

**B.A.(Hons.) Political Science, Sem.-II
Topic-Pressure Groups**

Introduction

Along with political parties ; in present day societies in political systems, pressure groups play a very significant role. These groups are found in every political system and work outside the regular party system. These are active not only during election times but even before and after that. A group of men and women who do not appeal to the electorate on the basis of any programme but who are concerned with specific issues, is called pressure groups.

Definitions

- According to Richard Watson," An interest group is any collection of individuals with a shared attitude on some matter who make certain claims on demands on others in society with respect to that matter."
- According to Francis G.Castles," Any group attempting to bring about political change ,whether through government activity or not and which is not a political party in the sense of being represented ,at that particular time in the legislative body."
- According to Finer,"Pressure groups are the anonymous empire."
- According to Alan R.Ball," A pressure group has been defined as organised aggregate which seeks to influence the context of governmental decision without attempting to place its members in formal governmental capacities-

Features of Pressure Group

- Limited objective
- Limited membership
- Use of constitutional and unconstitutional method
- Outside of Government and Legislature
- Organised and inorganised form
- Non-partisan character
- Interests

Causes of the rise of the pressure groups

- Development of Industrial civilization
- Growth in the functions of the state
- System of territorial representation
- Practical nature of Democracy
- Practical form of political parties
- Increase in the number of professional politicians

Basis for the formation of pressure groups

- Class groups
- Regional groups
- Language groups
- Religious groups
- Caste groups

Types of Pressure Groups:

1-Communal Group

- customary group
- institutional group

2-Federal Group

- protective group
- promotional group

Classification by Almond-

- Institutional
- Non-institutional
- Anomic
- Associational

3-Anomic Group

Techniques of pressure groups

- Creation of favourable public opinion
- Influence on political parties
- Lobbying
- Propaganda
- By providing high jobs
- By arranging strikes etc.
- Providing of information to government
- Consultants on government

Role of the Pressure Groups

- Pressure groups function as agents
- Role of pressure groups in election is indirect
- The basic function of each pressure group is to secure its interests
- To save the people from the despotism of government
- Efforts in influence the policies and laws of the government

- To coordinate among the different classes of the society
- Interference in the selection of candidates for the election
- Pressure groups play an important role in making the public opinion