

The Story of Indian Democracy

NCERT TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

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:

- Panchayat members will try to inculcate self discipline among students. Being students we will function as a role model for rest of the students.
- 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.
- 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.
- Panchayat will take care of special children and remedial teaching for them.
- 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.
- 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.

4. Have you heard of Bal Panchayats and Mazdoor Kissan Sanghathan? If not, find out and write a note about them in about 200 words.

Ans. Bal Panchayat: My school follows a prefectural system. The school has four houses. From each house, the house masters and the house children elect five prefects on the basis of their academic performances, leadership traits and their antecedents regarding contribution for the curricular and co-curricular activities of the house. The principal, teachers and 20 prefects elect head boy of the school.

The head boy functions as a prototype of the school. He/she is responsible for discipline, school environment, curricular and co-curricular activities, social interaction particularly with the other schools and is accountable for student's activities in the school.

The head boy particularly coordinates with the principal, headmasters, and house masters with the help of 20 prefects and helps in proper functioning of school buses, maintenance of assets, school fields, taking care of school property and by and large school discipline.

Mazdoor Sanghathan: In 1920, first All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) was established.

- It was initiated by the congress but in 1929 hijacked by the communists.

- Indian Trade Union Congress (INTUC) untraced by the congress, Hind Mazdoor Sabha organised by the socialists and Bhartiya Mazdoor Sabha linked with Bhartiya Janta Party earlier Jan Sangh.

These trade unions played a very significant role in the recruitment, wage policy, functioning, living conditions, hire and fire policy and by and large developing a political and social awareness among the workers.

Kissan Sanghathan: India is a country of villages. Even today 75% of Indian population is living in villages and depends on agriculture.

Earlier this population was not politically aware with their rights. They were very much traditional and attached to their customs and rituals but due to congress and communists now the kissans of India are politically very mature, are aware with their strength and providing strong base to Indian democracy. This is very much proved in 2014 election when these peasants voted for a stable government breaking the caste, class and region bondings.

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel took initiatives in 1936 congress session at Lucknow and All India Kissan Sabha was established but due to caste and class conflict it could not function. Later CPI activists took command of Kissan Sabha. Many Kissan organisations emerged in India after independence. The socialists established Hind Kissan Panchayat and instead the Kissan Sabha by Marxist. The communist party of India (Marxists) established revolutionary peasants convention in 1967. This organisation gave lead to Naxalbari movement in West Bengal.

- Due to the initiative of Shri Raj Narain and Choudhary Charan Singh in 1978 formed the All India Kissan Kamgar Sammelan. Many politicians and farmers like Shri Mahinder Singh Tikait tried to organise the Kissans of India but even now this peasant group of India is not a well organised pressure group.

5. The 73rd amendment has been monumental in bringing a voice to the people in the Villages. Discuss.

Ans. The 73rd amendment has been monumental in bringing a voice to the people in the villages because this amendment is related to the directive principles of the state policy and panchayati raj.

The amendment is based on the principle of power of the people and provides constitutional guarantee to the Panchayats.

Main features of the Act:

- Recognition to Panchayats, as institutions of self government.

- Panchayat's power and responsibilities to prepare a plan for economic development and

social justice.

- Establishment of uniform 3 tier system of strong Panchayats at village, block and district levels for all states having a population of over 20 lakhs.
- The Act provides guidelines for the structure powers and functions, finance and elections and reservation of seats for the weaker sections of the given area.

Importance of the Act:

- It was a revolutionary step towards establishing grassroot democracy.
- All the states have passed legislation on the basis of guidelines and provision of the amendments.
- Because of this act Panchayati Raj System at grassroot level became a reality.

6. Write an essay on the ways that the Indian Constitution touches peoples' everyday life, drawing upon different examples.

Ans. • Indian constitution has given a democratic system to all of us.

• Democracy is a government for the people, of the people and by the people. It is not limited to political freedom or economic and social justice. It is also about equal rights to all irrespective of caste, creed, race and gender.

• Indian constitution has established Secularism. We have respect for all the religions and all the Indians have fundamental right to have faith in their own religion. Indian constitution provides equal rights to minority communities by extending friendly relationship and all sort of support system to them.

• India is a welfare state and a Socialist patronise society. It is our duty to protect public and national property. We all have equal opportunities to make use of resources and put our best effort for economic development.

• Indian constitution provides social, political and economic justice and equality to all citizens of India. Therefore it is our duty to support the government to participate in activity of government programmes like population control, smallpox, Malaria or Pulse Polio Programmes. Food Security Bill, Right to Information (RTI), Right to Education (RTE) and efforts for women empowerment are few major efforts made by the government to strengthen Indian democracy.