

Question 5 - Iranian Political System

The political system of Iran is quite a complex one and combines elements of a modern Islamic ideology with democracy. The entire system functions under a Supreme Leader who is appointed by the Assembly of Experts and is the chief of state while the president is head of government.

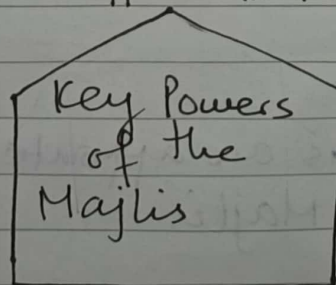
I Main Characteristics of Iran's Political System

(i) The Majlis (Parliament)

The parliament (Majlis) consists of 290 members elected after every four years. Minorities such as Zoroastrians and Jews have a total of five seats reserved for them. Both men and women have can be elected into office though women have little direct representation.

Approve all international agreements & treaties

Can impeach the President or cabinet members



Must approve cabinet members nominated by president

Approve foreign - nationals employed in government

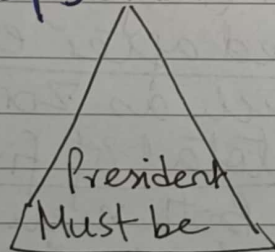
Must approve government loans

Two-third of members of parliament must be in session for a vote to be valid.

(ii) **The Presidency**

The President is elected after of every four years and can remain in power for a maximum of two terms. He must be elected by a majority of voters. The election can enter a second round with two candidates to decide final candidate if in the first round majority votes are not picked by one candidate.

Of Iranian origin



Supporting the ideals of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Shia of the Twelver Sect

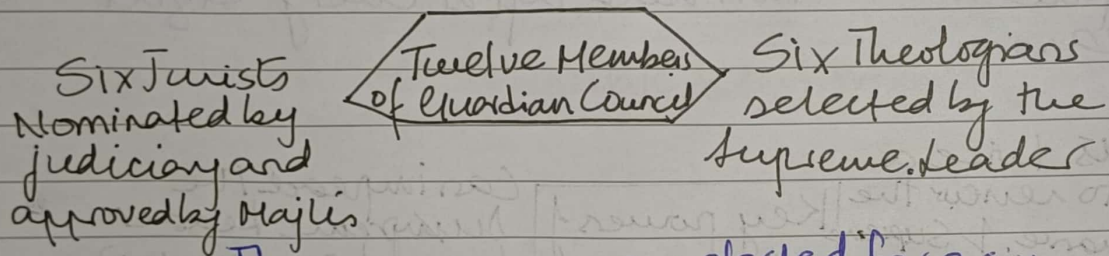
(iii) **The Cabinet**

The ministers are appointed by President, and approved by Majlis.

The Supreme Leader has significant influence over ministries of foreign policy, defence and security.

(iv) The Guardian Council

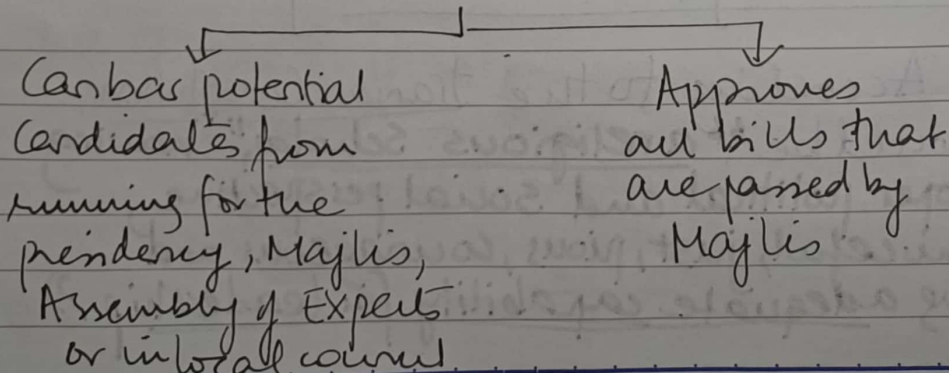
The Guardian Council is composed of twelve members.



The members are selected for a six-year period, though the process is phased, after three years there being a review.

The Guardian Council is very significant in determining the course of politics within the country.

The Guardian Council





This power is meant to ensure that legislation adheres to Islamic law and to the constitution.

(v) The Assembly of Experts

It is composed of 86 Islamic scholars (Mujtahid) who gain office through a popular election held after every eight years.

Meets twice a year to review the performance of Supreme Leader

Key powers of the Assembly

Can impeach the Supreme Leader (never been done yet)

Elects the Supreme Leader into a lifetime position

Can serve to advise the Supreme Leader

(vi) The Supreme Leader

He is the most senior member of the political system's hierarchy.

According to the Iranian Constitution, he should be "a religious scholar," having a proper political and social perspective, resourceful, just, pious, courageous and having adequate capability for leadership."

Key powers of the Supreme Leader

- (i) Appoints the head of judiciary
- (ii) Appoints six out of twelve members of Guardian Council
- (iii) Appoints the commanders of armed forces and is the commander-in-chief
- (iv) Prerogative to declare war or peace solely with him.
- (v) Appoints head of public television and radio network.
- (vi) Can dismiss the president
- (vii) Generally supervises the execution of policy
- (viii) Can call a national referendum.
- (ix) Confirms the elected president

(vii) The Supreme National Security Council

This body is charged with responsibility over sovereignty and territorial integrity. The president chairs the council's meetings.

(viii) The armed forces

An overall command regulates both branches of the armed forces, the regular forces and the Revolutionary Guard. All members are selected by the Supreme Leader and are directly and formally under his leadership.



(ix) Head of the Judiciary

The head is appointed by the Supreme Leader and holds the position for 5 years. The judiciary then appoints the members of the Guardian Council.

II Critical Appraisal of Iran's Socio-economic development in light of its political system

(i) The Supreme Leader has general and widespread powers

The spread of the Supreme Leader's say in almost every political institution of the state has led to dependence and subservience of policies and state affairs.

The Decision Making has been concentrated in mostly one hand.

(ii) Subservience to Supreme Leader

Institutions such as the Assembly of Experts have been criticised - instead of advising the Supreme Leader of being subservient to the Supreme Leader.

(iii) Minorities ^{have been} ~~are~~ underrepresented

As seen, only 5 seats are reserved for the various recognised minorities.

(iv) Women have very little say in socio-economic affairs

The Islamist ideology asserted by the supreme leader has led to women being kept aside.

(v) Unfree elections

Elections in Iran have been unfree, which leads to lobbying and policymaking skewed. This results in economic control and hindrance in social development of society.

Concluding Thoughts

As seen, Iran's political system is predominantly hybrid with the President, Parliament and Supreme Leader mentioned institutions. However, the Supreme Leader is controlling of the other organs of state which has kept "checks and balances" from occurring. It has hindered the socio-economic development of the country.



Question 7 - Foreign Policy of Pakistan

The National Interests of Pakistan have been driven by its National Security, Economic Interests, Islamic Solidarity, Peaceful co-existence, bilateralism ^{and} public opinion. ~~and~~ These National Interests form the backbone of the major determinants of its foreign policy rooted in ideology, geopolitical and economic factors, security concerns and a special determinant - the Indian factor.

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