**Question: Discuss the power and functions of Prime Minister of Great Britain.**

In British political system the Prime Minister is the most powerful person. According to Morley, “The Prime Minister is the key stone of the Cabinet arch.” Jennings said, “Key stone of the constitution.” In Great Britain, appointment of Prime Minister is not explained under constitution or law. Concept of Prime Minister has been evolved in Great Britain during those constitution changes, which spread over centuries. In fact, appointment of Prime Minister is due to convention. Now it is an admitted convention that British King/Queen invites a person, who commands majority in House of Commons, to form government. Thus, British King/Queen appoints Prime Minister from House of Common.

**Position of Prime Minister**

The Prime Minister is dominating a great position in the British Cabinet. This can be well explained under the following headings:-

1. **Formation of Government:** The primary functions of the Prime Minister are to form a government, and to choose and preside over the Cabinet. He gives advice to his ministerial colleagues on matters before they come to the Cabinet, and he is the main channel of communication between the Cabinet and the Sovereign, with whom he has a weekly audience. He advises the Sovereign on dissolution.
2. **Various Appointments:** No-doubt, actual appointments are made in most cases by British King/Queen, but selections are recommendations are made by the Prime Minister. British Prime Minister possesses power to advice British King/Queen for the Appointment of Ministers of Cabinet, Senior Civil and Military officers, Ambassadors and diplomatic representatives, Governor-Generals of dominions and Governors of Colonies, Peerages, knighthoods and other honors.
3. **Chairman of the Cabinet:** The Prime Minister He summons and presides over the meeting of Cabinet. The Prime Minister prepares the content of the meeting and any subject whether will be included or not in the content is decided by him and it is his own discretionary power. In the Cabinet meeting the Ministers are accountable to the Prime Minister for the performance of their own department. It is the duty of Prime Minister to resolve the disputes among the different Ministers. As the chairman of the Cabinet the Prime Minister can advice, encourage and warns the Minister. According to Lord Samuel, “Mac Donald was good chairman of Cabinet, carefully preparing his material beforehand, conciliating in manner and resourceful. In the conduct of Cabinet, when a knot or a tangle begins to appear, the important thing is for the Prime Minister not to let it be drawn tight, so long as it is kept loose it may still be unraveled. Mac Donald was skillful in such a situation and there were many.”
4. **As Leader of the House:** Being the leader of the majority party in the House of Commons, the Prime Minister assumes the role of leader of the House. As leader of the House, the Prime Minister enjoys privileges on the floor of the House.
5. **Cabinet decisions:** The Prime Minister sees that Cabinet decisions are carried out by the departments, although, as we have said, the extent to which he supervises the administration varies with different holders of the office. His contact with the affairs of the Foreign Office is often especially close. The Cabinet secretariat is under this control, and consults him in preparing the agenda. He communicates directly with the other Commonwealth Prime Ministers, and presides when they meet in this country.
6. **Advisor to British King/Queen:** Another important power of British Prime Minister is that he/she is chief advisor to British Monarch. He/she advices British King/Queen on critical matters like dissolution of Parliament.
7. **Link between the Queen and Cabinet:** British Prime Minister acts as a link between the Cabinet and the Queen. He keeps her informed about all important decisions of the Cabinet. The Prime Minister now invariable takes the office of First Lord of the Treasury, and occasionally some other office as well, such as that of Chancellor of the Exchequer (Gladstone), War office.
8. **As a National Leader:** His opinion on important national issues is paid due head. His statements and speeches are regarded as the most effective channels for molding public opinion. British Prime Minister possesses power to make national policy regarding national as well as foreign affairs. Therefore, he/she has control over national and foreign affairs.
9. **As a Leader of the Party:** The Prime Minister is the leader of the political party and as the leader of majority political party he is appointed as the Prime Minister by the King or Queen. Therefore, within and outside the Parliament as the leader political party he has a great influence on the party. It is the duty of Prime Minister to prepare the agenda and policies for the party. In the general election the people cast their in the name of Prime Minister. The Prime Minister as the leader of party is the chief co-coordinator between Queen and Cabinet. The Prime Minister always try to build confidence of the people for the party which he belongs.

**Conclusion**

To conclude, it can be stated that one of recent observation about constitutional role and powers of British Prime Minister is that growing role and powers of British Prime Minister are transforming present British political system into presidential system. The Prime Minister is the pivot of the whole system of the Government. Morley says, “Keystone of the Cabinet arch.”According to Jennings the Prime Minister is “a sun around which other planets revolve.” Again he says, “A Prime Minister wields an authority that a Roman Emperor might envy or dictator strive in vain to emulate.” After all Prime Minister plays a strong role in British political system. He is the actual head of the Government.