

**1. The executive has the power to issue ordinances in exceptional circumstances. A series of such ordinances have been issued during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Can you recall the most important ones?**

**Demand of the question:**

It expects students to write about ordinance making power of the executive i.e. President (Union) & Governor (State) in specific. It also expects students to recall & write about the most important ordinances promulgated by the President during the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic.

**Introduction:**

The executive has been empowered to promulgate Ordinances based on the advice of the central government & state government under Article 123 & 213 respectively of the Constitution. As Indian Parliament shut down due to ongoing COVID-19 crisis, President of India promulgated number of ordinances to deal with the situation during this period; same practise has been followed by Governors of various states.

**Body:**

Conditions to issue Ordinances:

- Executive can promulgate an ordinance only when both the Houses of Parliament/Legislature are not in session or when either of the two Houses of Parliament/Legislature is not in session. The second provision implies that an ordinance can also be promulgated by the president only when one House is in session because a law can be passed by both the Houses and not by one House alone.
- An ordinance issued by him/ her has the same force and effect as an act of the Parliament/Legislature.

Promulgation of ordinances during COVID-19:

Since the start of lockdown period till today, a series of Ordinances are promulgated by the President; important ones with their respective importance and impact are mentioned below:

Taxation and other Laws (Relaxation of Certain Provisions) Ordinance, 2020:

- Taxation and other Laws (Relaxation of Certain Provisions) Ordinance, 2020 has been promulgated to provide relaxation in the provisions of certain Acts including extension of time limit, in the taxation and other laws.
- A special fund “Prime Minister’s Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund (PM CARES FUND)” has been set up for providing relief to the persons affected from the outbreak of Corona virus.
- Keeping in view the challenges faced by taxpayers in meeting the compliance requirements under such conditions these kind of relaxations proved to be helpful to reduce taxpayers hardships.

Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020:

- 30% reduction in salaries payable to MPs to meet exigencies of COVID 19.

- It in turn led to divert the expenditure from spending on salary to spending on healthcare infrastructure.

Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020:

- To protect healthcare service personnel and property including their living/working premises against violence during epidemics.
- The Ordinance provides for making such acts of violence cognizable and non-bailable offences and for compensation for injury to healthcare service personnel or for causing damage or loss to the property in which healthcare service personnel may have a direct interest in relation to the epidemic.
- This Ordinance issued with hope that it will infuse confidence in the community of healthcare service personnel so that they can continue to contribute to serving mankind through their noble professions in the extremely difficult circumstances being witnessed during the current Covid-19 outbreak.

Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020:

- It was promulgated to make sure the sufficient availability & affordability of essential commodities to people during the COVID-19.

Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020:

- The Ordinance amends the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 as applicable to Cooperative Banks.
- Ordinance seeks to protect the interests of depositors and strengthen cooperative banks by improving governance and oversight by extending powers already available with RBI in respect of other banks to Co-operative Banks as well for sound banking regulation, and by ensuring professionalism and enabling their access to capital.

But, Ordinance making power of executive comes in contradiction with the principle of Participative democracy. In Participative democracy representative come together, debate, discuss and then form a law for the welfare of people.

- Our Constitution does not prohibit meetings that may require maintenance of physical distancing or remote meetings.
- It states that the President may summon Parliament “to meet at such time and place as he thinks fit”.
- Rules of procedure of house specify that Speaker has the power to decide how to organize sittings. Speaker may permit meetings to be held outside. Thus, there is no prior parliamentary action required to permit meetings through video-conferencing.

### **Conclusion:**

Though the Ordinance making power of executive comes in contradiction with the Participative democracy it seems suitable when it comes to emergency situations like COVID-19. Hence, In a democracy like India, Ordinances play a pivotal role but it should be taken care of that their nature should not turn harmful to democracy.

**2. . How are the activities pursued by pressure groups different from lobbying? Explain. What role do pressure groups play in the polity? Discuss.**

**Demand of the question:**

It expects student to write about the difference in activities pursued by pressure groups and lobbying. The Question also expects student to discuss the role pressure groups play in polity.

**Introduction:**

In general terms a pressure group is a group of people who are organised actively for promoting and defending their common interest. Whereas the term 'lobbying' means any attempt to influence the decision-making of a government or opposition representative in the exercise of their official functions on behalf of a third party, for a fee or other reward.

**Body:**

Difference in Activities pursued by Pressure groups & Lobbying:

- The pressure groups are also called interest groups or vested groups. 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.
- Whereas Lobbying activity may corresponds to interest of small section of people's interest, company or organisation.
- The pressure groups influence the policymaking and policy implementation in the government through legal and legitimate methods like correspondence, publicity, propagandising, petitioning, public debating, informing legislators and so forth.
- Whereas lobbying activities emerged as more of sophisticated activities where direct contact with legislator is established in terms of give and take.
- Sometimes Pressure groups resort to illegitimate and illegal methods like strikes, violent activities and corruption which damages public interest and administrative integrity.
- Lobbying activities are back stage activities where no one can surely say who the real people are involved in it. Depending on the type of polity in the country lobbying activities can be legal or illegal. As lobbying is legitimate in some of the states of USA whereas it has no legal basis in India.

Role of Pressure groups in Polity:

- Pressure groups in India represent interest of various sections of Indian society and economy such as Business groups, Trade unions, Professionals group, Students organisation, Agrarian groups etc.
- Interest Articulation: Pressure Groups bring the demands and needs of the people to the notice of the decision-makers.  
e.g. Narmada Bachao Aandolan.



- Agents of Political Socialisation: Pressure groups are agents of political socialisation in so far as they influence the orientations of the people towards the political process.
- Pressure Groups and Administration: Pressure Groups are actively involved with the process of administration. e.g. Student groups play a pivotal role in helping the administration for implementation of various schemes & scholarships for students.
- Pressure groups play a leading role in the formulation of public opinion.
- Pressure groups help in improving the quality of government. Consultation with affected groups is the rational way to make decisions in a free society.
- Pressure groups complement the work of opposition political parties by exposing the bad policies and wrongdoings of the government. Pressure groups thereby improve the accountability of decision makers to electorates.
- Pressure groups help to educate people, compile data and provide specific information to policy makers, thus they work as an informal source of information.

#### Shortcomings of Pressure Groups:

- Misuse of power: Instead of the pressure groups exerting influence on political process, they become tools and implements to sub serve political interests.
- Narrow selfish interests: Some Pressure Groups promote narrow selfish interest.
- Instability: Most pressure groups do not have autonomous existence; they are unstable and lack commitment, their loyalties shift with political situations which threatens general welfare. They many a times resort to unconstitutional means like violence. Naxalite movement started in 1967 in West Bengal is one such example.
- Propagating extremism: Pressure groups can allow too much influence over the government from unelected extremist minority groups, which in turn could lead to unpopular consequences.

#### Conclusion:

Democratic politics involves taking decisions through consultation, debate, discussions etc. Pressure groups can form good channel of communication between citizen and government but at the same time their vested interests if any needs to be checked so that true meaning of democracy can be fulfilled i.e. "participative democracy".

### 3. India's traditional medicine and way of life hold immense trade and brand potential. Do you agree? Substantiate your views.

#### Demand of the question:

It expects students to write about importance of India's traditional medicine and way of life. The question also expects students to analyse whether India's traditional medicine and way of life hold immense trade and brand potential or not with Substantiation.

#### Introduction:

India has a very rich and diverse treasure of traditional medicine and way of life. The COVID-19 crisis underscored the importance of India's traditional medicine and way of life, hence it holds immense trade & brand potential but at the same time there are some concerns regarding its contemporary life application.

#### Body:

Potential of India's Traditional medicine & way of life:

- India has the unique distinction of having six recognized systems of traditional medicine. They are-Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Yoga, Naturopathy and Homoeopathy.
- Synthetic drugs, surgeries have some adverse side effects with their own limitations.
- Traditional Indian medicines hold an advantage in this scenario as they pose no side effects and have a wide scale application because of its consonance with nature.  
e.g. Simple cure for Cough is mentioned in Ayurveda to chew the leaves of Tulsi along with Clove.
- Mostly traditional medicines are made from the plant extracts as they are naturally available so it proves to be more cost effective when compared with the costly allopathic medicines.
- As these medicines stand test of time for thousands of years there is no need to invest more money and time to do new research in it. So, it increase their trade value because of reduction in cost of research and development.  
e.g. Sushrut Samhita contains description of about 650 drugs and discusses different aspects related to other surgery.
- As this knowledge is available to all, A small household business can also be started in the form of MSME.
- The Indian pharmaceutical industry, currently stands at around Rs 1,00,000 crore industry. As per the estimation, the international market for traditional medicine is anticipated to acquire a market worth of US \$5 trillion by the end of year 2050.
- As per study conducted by Spain based "Natural Products and Chemistry Research Organisation" the extent of Indian exports of the medicinal and aromatic plants has increased from 2010 to almost double the value in the year

2014. Despite India's share in global export market of traditional medicine being 0.5%, the country still holds a great importance at global level and more so in the upcoming years.

- India's traditional way of life signifies living in consonance with nature. Where it focuses on habit building as per the nature's rule, which in turn helps to live a healthy life  
e.g. Waking up before Sun rise helps a person to get Vitamin D from early morning sun rays.
- Indian traditional way of life not just holds unique things about leading a healthy life style but they hold unique things about how to live in society, how to maintain relations, how to behave with the animals, birds etc.
- As Western civilisation is facing crisis in terms of family values, societal relations and health; projection of Indian way of life and promoting traditional medicine in trade has potential to be the "Brand of India".

However, there are some concerns regarding contemporary life application of traditional medicine and way of life:

- Traditional medicines though effective, they require more time than allopathic medicines to show its effect. So, in today's fast moving world waiting for a long period of time doesn't seem applicable.
- Also some of the traditional medicines need rare earth metals such as gold, silver etc, which may increase the cost of medicine.
- Traditional way of life doesn't suit current work culture of working late night, working for long hours, having meals at specific interval of time etc.
- Traditional medicines may not stand challenges posed by new diseases like currently the whole world is striving hard to find cure for COVID-19.

Government of India has taken steps to promote traditional medicine & way of life:

- With the proclamation at United Nations, world started celebrating 21 June as Yoga day. So, Yoga became a global brand.
- Government of India established Ministry of AYUSH in 2014 to ensure the development and propagation of AYUSH systems of medicine and health care.
- Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) is a pioneering Indian initiative to prevent exploitation and to protect Indian traditional knowledge from wrongful patents.

**Conclusion:**

It is a well-known fact that Indian traditional medicines & way of life played an important role in meeting the global health care needs and helped people to live a satisfactory life. Hence, it is visible that Indian traditional medicine and way of life holds an immense trade & brand potential but at the same time it needs to address the needs & challenges posed by modern lifestyle.