

Introduction

The president of the United States is widely considered the most powerful elected executive due to the combination of formal authority, institutional influence, and public visibility. Yet, this power is carefully balanced by constitutional checks, federalism, and democratic accountability. Understanding the source and limits of presidential authority is essential to evaluate the paradox of power and constraint in the US executive system.

1. Constitutional Authority of the Presidenta. Legislative Powers

The President can veto bills passed by Congress, influence legislative agendas, and issue recommendations to Congress. These

powers allow the executive to shape policy indirectly while maintaining constitutional boundaries.

b) Executive Powers

As head of the executive branch, the President ensures laws are faithfully executed, oversees federal departments, and issues executive orders to guide administrative action. This enables significant control over national administration.

c) Commander-in-Chief Role

The President leads the armed forces and directs national defense strategy. While this allows decisive military action, it is subject to Congressional funding and war power legislation.

d) Appointment and Treaty Powers

The President appoints federal

judges, ambassadors, and key officials and negotiates treaties that require Senate approval. This strengthens influence over the judiciary, diplomacy, and national policy.

2. Informal and Political Sources of Power

a. Party Leadership

As the de facto leader of their political party, the President can mobilize party support in Congress and influence policy priorities. This informal power enhances legislative success.

b. Public Persuasion and Media

The President can shape public opinion through speeches, media appearances, and social communication. Public support strengthens bargaining power with Congress and political actors.

c.

Agenda-Setting

By highlighting specific issues and framing policy debates, the President guides national discourse and influences legislative and administrative focus.

3.

Constitutional and Institutional Constraints

a.

Checks by Congress

Congress can override vetoes, control budgets, approve appointments, and hold investigations, limiting unilateral presidential action.

b.

Judicial Review

The Supreme Court can declare executive actions unconstitutional, ensuring the President operates within the legal framework.

c.

Federalism

Power is distributed across federal and state governments, restricting the President from acting unilaterally in areas reserved for states.

4.

Political and Public Constraints

a.

Electoral Accountability

The President's power depends on re-election prospects and approval ratings. Low popularity can hinder policy implementation.

b.

Opposition and Lobbying

Political opposition, interest groups, and civil society organizations influence policy outcomes and constrain presidential initiatives.

c.

Norms and Public Opinion

Even informal power is tempered by

societal expectations, democratic norms, and media ~~scr~~ scrutiny, which maintain legitimacy.

Conclusion

The US President is a uniquely powerful executive due to constitutional authority, informal influence, and public leadership. However, institutional, political, and legal constraints ensure accountability and prevent abuse of power. The interplay of power and limitation defines the US presidency as a distinctive and balanced model of executive authority.

Question: 5

Introduction

Pakistan's foreign policy has historically prioritized security concerns over economic objectives. This is largely shaped by geopolitical realities, regional rivalries, and historical experiences. While Pakistan avoids strict alignment with any global camp, its policies reflect a focus on strategic interests, military security, and territorial integrity. Understanding the security-driven orientation alongside Pakistan's non-aligned posture is essential to evaluate its foreign policy approach.

1. Security as the Primary Driver

1.1 India-Pakistan Rivalry

The longstanding conflict with India, including disputes over Kashmir, has been central to Pakistan's foreign

policy. Defense and deterrence considerations dominate bilateral and regional engagements, often overshadowing economic priorities.

1.2 Role of Military and Strategic Institutions

Pakistan's military and intelligence agencies have historically influenced foreign policy decisions. Emphasis on defense alliances, nuclear deterrence, and strategic partnerships reflects a security-first mindset.

1.3 Border and Regional Security

Concerns over Afghanistan, terrorism and regional instability further reinforces the focus on national security. Policies in border management and counterterrorism are prioritized over trade or economic cooperation.

2. Economy in Foreign Policy

2.1 Economic Diplomacy

While security dominates, Pakistan engages in economic diplomacy through trade agreements, investment initiatives, and multilateral forums. Projects like **CPEC** reflect efforts to integrate economic objectives with strategic planning.

2.2 Limitations Due to Security Priorities

Security imperatives often constraint economic engagement. Regional tensions, sanctions, and defense spending reduce available resources for purely economic initiatives. Economic goals are pursued selectively, often linked to strategic considerations.

3. Non-Alignment and Camp Politics

3.1 Avoiding Strict Alliances

Pakistan has traditionally avoided

rigid alignment with either Western or Eastern blocs, pursuing a pragmatic foreign policy. This non-aligned stance allows flexibility in international relations while safeguarding security interests.

3.2 Balancing Major Powers

Pakistan engages with the US, China, Middle Eastern countries, and regional organizations to maintain strategic autonomy. The balancing act supports security priorities without overt commitment to one global camp.

3.3 Implications for Foreign Policy Decision-Making

Non-alignment enables Pakistan to leverage international partnerships selectively, prioritize national security, and pursue economic initiatives opportunistically. It reinforces the security-driven nature of its foreign

policy while retaining some room
for economic diplomacy.

Conclusion

Pakistan's foreign policy remains primarily security-driven, shaped by regional conflicts, strategic concerns, and institutional influence. Its avoidance of strict "camp politics" provides flexibility but does not fundamentally shift the priority from security to economic development. The interplay of strategic autonomy and defense imperatives continues to define Pakistan's foreign policy orientation.

Question: 6

Introduction

BRICS, comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, represents a coalition of emerging economies in Global South. It challenges the traditional dominance of institutions like the United Nations and IMF by promoting alternative mechanisms for development, finance and diplomacy. BRICS initiatives reflect a collective attempt to reshape global governance, assert political and economic influence, and enhance cooperation among member states. Understanding its impact requires examining its financial, political, and institutional initiatives.

1. Economic and Financial Initiatives

a) New Development Bank (NDB)

The BRICS New Development Bank

provided loans for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in member and other emerging countries. It offers an alternative to IMF and World Bank funding, reducing dependence on Western-led financial institutions.

b) Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)

The CRA is a pooled reserve mechanism that supports member countries facing balance-of-payments crises. It offers financial stability without the stringent conditionalities typically imposed by the IMF, giving members greater policy autonomy.

c) Promotion of Trade and Investment

BRICS encourages intra-group trade, investment, and development projects.

Initiatives to strengthen local currencies in trade reduce reliance on the US dollar, subtly challenging the

global economic order led by traditional financial institutions.

2. Political and Diplomatic Influence

a. Collective Voice in Global Governance

BRICS nations coordinate positions on international forums, influencing UN debates and decisions on global issues such as climate change, peacekeeping, and reform of international institutions.

b. Advocacy for Developing Countries

By emphasizing the interests of the Global South, BRICS challenges the dominance of Western nations in the IMF and UN. The coalition advocates equitable representation, fair voting rights, and inclusive development policies.

c. Strategic Partnerships and Soft Power

BRICS strengthens bilateral and multilateral ties among member states, enhancing their bargaining power internationally. Its diplomatic initiatives allow members to counterbalance Western influence in global governance.

3. Institutional and Normative Challenges

A. Reforming Global Financial Architecture

Through NDB and CRA, BRICS promotes an alternative financial system that challenges IMF and World Bank authority. It encourages flexible lending, lower conditionality, and regional project prioritization.

B. Impact on UN Decision-Making

While BRICS does not directly control UN structures, its coordinated

stance influences resolutions, peace-keeping mandates, and voting coalitions. It represents a normative challenge by questioning the legitimacy of a Western-dominated decision-making model.

C. Limitations and Internal Constraints

Despite its potential, BRICS face challenges, including diverse national interests, geopolitical tensions, and institutional limitations. Its effectiveness as a counter-balance to UN and IMF is gradual rather than immediate.

Conclusion

BRICS serves as a significant Global South initiative challenging the dominance of the UN and IMF through financial alternatives, collective diplomacy, and normative influence. Its development bank,

reserves arrangements, and coordinated
positions enhance autonomy and
bargaining power for member
states. While internal diversity
limits immediate global impact,
BRICS continues to redefine
power dynamics and represent a
growing alternative to traditional
global institutions.

Question: 8

Introduction

Pakistan's economic situation is marked by low growth, high inflation, and a growing debt burden, creating significant challenges for governance and political stability. Foreign assistance and international loans play a crucial role in sustaining fiscal balance, yet they also come with conditionalities and external influence. Examining these economic indicators alongside their political implications provides a comprehensive understanding of the country's current challenges and policy priorities.

1. Economic Growth

a. Current Growth Trends

Pakistan's GDP growth has remained modest in recent years, affected by

structural weaknesses, low industrial output, and inconsistent policy implementation. Growth rates have fluctuated due to external shocks, including global energy prices and trade imbalances.

b. Sectoral Performance

Agriculture, industry, and services show uneven performance.

While agriculture remains a key employment sector, productivity issues limit its contribution to GDP.

Industrial stagnation and low investment levels further constraint overall economic growth.

c. Implications for Development

Low growth undermines employment generation and poverty reduction, increasing social discontent. Politically, sluggish growth pressures the government to adopt unpopular fiscal measures and complicates

policy legitimacy.

2. Inflation and Cost of Living

a. Price Increases and Public Impact

High inflation, particularly in food and energy erodes household purchasing. Rising living costs generate public dissatisfaction and protests, creating pressure on policymakers.

b. Causes of Inflation

Inflation is driven by supply-side constraints, currency depreciation, and fiscal deficits. Imported inflation, especially from global commodity price shocks, further exacerbates the situation.

c. Political Consequences

Persistent inflation can reduce public trust in government, strengthen opposition

narratives, and destabilize political coalitions. Policymakers face the challenge of balancing monetary restraint with social welfare.

3. Debt Management

a. External and Domestic Debt

Pakistan's debt has risen due to persistent - fiscal deficits and reliance on external loans. High interest payments limit fiscal space for development spending.

b. Debt Servicing Challenges

Rising debt servicing consumes a large portion of revenues, restricting public investment and social sector expenditure. Dependence on international lenders increases vulnerability to external conditions.

c.

Policy Implications

Heavy debt burdens constrain policy autonomy and may fuel criticism of government economic management. Delays in debt repayment or reliance on bailouts can trigger political controversies and reduce public confidence.

4.

Role of Foreign Assistance

a.

Multilateral and Bilateral Support

Pakistan relies on assistance from IMF, World Bank, and friendly countries for balance-of-payments support and development financing. These inflows help stabilize the economy temporarily.

b.

Conditionalities and Policy Influence

Foreign assistance often comes with conditions such as fiscal reforms, subsidy reductions, and privatization.

These measures can create public resistance and political friction.

C. Strategic and Political Outcomes

Dependence on foreign aid affects sovereignty perception and domestic politics. Policymakers must balance the benefits of assistance with national interests and public acceptance.

Conclusion

Pakistan's economic conditions; low growth, high inflation, rising debt, and reliance on foreign assistance, pose both developmental and political challenges. Economic pressures influence governance decisions, public opinion, and political stability, highlighting the inseparable link between economic management and political outcomes. Effective economic policy is essential to sustain legitimacy, reduce social tension, and maintain stable governance.