

Q: Political stability remains an elusive concept in Pakistan. Explore the factors contributing to the fractured nature of Pakistan's polity & discuss potential reforms to constitutional and political structure that could foster stability?

Ans: **Introduction:**

Political stability is a cornerstone of nation's progress and development yet in Pakistan, it remained an elusive goal since its inception. Despite various efforts to establish a stable political environment, Pakistan polity has been marked by fragmentation, instability and turmoil. There are many factors which lead country to very unstable political condition. It affect country in very negative way. But by adopting some potential reforms the situation could be improved & political instability can be prevented.

Historical Background:

Since gaining independence in 1947, Pakistan has struggled with establishing a consistent and stable political system. The

early demise of key leaders like Quid-Azam and Liaqat Ali Khan left a leadership vacuum, leading to political instability. The lack of clear democratic tradition, coupled with frequent changes in governments set a precedent for political instability. The early years saw a tussle between civilian and military leadership, eventually leading to military takeovers.

Factors contributing to Political Instability

(i) Weak Political Institutions:-

Pakistan's political institutions have been historically weak, lacking the maturity and strength needed to sustain democracy. Political parties often revolve around personalities rather than ideologies, leading to a fragile political structure that is susceptible to manipulation and disruption.

(ii) Military interventions:-

The military has played a dominant role in Pakistan's politics, with coups in 1958, 1977 & 1999. These interventions disrupted the democratic process and established a precedent where the military became a key

political players, often overshadowing civilians governments.

(iii) Ethnic and Regional disparities:-

Pakistan's polity is fractured by ethnic and regional tensions. The most notable example is the secession of East Pakistan in 1971, which now became Bangladesh. Regional disparities, particularly in resource allocation and development have fueled separatist tendencies and political unrest in areas like Balochistan & KPK.

(iv) Judicial overreach & activism:-

The judiciary in Pakistan has occasionally overstepped its boundaries engaging in political matters. While judicial activism can be a check on government excesses, in Pakistan, it has sometimes contributed to political instability by creating rifts between state institutions.

(v) Corruption & Governance issues:-

Corruption is endemic in Pakistan's political system eroding public trusts on government institutions. Poor governance, characterized by inefficiency and mismanagement, has further exacerbated

the problems, leading to disillusionment and political discontent among the populace.

(vii) Terrorism and Extremisms:-

The rise of terrorism and religious extremism has significantly impacted Pakistan's political stability. The state's inability to fully control extremism and its elements has not only caused security challenges but also influenced political dynamics, with religious parties gaining undue influence.

(vii) Economic challenges:-

Economic instability characterized by frequent IMF bailouts and a reliance on foreign aid has contributed to political instability. A weak economy undermines the government's ability to deliver services and maintain public support, leading to unrest.

Potential Reforms for stability:-

(i) Strengthening Democratic Institutions:-

To achieve political stability it is crucial to strengthen the democratic institutions. Political

parties must evolve beyond personality-based politics, focusing instead on ideology and policy. Strengthening internal party democracy and ensuring transparent electoral processes are vital steps toward this goal.

(ii) Civil Military Relations:-

A clear demarcation of roles between civilian and military leadership is essential. The military should focus on defense and security and leaving political matters to civilian or government institutions. Ensuring that military respects civilian supremacy is key to long term stability.

(iii) Judicial Reforms:-

Judiciary must maintain its independence but refrain from encroaching on political territory. Reforms are needed to speed up the judicial process and reduce the backlog of cases, thereby enhancing the efficiency of legal system and supporting good governance.

(iv) Electoral Reforms:-

Reforms are needed to ensure that elections are free and fair

and transparent. This includes curbing the influence of money in politics, reducing electoral (reforms) frauds, and ensuring that the Election Commission of Pakistan operates independently and effectively.

(V) Devolution & Decentralization

Decentralizing power to local governments can address regional grievances and promote development at grassroots level. The implementation of 18th amendment, which increased provincial autonomy is a step in the right direction but more needs to be done to ensure effective devolution.

(vi) Anti-Corruption measures:

Strengthening anti-corruption institutions like National Accountability Bureau (NAB) is essential. Efforts should be made to ensure that these bodies operate without political interference and focus on holding all individuals accountable, regardless of their status.

(vii) Economic Reforms:-

Economic stability is crucial for political stability. The government

should focus on sustainable economic policies reducing dependence on foreign aid, loans and promoting industrial growth. Job creation and poverty alleviation should be central to economic planning to reduce public discontent.

Critical Analysis: Persistent instability is deeply rooted in historical military interventions, weak political institutions & socio-economic disparities. While reforms in democratic institutions, civil military relations and governance are essential, their success hinges on a genuine commitment from all stakeholders to prioritize national interests over personal gains.

Conclusion:-

Political stability in Pakistan remains a complex and challenging issue, rooted in historical, institutional and socio-economic factors. While path to stability is fraught with challenges, comprehensive reforms in both the political and constitutional realms can pave the way for a stable and prosperous Pakistan. Achieving this goal requires a collective

efforts from political leaders, the military, the judiciary and civil society. Only through a sustained and coordinated approach can Pakistan hope to overcome its political instability and build a secure future for its people.