Polity & Governance · GS - II

Question:

"The growth of cabinet system has practically resulted in the marginalisation of the parliamentary supremacy." Elucidate.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2024	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

parliamentary supremacy, cabinet system, executive dominance, party majority, collective responsibility, anti-defection, delegated legislation, ordinance power, parliamentary scrutiny, committees

Model Answer

Introduction

India follows a parliamentary system in which the Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha. However, the evolution of a strong cabinet system, particularly under majority governments, can reduce the effective autonomy of Parliament.

How Cabinet Dominance Marginalises Parliament

1. Party majority: A government commanding a stable majority can generally secure legislative approval for its proposals.

2. Party discipline: The anti-defection framework restricts legislators' freedom to vote independently on many matters.

3. Control over legislative agenda: Government determines much of Parliament's business, leaving limited time for private members' initiatives.

4. Delegated legislation: Increasing rule-making powers allow the executive to formulate substantial details outside direct parliamentary debate.

5. Ordinance-making: The executive can temporarily legislate through ordinances when Parliament is not in session.

6. Limited scrutiny: Disruptions, shortened debates and inadequate committee examination can weaken legislative oversight.

Conclusion

The cabinet system does not constitutionally subordinate Parliament; the Council of Ministers remains accountable to it. However, **executive dominance within a disciplined majority can reduce effective parliamentary scrutiny**. Strong committees, meaningful debate, greater transparency and effective opposition are therefore essential for maintaining parliamentary accountability.

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