



Political System and Political Parties of Pakistan

Political System of Pakistan

A political system is a system through which a state is run. As we have already discussed 1956, 1962 and 1973 constitution of Pakistan. So basically, these constitutions are defining political system of Pakistan. In 1956 constitution, we had a unicameral legislation or parliamentary system. Unicameral means there is one house of parliament and parliamentary system means that executive of the country (i.e. Prime minister) is from the members of parliament. In parliamentary system all members of cabinet will also be from parliament members. Then 1962 constitution which was given by President Ayub Khan, was basically unicameral presidential system. There was only one house of the parliament. The form of the government was presidential form of government. There was an electoral college that was elected by the people and in return the electoral college elects the president. In presidential system, president is the chief executive of country while in parliamentary system prime minister is the chief executive of the country. In presidential system, president has liberty to choose members of cabinet and those members should not be necessarily members of parliament.

1973 constitution was bicameral- parliamentary. Bicameral means one senate and one national assembly. In senate all provinces were given equal representation. While in national assembly (lower house) representation was given based on population. This constitution was parliamentary system which means executive of country and cabinet members should be from members of parliament. In parliamentary system, we have a multi-party system in Pakistan. We have different provinces and the presidential system is implemented in different provinces but there is unicameral legislation and there is no upper house and he can be elected from the leader of the political party by the people and part of that house of provincial, again the same process is repeated and becomes the chief minister and selects members from provincial assembly and then he makes his own cabinet.

Defining a Political Party

A political party is defined as an organized group of people with at least roughly similar political aims and opinions, that seeks to influence public policy by getting its

candidates elected to public office.

These political parties contest the elections by the people. Every political party have different aims and prospects e.g. voting for religion, voting for equality, voting for justice. These aims, and prospects must be aligned with the objective of people which haven't been fulfilled or people which are aspiring for it. Than these political parties devise their manifesto and slogan than ask people to vote them. When these political parties are implemented than they go to the public offices to implement their manifesto of whatever they promise with the people.

Another definition of political party describes political party as: An organization of people who share the same views about the way power should be used in a country or society (through government, policy-making, etc.).

Political parties usually say that power shall be used in a very humble manner not in an editorial manner. Political parties go to ground and they ask people that how power should be exercised and when they come to know about the opinions of the people than they devise their own aims of whatever the people are asking to do so.

Political Parties in Pakistan

There are around 90 fringe political parties. Fringe parties are basically small parties which are confined to one district only. Around a dozen mainstream political parties are there in the country. Such as PMLN, Baluchistan National Party, PTI etc. These political parties and fringe political parties can combine with each other to increase their vote bank. These parties primarily try to find a breathing space and survive.

However, keeping in view the diverse issues in the country; Pakistan is considered as one of the fertile states for political parties. There are many issues in Pakistan and each political party claims to resolve different issues. So political parties have a lot to do in the country. Political parties in Pakistan have remained underdeveloped due to authoritarian political culture, imbalance between powerful state and weak political institutions. In west, there is no authoritarian political culture but in Pakistan usually parties are made by elites. So authoritarian political culture is more common in Pakistan. In west political parties there is no authoritarian political culture. A politician whom we elect or public elects consider to be as a very humble person because he hasn't seen the political approach by his predecessor but when we see this authoritarian culture in Pakistan those parties are made by elites in the country. If you take

example of these political parties (NAWAB's). They were in the habit that they would serve the masses. If we see about Pakistan people party It was made by a landlord which was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the problem in this scenario that there were no any internal democracies in the party, then because if you introduce internal democracy in the party than it is a sort of procedure that persons from elite class would be voted out.

Except the right wing religious political parties, the majority of political parties in Pakistan are least interested in any form of political education of the masses. This is the major dilemma as political parties as they do not educate masses. As uneducated masses would vote for the wrong person who will not be eligible for this position. The followers of most of the political parties mainly rely on the speeches of their leaders in public gatherings or on the views of their leaders disseminated through print and electronic media. The tradition of study circles, position papers by the leaders and the workers prevailed in the late 1960's however, it vanished with the passage of time.

Historical Reasons of Weak Political Parties

Within the colonial state structure that Pakistan inherited, the state institutions, like the military and civil bureaucracy, were far more developed than the political institutions such as legislatures and political parties.

The All-India Muslim League, to whom power was transferred in August 1947, was unable to transform itself from a movement to a genuine national political party. It was and remains an elitist organization and does not practice internal democracy.

Islamic Politics

Since Pakistan's inception, the combination of self-interest and Islamic politics has complicated the problem of building a political organization with broad responsibilities to the larger society. Efforts by other parties to contest the power of the League were frustrated and the opposition politicians were often physically prevented from appealing to their constituents and by dubbing them unpatriotic.

The League governments used repressive measures against them. The Red Shirt (NWFP), Majlis-i-Ahrar, Jama'at-i-Islami, and the Pakistan National Congress were the targets at different.