MONARCHY–ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

ORIGIN OF MONARCHY IN ENGLAND
Around 600 A.D., Anglo-Saxon people of Denmark occupied most of England and established Monarchy in England. Later, Norman king William occupied England in 1066 and established despotic rule. In 1215, Barons revolted against King John and forced the king to sign a Charter which became famous as ‘Magna Carta’. After signing of Magna Carta, the decline of the powers of King started. However, The Tudor and the Stuart Kings once again established their despotism. People did not tolerate the despotism of the Kings for long and there was a revolt against it in 1688 which is also known as Glorious Revolution. This revolution led to the end of Unlimited Monarchy forever and the era of Limited Monarchy began.
After the Glorious revolution (1688), it was decided that Parliament could make the rules regarding succession to the throne. By the Act of settlement (1701), it was decided that the throne of England will be hereditary and it will remain with the family of Queen Sophia of Honovar, till the persons belonging to this family would follow the Protestant religion….. In case, there are no successors following the Protestant religion, then Parliament could give the throne of England to another family.
Like ordinary man, king purchase, sell and own private property.
The king has to pay tax on his private property.
The king can not be charged before a court.
He can refuse to divulge information and answer queries which he considers to be against national interest.
MEANING AND DEFINITION OF CROWN

Crown is not a head-gear which the king or the Queen wears. Crown is that supreme institution which exercises supreme powers in England.

Acc to Pro. Munro, “The crown is an artificial and juristic person”

Acc to Prof. Finer, “The Crown is a cap over all those effective centres of political power—King, Ministers and Parliament.”
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE KING AND THE CROWN

1. King is an individual, Crown is an institution
2. King is mortal, Crown is Immortal.
3. King is a body, but Crown is abstract.
4. King is a part of crown
5. King is a nominal head, Crown is a real Head.
POWERS OF THE KING

1. EXECUTIVE POWERS

King is the chief executive head of the state and he exercise the following executive powers—

(i) POWERS RELATED TO COUNCIL OF MINISTERS— appoints the Prime-ministers and on his recommendation, appoints other ministers.

(ii) ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION— King is responsible for the proper conduct of the administration of the country.

(iii) CONTROL OVER APPOINTMENTS— High executives, functionaries and administrative officers are appointment by the king and removed from office by him.

(iv) MILITARY POWERS— King is the commander-in-chief of the forces in England.

(v) DIPLOMATIC POWERS:— He appoints ambassadors and high commissioners in other countries and accepts credentials of the ambassadors from the other countries.

(vi) PROTECTION OF PUBLIC PROPERTY:— He is the owner of all public property.

(vii) TO ISSUE EXECUTIVE ORDERS:— He issues the necessary executive orders.

(viii) INCHARGE OF DOMINIONS:— King is the head of the dominions and their administration is carried on under his supervision.
2. LEGISLATIVE POWERS

- (i) The King convenes the sessions of Parliament from time to time, extends the session and prorogues them.
- (ii) Every year and the first session after new elections, the Parliament is inaugurated with the “Speech from the Throne” of the king.
- (iii) King gives approval over the Bills passed by the Parliament.
- (iv) King can dissolve the House of Commons even before the expiry of its term in case of need and announcement of new elections.
- (v) Peers (the members of the House of Lords) are appointed by the king.
JUDICIAL POWERS

- (i) King appoints the judges of supreme Court.
- (ii) Lord Chancellor who is a member of the cabinet and supervises the whole administration of justice on the behalf of the king is appointed by the king.
- (iii) King can grant pardon for the punishment awarded by the courts.
- (iv) King hears appeals against the decisions of the high courts of Dominions and colonies.
4. ECCLESIASTICAL POWERS

(i) King is the defender of the Faith and is the head of the Church of England.

(ii) King appoints Arch bishops, Bishops, Dean and canons.

(iii) Appeal regarding ecclesiastical matters is filed before the King.

5. KING AS FOUNTAIN OF HONOUR

King is also the fountain of justice and confers the titles of Peer, Knight, Baron etc. Persons having achieved distinction in the fields of science, literature, art and social service are granted titles by the King.
1. In the appointment of the Prime-minister and cabinet ministers of British Parliament
2. King’s role in the dissolution of the House of Commons.
3. King as a guardian of the constitution.
4. King as peace-maker among different Factions
5. King convenes meeting of different political parties to solve National crisis.
6. King as an advisor—king has—
   (i) Right to advise
   (ii) Right to warn.
   (iii) Right to Encourage.
7. King is considered as Social head.
8. He is symbol of unity
9. Integral Part of the British Constitutional system.
THE KING DOES NO WRONG

- King is above the law
- King is nominal Head
- On every action of the king there are counter signature of the concerned minister
- ‘Speech from Throne’ is only read by the King
- Approval of the king over the list of high appointments is just a formality.
- No minister can evade responsibility by saying that it was king’s Action.
JUSTIFICATION OF MONARCHY IN ENGLAND

1. Conservative nature of the British People.
2. Lack of Republican sentiments among the people of England
3. King is useful for Parliamentary type of Government
4. King as an Advisor, Critic and Friend.
5. King is the symbol of Unity of commonwealth Countries and British Dominions.
6. Deep rooted love for kingship
7. King is also the head of the state.
8. Monarchy is not hindrance in the growth of Democracy.
10. He is as mediator
11. He links Past with Present
12. Historical Reasons.
CONCLUSION

We can conclude that as the monarchy has become an integral part of the political and social life of England. The people of England believe that anything else can be the cause of their troubles but not the king.
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