

Salient Features of the Constitutions of Pakistan

1956, 1962, and 1973

1956 Constitution

- First constitution of Pakistan
- Parliamentary system of government
- Prime Minister as chief executive, President ceremonial
- Unicameral legislature (National Assembly)
- Declared Pakistan an Islamic Republic
- Fundamental Rights included
- Islamic provisions: Objectives Resolution as preamble, no law against Quran and Sunnah
- Abolished parity between East and West Pakistan

1962 Constitution

- Introduced by Ayub Khan
- Presidential form of government
- President both head of state and government
- Unicameral legislature (National Assembly)
- Basic Democracies system for indirect elections
- Fundamental Rights restored later through amendments
- Reduced role of religion initially (Islamic provisions restored in 1963)
- Strong central government, limited provincial autonomy

1973 Constitution

- Consensus-based, still in force (with amendments)
- Federal parliamentary system
- Prime Minister as chief executive, President ceremonial
- Bicameral legislature (National Assembly & Senate)
- Wide range of Fundamental Rights guaranteed
- Strong Islamic provisions: State religion Islam, no law against Quran & Sunnah
- Provincial autonomy enhanced
- Objectives Resolution made substantive part of Constitution (1985)

Comparative Overview

- 1956: Parliamentary, Islamic Republic, Unicameral legislature
- 1962: Presidential, Basic Democracies, Strong Center, Unicameral legislature
- 1973: Federal Parliamentary, Bicameral legislature, Consensus-based, Islamic provisions strengthened