

**1. Do you see pressure groups as a genuine mechanism for ensuring broader and more participative democracy? Critically comment.**

**Approach-**

Candidates need to write about the pressure groups and critically comment whether they ensure the broader and participative democracy provide the both alternative sides.

**Introduction-**

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

**Body**

Ensuring broader and more participative democracy:

- Pressure groups are agents of political socialisation of different community and social groups they have role in strengthening the democracy.
- Pressure Groups bring the demands and needs of the people to the notice of the decision-makers. The process by which the claims of the people get crystallized and articulated is called interest articulation. e.g. Narmada Bachao Aandolan.
- Pressure groups play a vital role in the legislative process, not only as important structures of interest articulation, but also as active agencies engaged in lobbying with the legislators for securing desired laws or amendments in laws and policies of the government.
- Pressure groups play a leading role in the formulation of public opinion. Each pressure group is continuously engaged in evaluating all such laws, rules, decisions and policies which have a direct or indirect bearing on the interests it represents.
- For example with the gains made in mass media and education level, various experts and members of these farmers organizations during farm protest who constantly raise their issues and opinions through media, social media and interviews. Through this, they have tried to influence public opinions and government ideas.

Many times instead of serving a useful purpose in the political administrative process, they are reduced to work for narrow selfish interests and hampers the democratic process:

- Political motive: Instead of the pressure groups exerting influence on political process, they become tools and implements to subserve political interests.

- **Narrow selfish interests:** Some Pressure Groups promote narrow selfish interest. Unlike the pressure groups in the developed countries of the West, where these are invariably organised to safeguard economic, social, cultural interests, etc. In India these groups are organised around religious, regional and ethnic issues. Many a time factors of caste and religion eclipse the socioeconomic interests.
- **Misuse of power:** Instead of the pressure groups exerting influence on political process, they become tools and implements to sub serve political interests.
- **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. They many a times resort to unconstitutional means like violence. For example recent Republic Day-Red Fort incidents in Delhi.

### **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”.

- 2. It is argued that having a large number of ministries good impedes governance. But it can also be argued that it brings in efficiency by decentralising decisions and accountability? What do you think? Share your views and arguments.**

### **Approach**

Students are expected to write about the different government model in the introduction then simply highlight the both side of arguments also give the suggestion to be followed by large ministry setup for good governance.

### **Introduction**

Minimum government, maximum governance refers to reducing the role of government where it is in excess (minimum government) and umaking a citizen friendly and accountable government (maximum governance). The objective is to make government efficient and inclusive, reduce red-tapism thereby improving ease of doing business etc.

### **Body**

Large ministry decentralized governance:

- Reduces the burden on top executives: This reduces the time at the disposal of top executives who should concentrate on other important managerial functions.
- Facilitates diversification: A centralised enterprise with the concentration of authority at the top will find it difficult and complex to diversify its activities and start the additional lines of manufacture or distribution.
- Executive Development: Experts will get the opportunity to develop their talents by taking initiative which will also make them ready for managerial positions.
- Better control and supervision: As a result they have thorough knowledge of every assignment under their control and are in a position to make amendments and take corrective action.

Issues in having multiple ministries and departments:

- Problem of Co-Ordination: More ministry of authority creates problems of co-ordination as authority lies dispersed widely throughout the organisation. Currently Almost full strength (78/81) of the Council of Ministers with the recent reshuffle. Inefficiency as the work doesn't gets demarcated clearly. This results into lack of accountability. Lack of coordination results into delays and red-tapism.
- Require Qualified Personnel: Number of ministry becomes useless when there are no qualified and competent personnel. Duplication of work

- More Financial Burden: Decentralisation requires the employment of trained personnel to accept authority, it involves more financial burden and a small enterprise cannot afford to appoint experts in various fields. Wastage of public money. More Capital Expenditure than Revenue.
- Uniform policies not Followed: Hinders the process of service delivery to citizens.
- Overstaffing at the headquarters for most institutions and ministries, and shortage at the field level. Lack of mobility between different arms of the civil services.

#### Way forward

- Reduce the decision making layers to the minimum while allowing for faster means of information sharing/dissemination.
- Simplification of procedures.
- Leveraging technology to bring in transparency in public interface.
- Accountable methods for effective delivery of goods/services.
- A robust public grievance redress system.

#### Conclusion

The overall objective should be to reduce duplicity, streamline the work process, improve synergy, through exchange of information/data, between various departments within a ministry. The bureaucrats too need to work in tandem so that the coordinated efforts result into productive results. Departments and ministries with overlapping jurisdiction should be merged, but it should not be the only agenda.

**3. Lack of liberalisation in factor market has ailed the Indian economy for long. Elucidate.**

**Approach-**

Candidates need to elucidate/highlight how the lack of liberalisation in factor market has ailed the Indian economy for long.

**Introduction:**

Economic liberalization refers to the process of removing non-essential limitations and controls from a country's economy so that firms and enterprises can contribute to the economy to the fullest possible extent. However, it's crucial to remember that liberalization does not imply an unfettered economy. Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao and his then-Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh began the process of economic liberalization in India in 1991.

**Lack of liberalisation in factor market has ailed the Indian economy for long**

India still had a fixed exchange rate system in 1991, with the rupee tied to the value of a basket of key trading partners' currencies. India was pushed to the verge of bankruptcy. Dr. Manmohan Singh, India's then-finance minister, gave respond by introducing economic liberalization.

Lack of liberalisation had ailed the Indian economy for long in the following ways:

- Due to a lack of cash in the pre-liberalization period, executing expensive ventures were prohibited, but this was corrected in 1991, resulting in higher growth rates.
- After independence, India was under immense financial hardships. Especially in the 1950's and 1960's India saw a number of bank failures.
- In terms of financial markets, the bond market and FOREX market were limited.
- Based on government policies the nationalized banks gave enormous loans to small-scale industries and sectors such as agriculture.
- However, banks struggled to recover loans and non-performing loans increased. Labour productivity and efficiency came down.
- It was clear that the financial sector needed to be liberalized for a higher growth trajectory.
- India's looming balance-of-payments issue was adding fuel to the fire.

**The key goals of India's liberalization process can be summarised as follows:**

- To increase the private sector's contribution to India's economic development.
- To increase the amount of foreign direct investment into Indian companies.
- To encourage domestic rivalry in India's enterprises.

- To encourage international and private enterprises to expand in India to maximize the country's economic potential.
- To usher in a new era of globalization for India's economy.
- To regulate export and import, as well as to promote international trade.

**Conclusion:**

India's economic liberalization incorporated the characteristics mentioned above and, in general, removed various limitations to make the country more private sector friendly.

