

Question No: 2

day / date:

The evolution of Pakistan's Political system and cultural since 1999 military coup has been marked a cyclical struggle between military dominance, democratic consolidation efforts, and significant constitutional changes aimed at strengthening civilian governance.

Evolution Of the Political System

The Post 1999 period began with the military dictatorship of General Pervez Musharraf, continuing Pakistan's pattern of alternating between periods of corrupt civilian rule and military dictatorships.

1. Musharraf's Era (1999-2008):

- Musharraf's rule was characterized by authoritarian tendencies and attempts to create his own form of controlled democracy.
- A significant cultural shift with the radical liberation of the media, leading to proliferation of television and radio stations that increased government transparency and public awareness.
- Despite this liberation, the military remained dominant institution, continuing to assert its primacy and intervene in critical policy areas.
- The period saw an economic growth, but Musharraf's commitment to internal political reform after waned for political expediency.

- The political culture saw mass mobilization, notably The Civil Society Movement in 2007 (Lawyer's movement that successfully mobilized for an independent judiciary and against military rule.

2- Return to Civilian Rule And Democratic Continuity (Post 2008)

- The 2008 General Election initiated the Rebirth of the democratic institutions.

A critical milestone in democratic continuity was achieved in the 2013 General Elections marking the first time in Pakistan's history that an elected civilian government completed its full term and facilitated a peaceful transfer of power to another elected government via ballot box. This signaled a potential change in the mode of power transfer and diminished the army's ability to manipulate the political process.

However, the military continues to cast a large shadow over civilian government exercising veto power even when out of power. The system remains stuck in an intermediate "gray zone" between full democracy and military autocracy.



Constitution Development And Governance

The key constitutional development during this era was the passage of Eighteenth Amendment in 2010, which profoundly shaped government.

1. Reversing the Military Centralization

The 18th Amendment restored the balance of powers as envisaged in the 1973 Constitution. Critically, it reversed the centralizing effects of previous military-era amendments (like Zia's 13th Amendment). The amendments removed the military exemption, Article 58(2)(B), which military rulers had codified and used repeatedly to dismiss elected governments between 1998 and 1996.

2. Strengthening Parliamentary

Democracy:

The amendment formally returned to a Parliamentary democracy where the prime minister serves as the chief executive. The outgoing PPP government also took steps to assert greater civilian responsibility for foreign and defense policy, traditionally the army's domain.



3. Devolution And Federation:

The 18th Amendment gave greater political autonomy to the provinces.

- It eliminated the Concurrent List, transferring legislative authority in these areas exclusively to the provinces. This was intended to re-organize the Pakistan as a genuine federation.
- Simultaneously, Seventeenth National Finance Commission (NFC) Award provided provinces a significant increased share of federal budget, enhancing their financial power.
- This move was seen as a mitigating historical Centre-province tensions rooted in centralized authority and perceived Punjabi dominance.

Despite the developments, challenges persist in governance due to the provinces lacking the capacity (revenue and manpower) to handle their new mandates, effectively, potentially hindering service delivery in crucial areas like education and infrastructure.

Question No: 3

day / date:

The current economic challenges of Pakistan are fundamentally challenges of Political Economy, which perpetually undermines and prevent the resolution of deep-rooted structural flaws.

Argument: The Political Economy

Pakistan's economic instability is rooted ~~is~~ not just in a lack of resources, but in a governance structure defined by elite capture, patronage, and a deeply entrenched military bureaucratic dominance.

1. Elite Capture And Lack Of Fiscal Integrity:

A narrow elite, comprising the military, civil bureaucracy, landowners and political families, has resisted meaningful reforms to protect its interests. This is evident by Pakistan's dismal, inefficient and inequitable taxation system, which is characterized by rampant evasion, particularly among the wealthy and untaxed sectors like agriculture. The state's inability to raise sufficient domestic revenue leads to a perpetual budget deficit and forces like reliance on external borrowing and aid.

2. Defense v/s Development:

Pakistan's political economy is structured more for "defence" than for "development". Fear of India sustains the primacy of the military, leading to disproportionate allocation of resources where defence and debt servicing consume over 50% of the central government's expenditure. This crowds out vital investments in social sectors like education and health.

3. Policy Failure And Corruption:

Major structural problems, such as chronic energy crisis and soaring circular debt, are the result of colossal failures in public policy, lack of planning continuity, mismanagement, neglect, and systematic corruption rather than insurmountable resource scarcity. Governance issues are inextricably linked with effective economic policies.

Policy Measures Focused On Political Economy Reform:

Addressing Pakistan's challenges requires structural and political interventions to reform the incentive structure of the ruling elite.

1. Fiscal Justice And Revenue Mobilization:



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- Reform to restore financial stability through a disciplined fiscal and monetary policies.
- Reform the taxation system to make it efficient and equitable. This includes taxing the wealthy and bringing politically exempted sectors, such as agriculture, into the tax net.

2. Governance And Institutional Strengthening:

- Tackle the endemic corruption and improve governance.
- Implement structural reforms and reconfigure the state's governance structures.
- Implement sweeping land reforms to address the structures which are old and of landownership and reduce the power of feudal elites in rural areas.

3. Rebalancing Security And Development Spending:

- Radically reduce the army's role in politics and redefine its functions primarily to defending frontiers.
- Shift spending priorities from non-productive expenditures (defense/administration) toward ~~major~~ major investments in education and healthcare reform.



4. Energy Sector Stability:

- Develop and implement an Integrated Energy Planning (IEP) and a coherent strategy to address the chronic energy crisis.
- Address the systematic causes of circular debt corruption and power theft.

Question No: 04

The nature of Pakistan-US relationship since 2001 has been transactional cooperation, frequently deteriorating into a "acrimonious codependency" or an "alliance of convenience" rather than a deep strategic partnership.

Dynamics And Strategic Re-alignment:

1. Post 9/11 Reliance:

The relationship underwent a dramatic shift post 9/11, transforming Pakistan from a pariah state to a key strategic ally. This alliance was primarily driven by U.S. counterterrorism needs in Afghanistan and Pakistan's urgent requirement for economic and military assistance (lifting sanctions, debt relief, military aid) to stabilize the Musharraf regime and offset India.



2. Conflicting Core Interests:

The foundational difference in strategic focus prevents true partnership. Pakistan's foreign policy is perpetually India-centric, seeking military parity and external "props" to counter its neighbor. The US interest, however, has been situational (containing communism, fighting terrorism) and increasingly focused on India's ascent as a counterweight to China.

3. Global Power Shifts:

Pakistan views the US commitment to helping India become a global power (e.g., the civilian nuclear deal) with unease, seeing it as proof that the US has chosen India. As the US focus shifts towards China's rise, Pakistan anticipates its own decreased salience and seeks to strengthen ties with China and Saudi Arabia to ensure economic and strategic support.

Transactional Cooperation vs.

Strategic Partnership:

The evidence points strongly towards a transactional relationship.

Transactional Nature:

The relationship is one of convenience, based on immediate

expediency and short term thinking, secured through a combination of coercion and bribery (aid).

Trust Deficit:

A severe trust deficit defines the relationship. Many Pakistanis believe the U.S. has historically used and abandoned them, citing sanctions and past betrayals. Anti-American sentiment is widespread and deeply rooted.

Divergent Objectives:

Pakistan pursued the alliance while maintaining its strategy of using militant proxies (like groups in Kashmir) of security objectives, leading to US accusations of "double-dealing".

Imbalance Of Power:

The US intervention bolstered Musharraf's military dictatorship while rhetorically supporting democracy, facilitating a political economy of predation. The military's enduring power ensures its veto over civilian foreign policy of Pakistan decisions.

Future Trajectory:

The relationship is expected to become more distant and narrowly focused on fewer issues after the immediate needs related to Afghanistan decline, reinforcing the transactional nature.



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