

1. GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

In a parliamentary system of governance, the office of the Prime Minister holds pivotal importance which is second to none. He is 'moon among the lesser stars' and 'a sun around which planets revolve'. His relationship with the council of ministers is like that of a captain of a ship and its passengers. They sink and swim together.

The selection of the names and the distribution of portfolios among the ministers is a matter of exclusive concern of the Prime Minister and the appointment of the ministers by the President is just like the observance of a technical formality. Like the British Prime Minister, Indian Prime Minister enjoys the prerogative of selecting his colleagues by virtue of his strong position in the party commanding comfortable majority in the popular chamber of the Parliament. However, his selection and allocation of portfolios to ministers is circumscribed by various political, regional and partisan considerations. In case of a coalition government, such power of the Prime Minister is restricted by the tugs and pulls of intra-party politics.

Upon the advice of the PM, the President can dismiss a minister. He also can ask a minister to resign. The PM presides over the meeting of council of ministers and influences its decisions. He guides, directs, controls and coordinates the activities of all the ministers. Upon his resignation and death, the entire ministry resigns. In the words of Ambedkar, the PM is the keystone of the cabinet arch and unless and until we create that office and endow that office with a statutory authority to nominate and dismiss ministers, there can be no collective responsibility on the lines of the Westminster model.