

POLITICAL PARTIES AND PRESSURE GROUPS

L.No	Title of Lesson	SKILLS	Activity
21	Political Parties and Pressure Groups	Self Awareness, Empathy, International Relationship, Problem Solving, Effective Communication, Team Spirit	To Understand the Meaning, Need and Importance of Political Parties and Pressure Groups

Meaning

A political party is an organised group of citizens who have similar political views and who by acting as a unit try to control the government to translate their policies into practice.

A political party is an organised and large group of people with common goals and common principles. Its main aim is to get the political power and form the government.

Functions

- Parties nominate candidates to contest elections.
- They campaign to get support for their party candidates, policies and programmes.
- Form the government if in majority and act as opposition if not in majority.

Party System in India

In India we have a multiparty system. It means there are more than two political parties. There are countries where only one party system or two party system exists.

In India, there are two types of political parties :

- **The National Political Parties** have influence over most part of India. The status of National Parties is given to those parties which obtains 4% of the vote polled in at least four states. Indian National Congress, Bhartiya Janta Party, Communist Party of India, Communist Party of India(Marxist) ; Bahujan Samaj Party, Nationalist Congress Party are the National Parties.
- **The Regional Political Parties:** Such parties are also recognised by the Election Commission of India. Some of the regional parties in India are Forward Bloc (West Bengal); All India Anna Dravida Mannetra Kazhagam (Tamil Nadu), National Conference (Jammu and Kashmir), Rashtriya Janta Dal (Bihar), Samajvadi Party (Uttar Pradesh), Shiromani Akali Dal (Punjab) etc.

Policies of different Political Parties

- **The Indian National Congress:** The Congress Party is committed to democracy, secularism and socialism. It permits a measure of privatisation, liberalisation and globalisation; works for the welfare of the society, seeks to strengthen grass roots institutions of the local level.
- **Bhartiya Janta Party:** It stands for nationalism and national integration, democracy, positive secularism, Gandhian socialism and value based politics.
- **The Communist Party of India and the CPI (M)** stand for socialism, socialist ownership of industries, agrarian reforms, rural upliftment and self reliant economy.
- **Bahujan Samaj Party:** Formed in 1984 is a party of deprived Sections of the Indian Society, especially the poor, the landless, the unemployed and the Dalits. It draws inspiration from the teachings of Sahuji Maharaj, Jyotiba Phule, Ramaswami Naicker and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

Pressure Groups and Interest Groups

Interest Groups are organised groups of people who seek to attain protect and promote their interests for which they are united.

Generally, interest groups and pressure groups are considered synonyms but they are not so. A pressure group is an interest group which exerts pressure on the government to get their interest fulfilled. Some of the pressure groups are : Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Sanatan Dharam Sabha, Brahmin Sabha, Kissan Sabha, All Indian Trade Union. Unlike pressure groups or interest groups, political parties contest elections to seek power to spread their political ideologies.

Evaluate Yourself

- Q. Define a political party. Name any two national and two regional political parties of India.
- Q. Why are political parties needed?
- Q. How does a political party differ from a pressure group or an interest group?