

Q2: Critically evaluate the evolution of Pakistan's political system and culture after 1999. How have constitutional developments in this era shaped democratic continuity and governance? Explain.

EVOLUTION OF PAKISTAN'S POLITICAL SYSTEM AND POLITICAL CULTURE AFTER 1999:

1. INTRODUCTION: PAKISTAN'S POLITICAL TURNING POINT (1999-2025)

The 1999 military coup marked a decisive ~~phase~~ break in Pakistan's democratic trajectory, reshaping both political system and political culture. General Musharraf introduced a mix of both authoritarian governance, controlled democracy and institutional restructuring. Post 2008 Pakistan attempted democratic recovery - marked by two consecutive civilian governments - for the first time in history. Yet the political culture remained deeply by the civil-military imbalance, personality-based politics, elite fragmentation and polarization. The period from 1999-2025 displays Pakistan's struggle between authoritarian legacies and

democratic aspirations, with constitutional amendments acting as the key turning points.

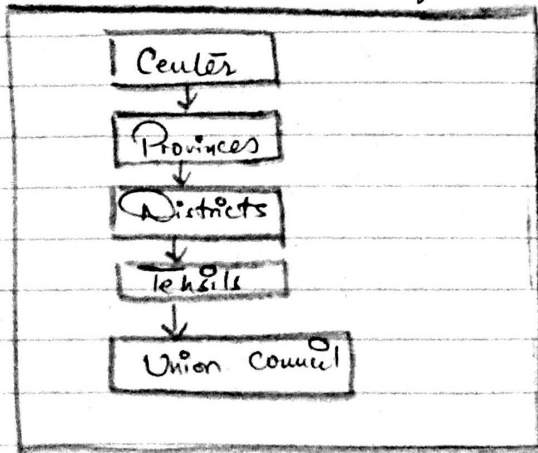
2. MUSHARRAF'S ERA AND CONTROLLED DEMOCRACY:

Musharraf's take over reconfigured the political landscape through centralized executive authority and restructuring of the parliamentary institutions. The legal framework order (2002) strengthened the presidency, introduced local government devolution and reshaped electoral processes. Political culture shifted towards technocratic rule, weakening political parties and promoting a hybrid governance model. This period entrenched the long standing pattern of military led political engineering.

3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEVOLUTION PLAN (2001): A SHIFT IN POLITICAL CULTURE:

The devolution plan created 6000+ local bodies and introduced the 'naam' system to decentralize power. Though innovative, it bypassed provincial authority, creating parallel governance structure. Political participation

expanded at the grass root level, especially for women and marginalized citizens. Yet the system remained heavily dependant on the federal executive, contributing to political fragmentation instead of institutional development. After 2008 political parties reversed several parts of the system, showing how political culture resisted structural reforms.



4. JUDICIAL ACTIVISM AND RISE OF CONSTITUTIONALISM (2007-2009)

The lawyers movement (2007-09) became a transformational movement; embedding a culture of the constitutional rights and judicial independence. The restoration of the

Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry reinforced public belief in constitutional supremacy. It also introduced aggressive judicial intervention in governance through suo moto actions. This period strengthened democratic consciousness but also blurred boundaries between institutions, contributing to future tensions between the judiciary, parliament and executive.

6. DEMOCRATIC REVIVAL AND CIVILIAN TRANSITION (2008-2018) :

For the first time Pakistan experienced two back to back transitions (2008, 2013, 2018). The political culture shifted towards constitutional legitimacy and electoral continuity. The PPP government (2008-2013) focused on the consensus politics, while the PML-N government (2013-18) institutionalized economic and infrastructure reforms. Despite grimance challenges, the sustained continuation of the elected government strengthened democratic habits and created political predictability.

6. CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AND THEIR ROLES DEMOCRATIC CONTINUITY AND GOVERNANCE:-

6.1. 18TH AMMENDMENT (2010): FOUNDATION OF MODERN FEDERAL DEMOCRACY:-

The 18th amendment reversed many powers accumulated by the presidency since 1999. It restored the parliamentary nature of the constitution, removed Article 58(2)(b) and expanded provincial autonomy and strengthening civilian liberties. Province gained major control over education, health, local governance and natural resources. This amendment is widely considered Pakistan's most significant democratic milestone, reshaping governance and balancing power between institutions.

7. NFC AWARD 2009 & FISCAL FEDERALISM:-

The 7th NFC award redistributed national resources towards the provinces, increasing their share to 57.5%. This empowered provincial governments to expand social

services and localize development planning. The combination of NFC + 18th Amendment strengthened federalism and reduced central dominance. Contemporary developments - such as provincial taxation reform and provincial health insurance programs (e.g. Sehat cards in KP and Punjab) reflects its long term impact on governance.

8. INSTITUTIONAL REBALANCING & CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS:-

Post 1999 constitutional reforms attempted to institutionalize civilian supremacy, yet political culture still reflected deep military influence. While elected government gained authority, security and foreign policy remained military dominated. Over-time constitutionalism created pressure for the negotiated civil-military decision-making rather than unilateral military control. The 2022-24 political crisis, however, revealed continued institutional competition undermining democratic stability.

9. ELECTORAL REFORMS AND DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY (2017-2024) ::

The Electoral Act 2017 unified electoral laws and strengthened the Election Commission's autonomy. Introduction of the biometric verification, overseas voting pilots, and strict campaign finance rules aimed to improve transparency. Post 2022 debates on digital census, delimitation, and electoral manipulation highlight the ongoing struggle to build credible democratic processes. These reforms have produced procedural democracy but political trust remains fragile.

10. RISE OF POLITICAL POLARIZATION AND MEDIA FRAGMENTATION (2014-25) ::

Political culture after 1999 became increasingly polarized - PPP, PML-N, PTI competing for narrative dominance. The rise of the media amplified populism, disinformation, and confrontational politics. This weakened the collective consensus necessary for stable democratic governance. Contemporary politics include 2022 protests, 2023 social-media driven polarization and 2024-25 tensions between

judiciary, parliament and executive. While constitutional safeguards exist, political culture continues to resist compromise.

11. CONTEMPORARY ERA (2019-2025) : HYBRID GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTIONAL STRESS ::

The post 2018 governance is marked by hybrid governance - shared influence between elected representative and non-elected institutions. The 2022 vote of no-confidence, 2023 constitutional crisis, Supreme court ruling on elections, and 2024 restoration of assemblies illustrate constitutional stress points. Yet the constitution remains the primary reference for dispute resolution, reflecting maturity of the democratic institutions. Governance however continues to suffer due to institutional overlap and political instability.

12. IMPACT ON DEMOCRATIC CONTINUITY AND GOVERNANCE ::

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HOW CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS STRENGTHENED DEMOCRATIC CONTINUITY

- 1) 18th Amendment restored parliamentary democracy.
- 2) Repeal of the Article 58(2)(b) prevented arbitrary dissolution of assemblies.
- 3) Two peaceful transitions (2013 and 2018) normalized democratic cycles.
- 4) Judicial activism embedded constitutional awareness in citizens.
- 5) NFC and provincial empowerment deepened federal democracy.

These developments collectively generated a more stable and constitution driven political environment despite repeated political shocks.

7. GOVERNANCE OUTCOMES: PROGRESS AND PERSISTENT CHALLENGES

Governance improved through federal devolution, transparent elections and strengthened judicial oversight. Yet political fragmentation, civil military imbalance, economic instability and confrontational politics continue to

hinder ~~political~~ policy continuity.

14. CONCLUSION:

The post 1999 era transformed Pakistan's political system through cycles of authoritarianism, democratic revival, constitutional reform and institutional contestation. The 18th Amendment, NFC Award, Judicial independence and electoral reforms collectively strengthened democratic continuity. However, political culture marked by polarization, elite competition and civil military tensions continue to challenge effective governance.

Q3: The current economic challenges of Pakistan are challenges of Political Economy or the issues are deeprooted in structural flaws in our economy. Take a side and suggest policies measures to address these challenges.

1. STATING MY STANCE:

Pakistan's current economic crisis is primarily a political economy problem - where weak institutions, elite captures, unstable governments and policy discontinuity have created and sustained structural flaws. Thus political economy failures are the root cause and structural issues are the consequences.

2. INTRODUCTION: POLITICAL ECONOMY AS A REAL CRISIS:

Pakistan's recurring economic instability - IMF dependence, low investment and inflation stems mainly from political decisions made by competing elites rather than pure economic defects. Political instability since 2008, polarization and no long term planning have blocked structural reforms.

3. POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND POLICY DISCONTINUITY (CORE OF CRISIS):

Frequent government changes (7 Prime Ministers in 10 years) disrupt economic agendas, scaring investors and halting reforms. Each government reverses the previous one's policies creating a cycle of uncertainty - worse than structural weakness.

4. ELITE CAPTURE AND RENT SEEKING (POLITICAL ECONOMY FAILURES):

Pakistan's budget, tax exemption, and subsidy pattern benefit big traders, real estate owners, and cartels. According to PIDE 2023, elite capture costs Pakistan around 160 billion PKR annually, undermining reforms and worsening inequality.

5. WEAK TAXATION SYSTEM CAUSED BY POLITICAL CHOICES:

The problem is not technical - it is rather political. Parliament refuses to tax agriculture, real estate and retailers. As a result, Pakistan's tax-to-GDP

ratio remains stuck at 7-10% forcing reliance on external borrowing instead of domestic revenues

6. STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS ARE THE OUTCOMES - NOT THE CAUSE:

Manufacturing collapse, energy circular debt, and trade deficits emerged because government lack continuity to execute long term reforms. Thus structural flaws (like low productivity) are symptoms of long standing political mismanagement.

7. ECONOMIC PLANNING UNDERMINED BY SHORT TERMISM:

Every administration focuses on short term populism - subsidies, salary hikes, mega-projects rather than productivity, exports or industrial policy. For example, the 2022-2024 cycles of artificial currency control triggered historic inflation and IMF pressure.

8. POLITICAL INTERFERENCE IN MARKETS AND INSTITUTIONS:

State institutions such as NEPRA, SECP and OGRA face political pressure, reducing transparency in tariffs regulation and market pricing. This undermines investor confidence and prevents efficient market functioning.

9. EXTERNAL DEPENDENCE AS A POLITICAL CHOICE:

Gulf states and China provide bailouts due to geopolitical alliances, creating a safety net that encourages political actors to avoid real reforms. Instead of fixing domestic tax collection, Pakistan relies on "friendly-deposit" and emergency loans.

10. CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLES (2022-24) CRISIS

- 1) 2022 political crisis triggered a 50% currency depreciation.
- 2) 2023 IMF deal delayed for 8 months due to political unwillingness.

3) 2024-25: budget shaped entirely around IMF conditions due to fiscal collapse.

This shows economic failure directly. Produces economic shocks.

II. POLICY MEASURES:

II.1 REFORM POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

FOR LONG TERM POLICY CONTINUITY:

Set 10 year binding economic frameworks across parties like (Malaysia's vision plan). Political consensus on taxes, export policy and energy pricing must be guaranteed by parliament not by the individual government.

II.2 EXPAND TAX BASE AND END ELITE PRIVILEGES:

Bring retailers' real estate, capital gains and agriculture into the tax net. FBR digitalization and end to SRO exemptions can raise revenues by 3-4 % of GDP within 3-years, reducing debt and stabilizing currency.

II.3 STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOR ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE:

Empowered local bodies reduces patronage politics and improve service delivery. Evidence from KP's 2015 LG system shows improved policing and municipal performance when political interference is minimized.

II.4 DEEP ENERGY SECTOR REFORMS:

Depoliticize tariffs, privatize loss making DISCOs and shift subsidies to targeted consumers only. This can cut circular debt (now 3.1 trillion PKR) and reduce fiscal pressure.

II.5 EXPORT LED GROWTH STRATEGY:

Shift away from import driven consumption based economy. Support IT exports (already \$3.2 billion), agriculture value chains and special technology zones to boost productivity.

11.6. DEPOLITICIZE SOES AND PRIVATE STRATEGIC SECTORS:-

Pakistan's SOEs lose 700-800 billion PKR annually. Creating independent boards and privatizing loss making entities (PIA, Steel Mills) reduce fiscal burden and promotes efficiency.

11.7 HUMAN CAPITAL AND GENDER INCLUSION:-

Reforms in education and women's economic participation can raise GDP by 23% (World Bank estimates). Political resistance - not structural inability has delayed these reforms.

CONCLUSION:- Pakistan's economic crisis is first and foremost a "political economy problem". Political instability, elite capture, tax exemptions and policy discontinuity have produced the structural faults in taxation, energy, and trade. Only by tackling political incentives through institutional reforms, policy continuity,

depoliticized markets, and inclusive growth - can Pakistan move from the crisis to sustainable economic governance.

Obj: Assess the changing dynamics of Pakistan-US relations after new government in both countries. Is the relationship strategic partnership or transactional cooperation? Discuss.

CHANGING DYNAMICS OF PAKISTAN-US RELATIONS AFTER NEW GOVERNMENT

1. INTRODUCTION: A RELATIONSHIP DEFINED BY SHIFTING GLOBAL AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

Pakistan-US relations have historically swung between alliances and abandonment, shaped more by global power needs than bilateral priorities. With new government in Islamabad (2024) and Washington (2025), the relationship is again adjusting to fresh geopolitical realities, especially China's rise and US Indo-Pacific strategy.

2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT: ^{FROM} COLD WAR ALLIANCE TO POST 9/11 COUNTER TERRORISM

The US relied on Pakistan during the Cold War, The Afghan Jihad, and The War on Terror while Pakistan sought security support from

India. However, mistrust grew over drone strikes, Afghanistan endgame and perceived inconsistent US commitments - setting the tone for today's cautious engagement.

3. IMPACT OF NEW GOVERNMENT:

Pakistan's new government prioritizes economic revival and diversified foreign ties, while the new US administration focuses on China's containment and Middle East stability. This creates limited overlap, pushing both countries to pursue an issue-based working relationship rather than long term alliance.

4. CHANGING GEOPOLITICS AFTER US-INDIA STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

The US-India partnership under QUAD and defense agreements (COMCASA, BECA) reduces America's strategic reliance on Pakistan. This shifts directly effects Pakistan's regional standing and forces Islamabad to recalibrate its foreign policy through multivector diplomacy with China, Gulf, Central Asia and Turkey.

5. CHINA PAKISTAN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP INFLUENCING US CALCULATION:

CPEC's expansion under ML-1, Gwadar Port development, and China's investment in Pakistan's digital infrastructure make the US cautious. Washington sees Pakistan through "China-lens" contributing to a measured engagement rather than strategic upgrade.

6. COOPERATION IN COUNTER TERRORISM AFTER 2023-24, TTP SURGE:

The resurgence of the TTP attacks (2023-25) has revived counter-terrorism cooperation, including intelligence sharing and funding through US Counterterrorism Assistance program. However, unlike the war on Terror era, this cooperation is narrow and technical not strategic.

7. ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT - IMF INFLUENCE AND US LEVERAGE:

As the largest IMF shareholder, US indirectly shapes Pakistan's macroeconomic decisions. The 2023 and 2024 IMF programs reflect

US preference for Pakistan's financial discipline. Yet American economic engagement remains transactional, revolving around IMF stabilization rather than trade and investment.

8. DEFENSE COOPERATION REDUCED BUT NOT ENDED:

US defense transfers have declined, but maintenance for F-16 fleet (2023-24) and training programs continue. The cooperation is no longer alliance based, shaped by Pakistan's counterterrorism needs and US regional security priorities.

9. STRATEGIC AREAS OF CONVERGENCE AFTER 2025:

Both states now align on climate adaptation, regional stability and digital security. US funding through USAID for green energy projects and Pakistan's interest in tech-sector integration show emerging but limited synergies beyond security.

IS THE RELATIONSHIP STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP OR TRANSACTIONAL COOPERATION?

10. ARGUMENT - PAKISTAN - US TIES ARE PRIMARILY TRANSACTIONAL TODAY:

The relationship revolves around issue specific needs - IMF support, counterterrorism and humanitarian cooperation. There is no shared long term vision, institutional cooperation model or regional security military partnership, marking the relationship as clearly transactional.

11. WHY IS IT NOT A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP?

- 1) US supports rises only during crisis (IMF, counterterrorism)
- 2) Defense aid reduced by more than 80% since 2011.
- 3) No major trade agreements or long term strategic dialogues.
- 4) Engagement depends on Pakistan's role in Afghanistan or regional crisis.

12. EVIDENCES SUPPORTING TRANSACTIONAL NATURE OF PARTNERSHIP:

12. WHY IS IT NOT A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP?

Strategic partnership requires aligned geopolitical interests, high trust, long-term security cooperation, and economic interdependence.

US tilt towards India, Pakistan has Chinese dependency and persistent mistrust prevent such a framework.

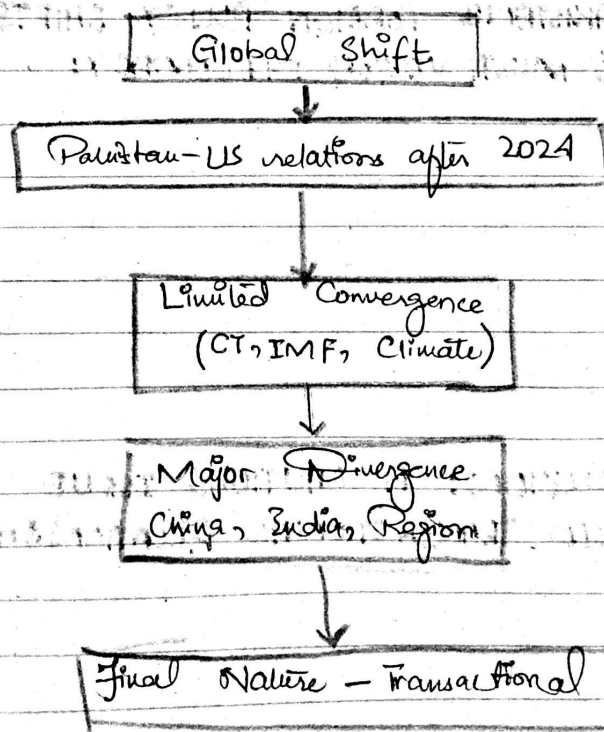
13. PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY SHIFTS TO MULTI VECTOR DIPLOMACY:

Pakistan no longer relies solely on the US but seeks diversified ties with China, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Turkey and Central Asia. This reduces dependency on the Washington but also means the partnership remains shallow and issue specific.

CONCLUSION: A CAUTIOUS ISSUE BASED TRANSACTIONAL RELATIONSHIP:

Pakistan-US relationship in post 2024 era reflect mutual pragmatism rather than strategic convergence. The partnership is

shaped by China's rise, Indo-Pacific tensions, Afghanistan's instability and Pakistan's economic vulnerabilities. Although cooperation continues in counter terrorism, IMF programs and ~~the~~ climate projects, the relationship lacks depth, vision and shared strategic roadmap - making it predominantly transactional with limited areas of strategic overlap.



Q6: Discuss the role of ideology in Pakistan's nation building process. How the interpretation of ideological counters evolved over time in Pakistan's political and social discourse.

ROLE OF IDEOLOGY IN PAKISTAN'S NATION BUILDING PROCESS:-

1947-58	→	Islamic Democracy + Unity
1958-69	→	Modernist nationalism
1970's	→	Islamic Socialism
1977-88	→	Islamization
1988-2001	→	Democratic pluralism
2001-2008	→	Enlightened Moderation
2008-2025	→	Civic Constitutionalism

1) INTRODUCTION - IDEOLOGY AS THE FOUNDATIONAL GLUE OF NEW STATE

The ideology of Pakistan - rooted in the Two-Nation-Theory and Muslim identity serve as the binding force for diverse ethnic groups at independence. It provided a

Common political purpose - safeguarding Muslim rights and creating a separate homeland where they could develop socially, economically and culturally.

2. IDEOLOGY AS THE BASIS OF STATE LEGITIMACY (1947-58)

In the early years, the state used ideology to unify provinces lacking administrative cohesion. Leaders like Jinnah and Liaquat emphasized Islamic democratic values, constitutionalism and minority protection, making ideology a moral justification for a new state's existence.

3. IDEOLOGY AND CONSTITUTION MAKING (1956 AND 1962 CONSTITUTIONS)

Both constitutions embedded Islamic clauses. Objectives Resolution, sovereignty of Allah and protection of the Islamic values, to strengthen national cohesion. These became tool for nation building by creating shared constitutional identity across linguistic groups.

4. NATION BUILDING THROUGH EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE POLICIES

State led policies such as making Urdu the National language, used ideology to promote unity but also triggered grievances (eg. Bengali resistance). Curriculum reforms in 1950s-70s projected Islamic identity as the primary national bond.

5. IDEOLOGY AND SECURITY NARRATIVES - INDIA AS "OTHER"

Security threats shaped ideology into a defense centric narratives. The Kashmir dispute reinforced the Two Nation Theory, positioning Pakistan's national identity in contrast with India. This created unity in crisis but also narrowed ideological interpretations.

EVOLUTION OF THE IDEOLOGICAL CONTOURS IN PAKISTAN'S POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DISCOURSE:

6. SHIFT DURING AYUB'S ERA: MODERNIST INTERPRETATION (1958-69)

Ayub Khan promoted Muslim "modernism" separating religion from politics while retaining Islamic symbolism. His focus on economic development and controlled democracy softened ideological rigidity and introduced technocratic nationalism.

7. ISLAMIC SOCIALISM UNDER ZULFIKAR ALI BHUTTO (1971-77)

Bhutto reinterpreted ideology as "Islam + Socialism + Democracy". His blended egalitarian Islamic principles with social justice policies, nationalization, land reforms — expanding ideology to economic right and populist politics.

8. ISLAMIZATION AND IDEOLOGICAL RIGIDIFICATION UNDER ZIA (1977-88)

General Zia ul Haq reinterpreted ideology into strictly religious framework: Shariat Ordinance, Hudood laws, Zakat-Ushr System, and madrasah expansion.

This era institutionalized religious discourse, deeply embedding ideology into politics and society.

9. POST 1988 PLURALIST & DEMOCRATIC REINTERPRETATION

After Zia, civilian government revived constitutionalism and parliamentary norms. Ideology became more inclusive, focusing on democracy, rights and federalism. The judiciary and media increasingly framed ideology in terms of rule-of-law principles.

10. POST 9/11 ORIENTATION - MODERATION AND COUNTER EXTREMISM:-

Under Musharraf, ideology evolved again with ~~Enlightened~~ "Enlightened Moderation", balancing Islamic identity with global integration. Extremism forced the state to reinterpret ideology around counterterrorism, national security and internal peace.

11. CONTEMPORARY ERA (2008-2025)

CIVIC NATIONALISM AND CONSTITUTIONALISM

The 18th Amendment strengthened parliament^{ISM}, revived federalism and judicial activism, redefined ideology into civic frameworks. Youth-led social media discourse emphasizes rights, diversity, and democracy, shifting away from the rigid religious narratives.

12. IDEOLOGY IN (2023-25) POLITICAL POLARIZATION.

Recent political divides have reposed ideology for party narratives - rule of law, constitutional supremacy, civil-military balance, while society debates the balance between Islamic identity and modern democratic governance.

CONCLUSION: A MULTI LAYERED, EVOLVING IDEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK.

Pakistan's ideology has never been static - it evolved from Muslim nationalism

to Islamic modernism, Islamic socialism, Islamization and today's constitutional civic nationalism. While ideology helped unify the states at birth, its shifting interpretation reflects Pakistan's political transitions, security needs and social changes. Today the challenge is to balance Islamic identity with democratic, pluralistic values to sustain long-term nation building.