



1. Interest groups are part and parcel of a functioning democracy. Discuss.

Ans:

- Interest groups are organised to pursue specific interest in the political arena, operating primarily by lobbying the members of the legislative bodies.
- When certain groups feel that their interests are not being taken up, they may move to form an alternative party.
- Democracy is a form of government for the people, by the people and of the people. In this system interest groups are formed for specific interest.
- Interest groups are private organisation. They are formed to influence public policy.
- These are non political systems and their main goal are to take care of their own interest.
- Political parties are established organisations with the aim of achieving governmental power and using that power to pursue a specific programme. Different interest groups will work towards influencing political parties.
- These organisations are regarded as movements until they achieve recognition.
- The interest groups play a significant role in Indian democracy and they perform various important functions such as:

(a) Formation of Public Opinion: Using various forms of propaganda and communication, they mould public opinion. To get goodwill of public opinion and change in administrative system in their own favour they use T.V., radio, Email and various forms of social media, twitter and face book.

(b) Function at the time of Natural Disaster: These interest groups provide help during natural calamity like Himalayans Tsunami at Kedamath or earthquakes etc. By doing such social activities they get public attention and favour and they influence the government.

2. Read the snippets from the debates held in the Constituent Assembly. Identify the interest groups. Discuss what kind of interest groups exist in contemporary India. How do they function?

Ans. Snippets from the debates

K.T. Shah said that the right to use full employment could and should be made real by a categoric obligation on the part of the state to provide useful work to every citizen who was able and qualified.

B. Das spoke against classifying the functions of the government as justiciable and non-justiciable. "I think it is the primary duty of Government to remove hunger and render social justice to every citizen and to secure social security...". The teeming millions do not find any hope that the Union Constitution... will ensure them freedom from hunger, will secure them social justice, will ensure them a minimum standard of living and a minimum standard of public health".

Ambedkar's answer was as follows:

"The Draft Constitution as framed only provides a machinery for the government of the country. It is not a controversy to install any particular party in power as has done in some countries. Who should be in power is left to be determined by the people, as it must

be, if the system is to satisfy the tests of democracy.

On land reform Nehru said, that social forces were such that law could not stand in the way of reforms, interesting reflection on the dynamic between the two. "If law and Parliament do not fit themselves into the changing picture, they cannot control the situation".

On the protection of the tribal people and their interests, leaders like Jaipal Singh were assured by Nehru in the following words during the Constituent Assembly „ debates: "It is our intention and our fixed desire to help them as possible; in as efficient a way as possible to protect them from possibly their rapacious neighbours occasionally and to make them advance".

Even as the Constituent Assembly adopted the title Directive Principles of State Policy to the rights that courts could not enforce, additional principles were added with unanimous acceptance. These included K. Santhanam's clause that the state shall organise village panchayats and endow them with the powers and authority to be effective units of local self government.

T.A. Ramalingam Chettiar added the clause for promotion of cottage industries on co-operative lines in rural areas. Veteran parliamentarian Thakurdas Bhargava added that the state should organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern lines. Interest groups are people outside the government who support the political parties to gain favours from them when they are in power. These are private organisation formed to influence public policy. They are non political groups whose main aim is to uphold their own interest. Political parties are not political parties. In India interest groups adopt two methods i.e. to influence the legislative committees and to help people at the time of natural calamity. In contemporary India ASSOCHAM, FICCI, Labour Unions, Student's union, Farmers union, women's organisations are example of pressure group and interest groups.

3. Create a 'phad' or a scroll with your own mandate when standing for school election. (This could be done in small group of 5, like a panchayat).

Ans: Being member of school Panchayat we will focus on following areas:

1. Panchayat members will try to inculcate self discipline among students. Being students we will function as a role model for rest of the students.
2. Being co-educational school, we will create an environment where girls get respect and security so that indirectly we will provide a solid base for a healthy society.
3. We will take care of developing a system, through which students develop habit of self study and special coaching for professional courses may be arranged in the school.
4. Panchayat will take care of special children and remedial teaching for them.
5. Panchayat will coordinate with the Principal and may function as a pressure group to take care of proper student-teacher ratio, admission policy of the school, proper uniform, distribution of mid-day- meal etc.
6. Panchayat will also coordinate with the Principal and Managing staff to take care of games, sports, co-curricular activities and use of technology in school education.

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