



Sambhav

Day 20

Question 1. What do you understand by the Pressure Groups? How are pressure groups highlighting the interest of the downtrodden people? (250 Words)

Question 2. The emergence of the regional parties brings local issues into the mainstream political discourse. Do you think the simultaneous election will provide voice to national discussion at the cost of local issue. Discuss. (250 Words)

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Approach / Explanation / Answer

Answer 1

Approach

- Introduce about the pressure groups.
- Mention the methods used by the Pressure Groups and role of pressure groups in highlighting the interest of the downtrodden people.
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

A pressure group is a group of people who are organized actively for promoting and defending their common interests. It attempts to bring a change in the public policy by exerting pressure on the government and acts as a liaison between the government and its members.

Body

- They are also called interest groups or vested groups and are different from the political parties because they neither contest elections nor try to capture political power.
 - They are concerned with specific programmes and issues and their activities are confined to the protection and promotion of the interests of their members by influencing the government.
 - To influence the govt pressure groups adopt various techniques and methods like lobbying, correspondence, publicity, propagandizing, petitioning, public debating, maintaining contacts with their legislators and so forth.
 - However, sometimes they resort to illegitimate and illegal methods like strikes, violent

- activities and corruption which damages public interest and administrative integrity.
- According to Odegard, pressure groups resort to three different techniques in securing their purposes, like:
 - **Electioneering:** They can try to place in public office persons who are favourably disposed towards the interests they seek to promote.
 - **Lobbying:** They can try to persuade public officers, whether they are initially favorably disposed toward them or not, to adopt and enforce the policies that they think will prove most beneficial to their interests.
 - **Propagandizing:** To influence public opinion and thereby gain an indirect influence over government.

Role of pressure groups in highlighting the interest of the downtrodden people: Pressure usually raised the voice of their group (mostly voiceless, powerless and downtrodden), to address the interest of their interest. Pressure groups carry out a range of functions including:

- **Representation:** Pressure groups provide a mouthpiece for groups and interests that are not adequately represented through the electoral process or by political parties. It provides an alternative to the formal representative process through functional representation.
- **Political Participation:** Pressure groups have become an increasingly important agent of political participation. Moreover, a range of pressure groups, mainly outsider groups, seek to exert influence precisely by mobilizing popular support through activities such as petitions, marches, demonstrations and other forms of political protest. Such forms of political participation have been particularly attractive to young people.
- **Education:** Many pressure groups operate largely through their ability to communicate with the public and raise political consciousness. An emphasis is therefore placed on cultivating expert authority.
- **Policy Formulation:** The pressure groups are a vital source of information and advice to the governments. Many groups are therefore regularly consulted in the process of policy formulation, with government policy increasingly being developed through policy networks. An example of such group is Observer Research Foundation (ORF), which works on policy issues primarily related to foreign affairs.
- **Policy Implementation:** The role of some pressure groups extends beyond trying to shape the content of public policy to playing a role in putting the policy into practice.

Way Forward

- Pressure groups are now considered as an indispensable and helpful element of the democratic process. The society has become highly complex, and individuals cannot pursue their interests on their own. They need the support of other fellow beings in order to gain greater bargaining power; this gives rise to pressure groups based on common interests.
- Thus, it is very essential for the government to consult these organised groups at the time of policy formulation and implementation.

Answer 2

Approach

- Introduce by writing about Regional Parties.
- Discuss how regional parties bring local issues into the mainstream political discourse.
- Discuss the pro and cons about the Simultaneous Election.
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

- The presence of a large number of regional parties is an important feature of the Indian Political System. They have come to play a vital role in Indian politics at all levels, i.e., local, state and national.

Body

Characteristics of regional parties which brought local issues into the mainstream political discourse:

- It generally operates within a particular state or specific region, like **Jharkhand Mukti Morcha** operates in **Jharkhand**.
- It **articulates regional interests** and identifies itself with a particular cultural, religious, linguistic or ethnic group, like **DMK having more vocal about the interest of Tamilians**.
- It is **primarily concerned** with exploiting the local resources of discontent or **preserving a variety of primordial demands based on language, caste or community or region** like **Shiv Sena** is advocating interest of Marathi people (**Son of Soil**).
- It **focuses on local or regional issues** and aims to capture political power at the state level.
- Economic disparities and regional imbalances in the development, E.g., **YSR Congress Party of Andhra Pradesh (A.P.) is demanding special status for A.P.**
- Desire of certain sections or areas to maintain separate identity due to historical factors, E.g., **Naga People's Front (NPF) in Nagaland**.

In current election system the election for state legislature and union parliament usually held at different time. It usually cost huge men and money investment for the election system.

The structuring the Indian election cycle in a manner so that elections to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies are synchronized together so that the election to both can be held within a given span of time.

There are several advantages in the simultaneous election system and these advantages may compensate the interest of the regional people, like:

- A citizen can distinguish between national and regional issues and vote simultaneously for different parties as per their interest.
 - It's an example in India - **in 2018 Rajasthan Legislative Assembly election people voted to Congress (NCP) but in 2019 General election BJP had largest Member of Parliaments (MPs)**, same is true for Delhi.
 - The **election Cycle of Britain and USA** is also a practical example of simultaneous election.
- From first general election in 1952 all the election were held on simultaneous basis.
- The Election cycle/system of the local bodies is perfect example for a continuity of single election in a state irrespective of by-poll or mid-term election.
- Ensure timely implementation of the government policies and also ensure that the administrative machinery is engaged in developmental activities rather than electioneering.
- Solve the problem of governance on the part of the politicians who are ruling.
- Provide more time to all the stakeholders i.e., political parties, Election Commission of India (ECI), paramilitary forces, civilians for the preparation of elections once in five years.
- Help keep a check on the poll expenses, party expenses, etc. and also save public money and reduce the burden on administrative setup and security forces.

In spite of several advantage of the simultaneous election, there are various factors which may harm regional interest like:

- **Against Democracy:** It tries to force an artificial cycle of elections and restrict the choice for voters.
- **Impact on Voter Behaviour:** Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), argue that voter behaviour would end up voting on national issues even for State elections and increase the probability of victory for larger national parties thereby marginalizing regional parties.
- **Election Issues:** State and national elections are often fought on different sets of issues — and in simultaneous elections, voters may end up privileging one set over the other in ways they might not have done otherwise.
- **Neglecting people's mandate:** Arbitrarily curtailing or extending the term of existing legislatures to bring their election dates in line with the due date for the rest of the country. It may undermine democracy and federalism.

Way Forward

- Elections are held at different places every few months and it hampers the developmental work and leads to policy paralysis. Therefore, it's a must to have a deep study and deliberation on the idea in order to prevent the impact of the model code of conduct on development works every few months.
- There needs to be a consensus on whether the country needs one nation, one poll or not. All political parties should at least cooperate in debating this issue, once the debate starts, the public opinion can be taken into consideration.

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