law-enforcing and money-spending authorities, on the other. There are, thus,

few chances of conflict of authority and jurisdiction.

d) Presence of Ministers in the legislature

Being in constant touch with the opposition as well as in closer contact with the members of their own party, the ministers feel the pulse of Assembly and through it the pulse of the public opinion and thereby obtain useful criticism, in a friendly way, of their measures

[Advantages of parliamentary system discussed by Bryce in book, 'Modern Democracies']

e) Best Example of Representative Democracy

Parliament is the best example of

representative democracy for it recognizes the ultimate sovereignty of the people. Ministerial responsibility is immediately to the legislature, but no majority dare ride rough-shod over public opinion.

f) Provides periodic Assessment of Rulers

"Government is with us" says Jennings, "is the government by opinion and that is the only form of government in which 'self-government' is possible."

The government is ever under scrutiny

and the parliamentary system provides for daily as well as periodic assessments of what rulers do.

g) Real sense a government by Criticism

Parliamentary system is in the real

Sense a government by criticism. The majority party forms the government. The minority constitutes the opposition. The opposition must oppose and criticize the government. There is a saying in Britain that the prime Minister knows the leader of opposition more than he knows his wife. It explains how far the ministry is alive to the opinion of the opposition and apprehensive of its criticism.

h) Parliamentary system is flexible and Elastic

"Bagehot" in his book, "The English Constitution" highly emphasized on this aspect and pointed out that people can, under this system of government, choose a ruler for the occasion who may be specially

qualified to successfully pilot the ship of the state through a national crisis. For example Churchill replaced Chamberlain as prime minister, because national emergency demanded it.

4) Nature of the Presidential Form of Government

Bagehot, W, in his book "The English Constitution", say that, "The independence of the legislature and executive powers is the specific quality of presidential government just as fusion and combination is the principle of cabinet government. Under the presidential system, the legislature and executive are two distinct departments of government. The executive is neither the creation of legislature, nor it is responsible to that body for

its public acts or dependent on it for the remaining in office. The head of state is the real executive both as matter of law and fact. Such power is the result of a direct grant from the constituent authority effected through express provisions. The president is the chief executive and he also makes all "ministers" and "cabinet" members.

5) Merits of presidential Form of Government

Presidential Form of government has various features. Some of them are described but first of all let discuss the characteristics of a president given by Herman Finer, in his book, "The Theory and practice of Modern Government."

According to Herman Finer the American presidency has six outstanding characteristics:

It is made executive but it has grown;
It is a "solitary" not a collective executive; It is popularly elected, in practice directly; It is more than a executive; It is separated from Congress; It may be tinkered with, but cannot be reformed.

Following are the merits/characteristics of presidential form of government

1) President retains a representative character

The chief merit of the presidential system is that without being responsible it retains a representative character.

The president is an elected representative of the people, but his tenure does not depend upon the fluctuating will of the legislature.

b) Creates a Stable Executive within framework of Democratic Order

All authority is vested at one-centre and the head of state is a executive as well as the executive. He is the generalissimo of administration and there can be no question of divided policy. His ministers follows the policy initiated by him.

c) Quick Decision-Making Capability

Unity of control, quickness in decision and concerted policy, which emergency of any kind may demand, can be best obtained by presidential system. The head of state is the **chief foreign policy maker** and the **Commander-in-Chief** of the armed forces of the country. Examples include Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt.

d) President, The Head of Nation

The president is the head of the nation and is not merely a party leader.

This gives him greater dignity, prestige and authority: The Nation looks to him to steer the country through any kind of national emergency.

e) Allows to appoint Experts without party Affiliation

The presidential system also makes possible the appointment of experts to head various departments of governments. For example, President Cleveland, a democrat, appointed Walter G. Gresham as secretary of state, a republican candidate.

6) Presidential or Parliamentary System for Pakistan

Majority of the developed states are ruling their states with the Presidential form of government. The Prime examples are America, Russia and China. The parliamentary system is most used in third world countries. Pakistan is currently observing the parliamentary form of government. The advantage of parliamentary system is that legislation can be done easily as the parliament have the mandate of people to pass it. Whereas In a presidential system, the executive is often chosen independently from the legislature. Analysing the Post-Musharraf Era, the parliamentary

System has been endorsed in. In last years of PPP, President Asif Ali Zardari dissolve the extra presidential powers which are embedded in article 90, 52B of constitution of 1973. The 18th amendment took the power from president to dissolve assembly, turning Pakistan from a semi-presidential to a parliamentary republic. The whole amendment was done to restore the political stability in Pakistan. An recent example of Ex-Prime minister Nawaz Sharif as he was disqualified for being PM but National assembly paves the way for him.

Analyzing both system, Presidential System is far better than parliamentarian system. One major drawback of parliamentary system is the elections. As the population of Punjab is larger, the party from Punjab

will form the government. Whereas NFC is another blessing with disguise. To overcome all this, Presidential system is required. Article by CPSD (Centre for peace, Security and Development studies) analyze the need of presidential form in Pakistan

7) Conclusion

A choice between a parliamentary and presidential system for Pakistan is a complex decision that requires careful consideration of various factors. Both systems offer distinct advantages and drawbacks, ranging from political stability and accountability to efficiency and separation of powers. Ultimately, it can be decided by its specific needs, political culture and societal dynamics