Constituting an important component of the overall political processes in democratic societies, the pressure groups rival with the political parties in articulating the interest of the particular sections of the society irrespective of the shades of political party in power at a certain period of time. Distinguished from the political parties on the basis of their desistence from either seeking direct political power or putting forward a programme covering the whole range of governmental activities, the pressure groups appear to be the most remarkable non-political formations to safeguard and secure the interest of their members of by putting pressure or desist from adopting certain set of policies or programmers which have been found to be prejudicial to the interests of their members. Pressure groups also happen to be an indicator of the level of political maturity and accommodation in a political system, for only in a truly democratized country, would the pressure groups be allowed to have a say on the policy formulations of the government as against the norms of the authoritarian societies where the government is considered to be the sole giver of policy and programmers to the people who are bound to accept them without any murmur or pressure on the government to modify the same. The role of pressure groups in India is marked by a number of remarkable features distinct to the Indian political system.¹

In India, there are also wide variety of pressure groups which seek to influence the policies of the government like the Big business interest groups, trade unions, peasant organization, caste groups, religious groups.
Teachers and students associations, women’s organization professional groups tribal groups. MNCs, and NRI and so on they all play an important role in the decision making process of the government and powerful groups always have their demand met by the government in the form of major policy decisions.

Modern India, in its social-economic and political aspects, is a product of variety of influences, spread, over a long period of time. The political history alone does not give a complete picture of the society in India. More important than the political activities of a nation are its economic, social and cultural activities which really matter most and contribute a lot to the national building process. While the political activities are confined to a small number of educated elites, the economic and socio-cultural ones are associated with the people as a whole. The economic life in different regions of India in the 18th century prior to the advent of the British Rule, the broad impact of new forces on it, the decline of urban and rural cottage industries and handicrafts and also the indigenous mercantile and banking houses all over British India exercised powerful influence on Indian economy and polity. Similarly, the impact of the British land revenue policy and administration on rural economy, village communities, class composition and profession patterns of population, the impact of British taxation and industrial policies on the industrial development in urban areas contributed to the shaping of society and policies in India.

The British empire in India under the East India company the material progress and the development process was very much hampered because of the concentration of its attention only on the expansion and presentation of British empire and colonial markets. The material progress and the
development process in India under the East India Company was very much hampered because of the concentration of its attention on the expansion and preservation of British empire and colonial markets. Consequently, the agro-industrial economy of India on the advent of British rule in the middle of the 18th century. India became a market for British goods and a supplier of raw materials to England. This metamorphosis in her economic life made her dependent on Britain. Subsequently, when some economic development began to take place due to political forces, the pace of such progress was not satisfactory due to the British vested interests and their anti-pathy towards the Indian economic development.

In fact no encouragement was given to the growth and development of any industry which could compete with those of England. The Indian labour was also exploited due to illiteracy, poverty and mass unemployment. The exploitation was due to absence of protective labour legislation. The lack of proper irrigation system to serve Indian agricultural interests tended to create food scarcities, droughts and famines. Consequently, the Indian economy, so much predominated by and subordinated to British interests was destined to wreck the economic structure of the country and made it a hand-maid of British colonial interests. Hence, much of the under-developed economy of India under British rule was the inevitable outcome of the British commercial interests in India. At the same time, however, “coming of the British in India”, writes Jawaharlal Nehru, “synchronized with developments in transportation, communication and industry, and so it was that British rule succeeded at last in establishing a political unity”.2
Political and society in India are closely inter linked since ancient times. Political responds to outside pressures and aggregates outside interests of the masses. As such the political system at any given time becomes an agency of the social structure, and consequently, socialization of elites and articulation of their demands become inseparable from politicization of social groups. Modern India, in its socio-political aspects is a product of a variety of influence spread over a long period of time. The most outstanding historical periods of this long history of India’s social, cultural, economic and political transformation are the Vedic period, the Muslim period, the British period, Independence Movement and various Religious, Social and various sectarian and Labour Movements and ultimately the post-Independence period of today.

In Vedic, times, the Aryans brought contributions in social structure, language, literature and philosophy. In fact, the Aryans contributed to the foundations of the Hindu civilization. Caste institutions are said to be the gifts of the Aryans to Hindu society. The ‘Varna’ the term for caste grouping includes, Brahmin (Priest), Kshtriya (warrior or ruler), Vaishy (merchant), and the lowest rank namely Shudra (servant or menial). The last category was considered “untouchable”, or “outcaste”. This primitive social system of caste, after so many centuries of its prevailing throughout India at all times has done colossal harm to the unity and prosperity of India, socially, economically and politically. Within the villages, the caste system, sanctioned by Hindu tradition, has its most powerful hold. There are said to be more than two thousand sub-castes, or ‘Jati’, in India. Most of them confined to relatively small geographical areas
within a linguistic region. Marriages is only within the caste and the members of each caste share, by tradition a common lot and occupy by virtue of their birth a defined status and role within society. Each caste is hierarchically ranked according to the ritual purity of its traditional occupation. Caste can be distinguished from one another by the manner of behavior, the style of dress, the food eaten, and the general life style. The behavior of each caste is socially prescribed and any deviation may bring penal action from the caste itself through the caste panchayat, that is, a body of caste elders.

As the hereditary caste with permanently assigned responsibility of discharging essential social functions, are the peculiar features of the Vedic period, monarchy has been the principal characteristic of this polity. The legal entity known as ‘state’ is to be hardly come across, as the persons called upon the discharge the affairs of the government with highest apex at the King’s office, are held responsible in their personal capacity for proper management and also responsible for any dereliction of duty. In this polity personal freedom to resign and thus to avoid the responsibility of office that has come to one in course of time, by the operation of hereditary principle, is not recognized. The political administration is secular in the sense that there is nothing to prevent members of other faiths from being participants of the common life along with Hindus of different caste and regional groups. The most important characteristic of Vedic polity is the responsibility placed on the Brahmans in the working out the eternal plan of human life. The king, i.e. the political authority and Brahmans generally maintained the economic, social and political philosophy evolved by the Vedic plan. The state in ancient India was unitary in
character, and it is said the beginnings of the State of India may be traced to the Vedic times when the unit of corporate existence starting with the family, enlarged itself through the village, the clan till it embraced the whole community with the central authority vested in the king. Consultative assemblies trade from Portugal, Holland, France and Britain. The Moghul Empire came to an end after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707.

The influence of Islam on politics and society in India was by no means negligible. Hindu society and its age old institutions lost its vitality and dynamism. The impact of the Muslim rule left behind a vast Muslim community, particularly throughout north India as integral part of Indian society. As a result of Muslim impact, the country witnessed a marked socio-political upheaval. The contact of Hindu and Islamic cultures produced important results which may be noticed into two different periods. One the one hand, we find an attempt to organize the existing society in a way to protect it from Islamic influence and on the other hand, an attempt to unite together the two cultures in a harmonious manner. The former introduced more rigidity into the existing social a system by advocating strict rules about caste organizations marriage, dining, worship etc., They taught the people to concentrate more a religious activities particularly Bhakti (devotion to god). The latter class of thinkers new sects combining the tenets and practices of both Hindu and Mahammedan religions. The chief reform which they sought to introduce in the existing society was the abolition of the casteism – Kabir, Nanak and other were such leaders. The birth and growth of Urdu is essentially due to the contact of the Hindu and Muslim cultures. It is however, important to remember that the basic Indian Cultures
which is essentially Hindu or Aryan could not assimilate the culture introduced by the Muslims. The two communities are still separate and sometimes difficult situation arise in the settlement of their disputes. Due to `divide and rule' policy of the British's, Indu-Muslim disputes on petty issues became a frequent feature of the polity in India during British rule. The Muslim impact thus turned into a legacy.

The coming of the Europeans and the contact of the East and West may be regarded as the last stage in the evolution of Indian society and culture. This contact can be looked at from different points of views and its effects have been really manifold. The nineteenth century must be regarded as a very important period in social and religious movements and the instruction of a new life into the politically slumbering people of India. The growth of various sciences and the invention of steam, railways, electricity etc., brought about as unprecedented change in the life and attitude of Indians of all categories. The introduction of Christianity introduced a different religion in the country created a separate community. The Christian missionaries greatly helped the spread of western Education in India. The introduction of social and political ideas of the West into this country slackened the bonds of rigid caste system and joint family and fostered the growth of Indian Nationalism and also infused a spirit of active civic life. Lastly, the enthusiasm and spirit of reform actuated a number of Indians who received the Sabha or the Samiti were established to advise the king in the Vedic age. Since caste played an important role in the polity since ancient times, it became a potent political force, capable of articulating their socio-economic and political interests. Casteism and religious ideas have for
long been the innovation and expression of individuality and separate identity.

During the Muslim period beginning in the eight century A.D., inspite of the Muslim invasions and a different religion and social system based on teachings of Islam, Hinduism, Hindu society and culture, the doctrines preached in the Hindu epics maintained their strength and popularity. The Brahmin elites dominated of the Hindu society. Hence inspite of the rise and fall of empires and dynasties, much of Indian society, Hinduism and Hindu culture went on its own way.

The Muslim invasions, beginning in the eight century A.D., ushered in a period of change and of interaction with Hindu traditions. Islam was fundamentally at odds with orthodox Hindu culture. The Muslims and the Hindus differ in very vital aspects of life. Their diet is different, their dress is different, their modes of living are different, their social and ethical codes are different and even today there is a great difference between them in respect of marriage, inheritance, religious practice and even the rights of their members. Muslim invasions of India were mostly through the north-west mountain passages such as Khyber pass. One of such earliest raid was led by Mahmud of Ghaznie from the Middle East. The northern plains of India were ruthlessly devastated. Hindu temple were destroyed and to Islam were forced in large numbers. Many other Muslim adventures and propagandist of Islam, notably Ghori and Timur invaded northern India in the 13th and 14th centuries. Moghul power in India ushered with Babur in about 1526. The Moghul Empire was established in India under the great Moghul rulers-Akbar, Jahangir, Shahajahan and Aurangzeb. During his long rein (1556-1605), Akbar established a firm
political system. The empire was divided into provinces and districts. The land revenue system was based upon a land survey and the fertility of the soil. Akbar was not exclusively for Islam. Rather he stood for secularism and respected all religions. He founded a universal religion, the 'Din Ilahi; which he hoped would unit the Muslims and Hindus. It was only during the reign of Akbar that we find a regular administrative machinery at work whose detailed account is available in the pages of Abdul Gazal’s Ain-I-Akbari. There is also available a detailed account of the administrative system prevailing in Maratha countries during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Akbar died in 1605 and it is said that the Great Moghul Empire declined in power and prestige in the later seventeenth century with the arrival of the English education to form various societies for the reform of the socio-economic and political life of the people.

The British impact on the society and politics of Indian is immense and it came in distinct stages. The British first established trading centres in India after Queen Elizabeth granted a royal Charter to the East India Company in 1600. At that time the Moghul Empire was not expected that company of traders who established their factories with a purely commercial notice would one day establish an empire in this sub-continent. In the beginning the Company was not willing to establish a political dominion in India; but circumstances in India created the proper atmosphere for establishing British Rule. The Moghul Empire was crumbling to pieces after the death of Emperor Aurangzeb. A scramble for power began. The East India Company established its supremacy first by eliminating the Dutch, the Portuguese and the French. The company was granted by the Nawab of Bengal extensive trading privileges
and Diwani rights of collecting revenues of the Provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The Diwani practically conferred upon the Company rights of territorial sovereignty. The Company also succeeded in annihilating the power of regional rulers, namely, the Peshwas and Marathas in Western India, the Nizam of Hyderabad in the South, and the Sikhs in the North through wars or through mutual “Alliances”. The Charter Act of 1833 and 1853 revised the earlier charter. The Executive Council of the Governor General was enlarged for legislative purposes. The East India Company was the authority entrusted with the administration of the country and the Parliament of Britain continued to, exercise its control and supervision over the Company’s affairs. There was no parliamentary government in India so far. It was, however, introduced in stages.

The Mutiny of 1857 gave the death-blow to the existence of the East India Company. The Act of 1858 for the Better Government of India replaced the Company’s Rule by direct British Rule administered by the queen-in-Parliament in Great Britain. The Act provided that India should be governed by and in the name of the Queen, and vested in the Queen all powers and territories that had belonged to the East India Company. A Secretary of State with a Council was appointed to transact the affairs of India in England. India was hence forth to be ruled in the name of the British Crown. The Indian Councils Act of 1861 expanded the size of the legislature. The post of the Secretary of State for India was made a Cabinet post in the British Cabinet, and the Governor-General in India carried the additional title of Viceroy in his capacity as Crown’s representative in India. The Act of 1861 has been described as “the prime charter of Indian legislature”. It created legislative
councils in the Centre as well as in the provinces. It also made provisions for nominated members. However, the functions were strictly of a legislative character. The Executive was not responsible to the legislature. With the impact Western education and the spread of the English language created a westernized middle class which Lord Macaulay envisaged in his Minute of 35, “a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals, and in intellect”. The spread of English served the British’s as they needed subordinate officials, teachers and clerks. The Indian response to the British impact came in the form of revivalism of Indian society, tradition and culture. During their period, social reformers established societies for the emancipation of Indian society. To name of few Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1833) funded the Brahma Samaj (Divine Society) for the social reforms. The Brahma Samaj contributed much towards reform of social life in India. Ram Mohan Roy opposed rigidity of caste system, child marriage and discrimination against women. Soon afterwards, a very popular social reform society, namely the Arya Samaj was founded in Bombay in 1875 by Swami Dayanand Saraswati. In Arya Samaj opposed vehemently the influence of Islam and Christianity. The Arya Samaj preached to follow the earliest Hindu scriptures-the holy Vedas and revival of Hinduism. The Arya Samaj gained popularity among the Hindus and Arya Samaj’s educational institutions and societies were established all over the country. Besides these societies, the various missionaries established by great social reformers like M.G. Ranande, Ram Krishan Paramhansa and Swami Vivekananda, continued to pursue educational and social reform. All these societies and missions, besides being engaged in social reforms, contributed towards political awakening and Indian
Nationals. The British Government also grew conscious of the growing political consciousness among the Indian masses. The hastened the pace of constitutional reforms in India. From the passage of the Indian Councils Acts of 1861 until the passage of the Government of India Act of 1935, there followed a significant constitutional move on the part of the British Government toward the gradual introduction of responsible representative cabinet type of government along parliamentary lines. These constitutional advances are milestones in the achievement of self-government in India through successive stages and are responsible for shaping Indian politics. We shall first discuss the constitutional aspect.

MANIFESTATION OF PRESSURE GROUPS IN INDIAN POLITICS:

The Act of 1861 is of much importance because it provided India with the framework of a government which lasted up to India’s independence. About this time was born the Nationalist Movement of India of which the Indian National Congress (1885) was the embodiment. The congress was established for the purpose of organizing and channelizing the ambitions and opinion of the people of India on questions of public interest, and for giving expression to Indian grievances in a vigorous but constitutional manner. The Congress expressed dissatisfaction with the form of government established by the Act of 1861 and pressed for the reform and expansion of the Central and Provincial Legislative Councils by increasing the number of elected members. The British Government in India adopted a hostile attitude and prohibited government servants from attending the sessions of the Congress. This step on behalf of the Government contributed to the popularity of the Congress. The then
Viceroy, Lord Dufferin in realized the nature of the Congress demand for reforms. The result was the enactment of the Indian councils Act of 1892, which increased the number of members in both the Central and Provincial Legislative Councils. The Act enabled the councils to discuss the annual financial statements by giving opportunities to members of the council to discuss the financial policy of the Government. The act also gave to the members of both the Supreme and Provincial Councils the right of asking questions as matters of public interest. The Act of 1892 marked a step in the direction of greater separation of the legislature from the executive, and the democratization of the legislature by providing for a majority of the nominations being made on the recommendations of specified persons, bodies and associations so as to give a representative character to the Legislative Councils. The system of nomination amounted to indirect election. The Act marked a decisive advance towards parliamentary government in India.

The Indian councils Act of 1892 was plagued with many short comings and defects and in way could not be categorized as substantial gain for the people of India. The system of election was not a fair deal. The functions of the Legislative council were circumscribed. The number of non-official members was small. Despite such defects, if can be said that this Act of 1892 introduced the principle of election for the first time and give the legislature some control over the executive and to some can be considered as strong step towards, if not for Indian self - Government, but for Indian participation in the highest administrative functions.

The Indian National Congress was dissatisfied with the reforms because
they did not introduce direct elections nor vested the legislatures with the
democratic right of controlling the executive. The reforms were too limited.
Certain factors were responsible for the birth of the Indian National Congress.
The main factors were as spread of western education, contact with western
civilization which instilled in the people the concepts of liberty, nationality and
self government, the press which became patriotic and critical-minded,
development of means of communication and transport and denial of higher
posts of Indians. A new awakening developed in India with the dawn of
twentieth century. In the beginning, the Congress was led by moderate leaders
like Gopal Krishna Gokhale who pursued a path of constitutionality petitions
and non-hostility with the British Raj. The Congress was not satisfied with the
attitude of the British government towards fulfillment of Congress demand for
political reforms. Extremist movement was a foot. The Congress grew more
critical of the failure of the government to respond to the gestures of
co-operation that its leaders had been making. There emerged within the
congress, along the moderate leadership led by G.K. Gokhale a powerful and
militant group of congressmen led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lajpat Rai and
Bipin handra Pal. Tilak said, “Swaraj (self-government is my birth right and I will
have it”). In 1909, the British government introduced the Morley-Minto Reforms.

The Indian Councils Act of 1909, usually known as the Morley-Minto
Reforms increased the size of the various legislative councils in India by fixing
their maximum strength. The size of the Imperial Legislative Council was
materially enlarged, the maximum number of members if the Governor-
General's legislature being raised from sixteen to sixty. They were to be partly
elected and partly nominated. Communal representation was introduced by the Act of 1909. It is required that reserved seats be set aside for certain minority communities, particularly the Muslims in other words, it meant that “separate electorates” be established to ensure that only members of a specified community would vote for the seats reserved for them. An official majority was, however, deliberately maintained in the central legislature, only twenty-seven, out of the additional sixty members being elected, and the remaining thirty-three together with the eight ex-officio members being nominated by the government. The principle of election which only indirectly accepted in 1892 was now explicitly introduced. The powers and functions of the Council were increased. It was given right to discuss financial statements and to move resolutions, and to vote on various resolutions affecting matters of public importance. Certain subjects, however, could not be discussed by the council at all. Any resolution could be disallowed by the Governor-General who acted ex-officio as the President of the Council. Further, the right of interpellation was extended by allowing the member who put the original question to ask a supplementary question.

As insistent demand for the recognition of Indian public opinion as the controlling factor in Indian administration was sought to be met by the Act of 1909. However, all these reforms, though in themselves marking a distinct step in advance, has absolutely nothing to do with the introduction of responsible or parliamentary government. Lord Morley’s clear disclaimer about any intention of introducing parliamentary government in India is famous. There was no question of subordinating the executive to the legislature. However, there was a
distinct Endeavour to associate the latter with the former more closely than before. Parliamentary institutions were given but parliamentary ideal was stated to be not the goal. However, opinions expressed by the elected members of the legislature were expected to indicate clearly the direction of the current public opinion and the political attitude of the British rulers. Very high hopes were formed by moderates like Mr. Gokhale about the Reforms, while declaring them as modifying the bureaucratic character of the Government, as offering the elected representatives responsible association with administration and as alloying racial considerations, giving a chance to Indian views to effectively present themselves in the legislative councils. Gokhale was, however, disappointed when he said within a few months of the operation of the Morley-Minto Reforms. He opined that once the Government had made up their mind to adopt a particular course, nothing that the non-official members may say in the Council is practically of any avail in bringing about a change in the course. The existence of the solid official block in the Imperial Legislative Council was a barrier and created disharmony the Government and the non-official Indians. India was still centrally administered by a Central Government which was responsible to British Parliament. There was no relaxation of control in provincial matters. The system election adopted was unscientific and unfair in its treatment to various communities. It can therefore, be said that the inherent defects of the Morley-Minto Reforms were so fundamental that no amount of loyal co-operation on the part of the Indians could accommodate with them. Still, the Reforms were welcomed by some contemporary politicians, as marking definite advance in the history of India’s constitutional development and in any case they prepared the way for further reforms.
Immediately after the Reforms of 1909 were passed political life and events in India developed at a tremendous speed. The Muslims in the beginning kept aloof from the congress. The Muslims argued that without separate electorates the Muslims would be at the dictates of the Hindu majority in India, and that the Muslim community would be submerged in the Hindu majority. The Muslim leaders such as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan attached Hindu domination and asked the Muslims not to identify themselves with the Hindus and to keep aloof from the Congress Movement. He warned of the dangers of Hindu domination under democratic system. He said that Hindu rule would fall more heavily upon Muslims because they were in minority. He pleaded co-operation with the Britishers to solve their problems. Sir Syed Ahmed founded Muslim educational institutions exclusively for the Muslims. He established the Anglo-Oriental Collage in 1877 which later grew into the Aligarh Muslim University. The seeds of Muslim communalism was sown with the foundation of such Muslim institutions. Later, the staunch Muslim founded the Muslims League in 1906 at Dacca. The Muslim League was the attempt by Indian Muslims to found an organization to secure a more favorable position in the politics of the country by promoting among the Muslims of India a feeling of loyalty to the British Government. There developed confrontation between the Congress and the Muslim League. The award of communal representation to the Muslims by Morley-Minto Reforms was opposed by Congress nationalists as an attempt to weaken national unity of the country with the political strategy of 'divide and rule'.

It is important to remember that among the Muslims, there has been a
division. Some Muslims usually called Nationalists stuck to the congress creed, while others believed that the Congress dominated by Hindus might not safeguard their political and other interests. They tried to formulate their demands separately as a communal basis. In 1916, the Muslim League and the Congress leaders met in Lucknow and signed the famous Lucknow Pact. The League agreed to support the demand of the Congress for the achievement of self-government and the Congress accepted separate electorates and special weightage for Muslims in legislatures which it had opposed so long. The Congress agreed to the right of minorities to veto legislation affecting its interests. The Lucknow proposals were drafted by Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The Congress also agreed to support the “Khilafat” movement in support of Muslim ideals in Turkey. Hindu-Muslim unity never again reached such a level of agreement.

The moderate leader Gokhale died in 1915. The Lucknow session of the congress, held a year after Gokhale’s death marked the reemergence of Tilak who was imprisoned by the British from 1908 to 1914, was set free. He joined the Home Rule League organized by the Irish theosophist Annie Beasant. Tilak represented extremist faction within the congress and demanded, if necessary direct and vigorous action against the British rulers for greater measure of self-government.

During the world war I, the British claimed that they stood for the protection of democracy around the world. Thus, the Indians, who fought for them in this war, demanded that democracy should also be introduced in their country.
World War I forced the British Government to seek the co-operation of the Indians in winning the war in exchange for vague promises of introducing reforms after the war. However, as the Indian demand for self-rule (Swaraj) intensified with the Home Rule agitation, the British assured the Indians of a greater measure of self-government. Edwin Montagu, who had succeeded Morely as Secretary of State for India, announced on the 20th of August, 1917 the Government policy “of increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as integral part of the British empire”.

While making this announcement of policy, the Secretary of State also made it clear that progress in this policy could only be achieved by successive stages and that “the British government and the Government of India must be the Judges of the time and measure of each advance”. This declaration of policy was followed in 1919 by the Government of India Act (Montagu-Chelmsford or the Mont-Ford Reforms) which made a beginning in introducing responsible government. Under the Act, authority was decentralized with a division of functions between the Central and the Provincial governments. A Central Legislature bicameral in nature the Legislative Assembly and the Council of state was constituted. An elected non-official majority was introduced in Lower chamber (legislative Assembly, the Governor General, responsible to British Government in London, retained the overriding powers of certification and veto over legislative measures adopted by the Central Legislature. In the provinces, the Monto-Ford Reforms of 1919 introduced Dyarchy, or dual government, under which the Governor of the Province retained authority over certain “reserved” subjects mostly in the
spheres of revenue, law and order-while “transferred” subjects, such as education, local self-government, health, public-work and agriculture, came under the control of ministers responsible to popularly elected provincial legislatures. The Principle of communal representation was extended both at the Centre and in the provinces.

The problem that was sought to be tackled by the Mont-Ford report and also by the Government of India Act of 1919 was a complicated one. The continuance of undemocratic government, completely irresponsible to the legislature, was inconsistent with the Announcement of 1917 which declared the grant of responsible government as the final goal of British policy in India. The Act of 1919 influenced the politics of India in an unpredictable manner. The Central Government was wholly left out so far as the introduction of responsibility in any degree was concerned. Only partial responsibility to the legislature was concerned to the provinces in the administration of “transferred” subjects by introducing dynastical form of government. The reforms of 1919 did not satisfy in the least the political aspirations of the Indian people. The Act received a cold response in the country. Agitations started in several parts of the country. The British Governments repressed the outbursts of the people’s annoyance over the Act of 1919. The Government enacted the Rowlatt Bills in 1919, extending the emergency powers assumed during the war to imprison persons without trial in political cases. Extremism spread among the masses. Martial law was proclaimed in the Punjab and public meetings were banned. Disturbances in Punjab in 1919 led to the dreadful massacre of hundreds of Indian through mass shooting at the central part of the Jalianwala Bagh in
Amritsar by general Dyer. The country was shocked to hear of this ghastly tragic event at the hands of the British Government. The Indian National Congress which met at Amritsar towards the end of the year in a mood of great anger passed a resolution denouncing the Act of 1919 as “inadequate unsatisfactory and disappointing”, and called upon the British Government to establish in India “full responsible government in accordance with principles of self-determination”.

Tilak known as “the father of Indian Unrest” and who was given the title of Lokmanya for his being honoured by the people, gained dominance in the Congress for sometime. He died on First August, 1920.

The politics of India had so far failed to provide strong and proper leadership to nationalist movement and Hindu-Muslim concord. The moderate leadership led by Gokhale as well as extremist militancy of Tilak failed to awaken national consciousness among the people of India. The reason was that the Congress had not succeeded so far to create a strong organization base in the country from which to recruit leaders and their followers. So far the Congress men were mostly from the educated middle class of urban societies. The leadership of the congress, therefore, lacked mass followers. At this time, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi appeared on the platform of Indian politics, Gandhi, a Gujrati Barrister from the Inner Temple in London returned to India in 1915 from South Africa where he had gone to plead the case of the Indian community against racial discrimination. In South Africa, he had developed technique of non-violent resistance to racial discrimination which he called ‘Satyagraha’.

Gandhiji toured widely to observe the Indian scene to observe himself
the state of political atmosphere prevailing in the country. Gandhiji was convinced that the national awakening in India was confined to urban middle class and unless the movement was concerted to mass movement, the ultimate task of introducing self-government in India would be difficult to achieve. Gandhiji saw much poverty and illiteracy among in Indian masses. He, therefore, shifted his attention to the villages and the poor peasants. He began his experiments with Satyagraha or non-violent resistance. Gandhiji attained remarkable success in giving to the Congress a new direction, a broad greeted with the title of “Mahatma” or Great Soul. He pledged to disobey the unjust law as a symbol of passive resistance and he called for non-co-operation, fasting and Hartal (strike) in protest against unjust acts of the British Government. Gandhiji’s entrance into Congress and active politics of India begins 1919 with his participation in the 1919 session of the Indian National Congress at Amritsar. Thereafter, Gandhiji became the guiding force of the Congress. Gandhiji appealed to the congress to adopt a nation-wide non-violent resistance campaign against British rule in India. The Congress accepted Gandhi’s proposals and a non-violent civil disobedience campaign was undertaken in 1920 under Gandhi’s leadership. This was the first of the major Satyagraha’s led by Gandhi that gave the non-violent character to the Indian Nationalist movement and which step by step, but successfully moved India toward independence. Gandhi’s also gained Muslim support for sometimes. He led major non-co-operation movements in protest against foreign, rule in India in 1920, 1930, and 1932. Although Gandhi’s non-co-operation movement was intended to be non-violent, there was several violent happenings that marred the movement. Gandhi was arrested and imprisoned for sedition. He
understood several fasts including “fast unto death” to persuade the Government to liberate India from foreign yoke. While Gandhi was imprisoned, Hindu-Muslim unity was broken by the outbreak of communal rioting in several towns of north India upon his release in 1924. Gandhi began a twenty-one day fast for Hindu-Muslim unity, but he did not succeed in his noble efforts. Since then, the Muslim League which claimed to represent the Muslims started showing open confrontation with the Congress. The Congress-League rift continued to grow. Also, within the Congress C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru who were close associates of Gandhi formed the Swaraj party with the object of contesting the Council elections with the purpose of destroying the Mont-Fort reforms from within by obstructional tactics. Gandhi did not support the Swarajist strategy of council entry. He engaged himself in social reforms like uplift of the untouchables, whom he called Harijana or “Children of God”, uplift of villages, boycott of foreign goods, use of Khadi, that is, homespun cloth, popularity of spinning wheel (charkha), use of Hindustani language for national unity, equality of women with man etc. These socio-economic reforms contributed to the amelioration of Indian society. Gandhi always emphasized the moral aspect of social and political fields resulted in bringing the gap between urban and rural India and between traditional and modern Indian society. He converted the Congress movement which was so far mostly confined to upper urbanized society of India into a mass movement.\(^8\)

The Mont-Fort Reforms of 1919 provided for a review of the reforms by the British Parliament after ten years. As such the Simon Commission was appointed for recommending further reforms. The Congress boycotted the
Commission with a slogan, “Simon go Back”, because it was composed of Britishers only. In 1928, the Congress, the Muslim League, and the Liberal Federation held an All-Parties Conference to frame independent India’s constitutions. The report, drafted by its chairman, Motilal Nehru, demanded responsible government and dominion status. The young radicals Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose opposed the recommendation for Dominion Status. However, with the intervention of Gandhi the Congress agreed to accept the Nehru Report, provided its recommendations were accepted by British Government before the end of 1929 failing which, the Congress threatened would launch non-violent, non-co-operation movement in pursuit of self-rule. In accordance with its pledge, the Indian National Congress at its Lahore session, held at the bank of Ravi river on December 31st, 1929 at midnight under the chairmanship of Jawaharlal Nehru declared complete independence (Purna Swaraj) at its goal. The National flag of India was hoisted by Jawaharlal Nehru. On January 2nd 1930, the Congress working committee resolved to observe every year 26 the January as Independence Day. Free India’s Constitution was inaugurated on 26th January 1950. This day is celebrated every year as National Day.

The civil disobedience movement was launched by the Congress in 1930 under the leadership of Gandhi. The movement spread rapidly with mass demonstrations, strikes closure of educational institutions etc. The Government used repressive measures. The Congress working Committee was declared an unlawful association. Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and thousands of people in the country were arrested and more than one hundred people were killed in police
firings. When the civil disobedience movement was in its full swing, the Governor-General, Lord Irwin, announced that Round Table Conference would be held in London to discuss the recommendations of the Simon Commission, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and Mr. M.R. Jayakar who attended the conference failed to bring about an amicable settlement regarding future reforms with a view to bring about Swaraj (self Rule) in India at the earliest. In 1931, Gandhi-Irwin Pact was concluded. The Government agreed to withdraw its repressive measures and to release all political prisoners except those guilty of violence. Gandhi called off the civil disobedience movement. The agreement led to the presence of Gandhi in the Second Round Table Conference. A deadlock was created on the question of communal electorates. Gandhi returned to India as a disappointed person. Government renewed its repression policy. The congress again started the civil disobedience campaign. The British Government went ahead with its proposals and announced Communal Award in 16th August 1932 which provided for separate electorates to Muslims, so-called Harijans (untouchables) and even to minorities. The grant of communal representation created much discontent in India against British policy of ‘divide and rule’. Gandhi protested against the proposals, particularly the provision for separate electorates for the Harijans whom he regarded to be an integral part of the Hindu Community. In protest, he started in jail to “fast unto death”. His life, was, however, saved by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, leader of the Harijans who agreed to give up the demand for separate communal electorates, but to safeguard the interests of the Harijans, a number of the seats be reserved for them within the quota of seats of the Hindu Community. The Government conceded in full to the demand of the Muslim League for separate electorates to the Muslims. The
emergence of Mohammed Ali Jinnah in 1928 and the presentation of his fourteen-point communal programme to the Muslim League changed the complexion of communal politics in India, ending with a demand for a separate Muslim State in Muslim majority areas. On the basis of the recommendations emanating from the round Table Conferences, the White Paper proposals of March 1933 and the report by a joint Select Committee of the British Parliament, the Government of India set of 1935 was enacted which provided greater political participation of the people in the governance of the country.

The Act of 1935 was an improvement on the previous Act and paved the way for parliamentary government in India. However, the Act did not establish Dominion Status for India and hence it was not welcomed by nationalist leaders. The Act authorized the establishment of a federation that would link together the provinces of British India and the Princely States of India. Legislative power was divided among Central, Provincial and Concurrent subjects. At the Centre, a diarchical form of government was introduced by which the Governor-General, responsible only to the British Government and British Parliament, was invested with a number of discretionary power. Further, the Governor-General was empowered by the said Act to exercise his “individual judgment” in certain cases such as defense and external affairs. There was a demarcation of the Federal subjects into “Reserved” and “Transferred”. The administration of the Transferred subjects was transferred to the Federal Ministers chosen from elected members of the Federal Legislature. The Reserved subjects were to remain under the authority and control of the Governor-General, the entire authority was concentrated ordinary powers and
special responsibilities. The Federal Legislature under the Act of 135 was a bicameral system of the legislature. It consisted of the Council of State or the Upper House, and the Federal Assembly or the Lower House. They were to consist of elected representatives from British India and nominated members from the Indian states. In the case of some provinces, the bicameral system was introduced, while certain other provinces, were to have unicameral legislatures. The Government of India Act, 1935, which was the result of a long series of discussions extending over a number of years introduced what the characterize as diarchy into the sphere of the Government of India.

As far as the Provincial Government were concerned, provincial autonomy was introduced to the widest extent possible. All the subjects included in the Provincial Legislative were to be administered by the Council of Ministers chosen from the elected members of the Provincial Legislatures to whom they were responsible for the administration of these subjects. The process which was already set in motion to some extent by the Act of 1919 was thus completed with the Government of India Act of 1935 in regard to provincial autonomy. Moreover as required by the fundamentals of the Federal form of government, a provision was made for the establishment of a Federal Court. But, the Federal Court was not a Supreme Court in the sense that it was neither an interpreter of the Constitution nor the ultimate declarer of the civil law of the land. The real highest judicial authority was the Privy Council of England. Franchise was widened. But just as responsible government at the Centre was over shadowed and made illusory because of the excessive powers given to the Governor-General, provincial autonomy had like wise become proverbial
because the Governor of the Province continued to enjoy the same extraordinary powers and to have special responsibilities. This blocked the political progress of the country.

The Act of 1935 did not establish dominion status for India and was therefore, opposed by nationalist leaders. The provincial autonomy granted under the Act was a substantive move toward meeting partially the Congress demand for Swaraj. Unfortunately, the Part of the Act of 1935 which provided for a partial introduction of responsible government at the Centre and also for the establishment of a Federation linking the provinces of British India and the Princely States, could not be implemented, and the Government of India continued to be constituted till the 14th of August, 1947, as before 1935, under certain provisions of the said Act of 1935. The Congress, however, resolved to work within the new reforms to some extent. In February 1937 it swept the provincial elections and formed ministries in seven of the eleven provinces. The Muslim League performed very poorly in elections. The Muslim League demanded representation of Muslims in the Congress cabinets on the ground that it best represented Muslims interests. The Indian National League began to propagate that the interests of the Muslims would not be safeguarded in an unified and independent India. The leader of the Muslim League, Mohammed Ali Jinnah declared in 1940 that the Hindus and Muslims of India formed two separate nations on account of their different religions, cultures, languages etc. The demand for a separate state of Pakistan was voiced formally at Lahore in March 19, and inspite of the efforts of the congress to maintain the unity of India, no compromise regarding the demand for Pakistan consisting of such
provinces as possessed predominantly Muslim population was made by the Muslim League of India until the League succeeded in its communal objectives of creating a separate independent State of Pakistan. The two nations theory of Jinnah was successful under the communal as well as political pressure. The Muslim League thus adopted as its goal the creation of the separate and independent Islamic State of Pakistan.

At the outbreak of World War II in Europe in September 1939, the Viceroy of India, Lord Lintithgow proclaimed India also at war with Axis powers at the same time that the Great Britain declared war. The viceroy had proclaimed India's involvement in the war without consulting Congress leaders and other leading political groups in India. The Indian National Congress—the leading political party of India condemned the fascist aggression but declared that India would not associate itself with the war effort unless it was given immediate independence. When this demand was rejected by the British Government, the congress directed the provincial Congress ministries to resign in protest. The Viceroy made vague political offers of India's independence after victory in war. At the same time, the Viceroy kept on appeasing the Muslims and other minorities that the British government would not accept any constitutional reform to which they were opposed. Emergency governments were established in provinces after resignation of congress ministries. Since the political situation in India was deteriorating and was not co-operative towards British war efforts the Viceroy of India on August 8, 1940 promised dominion status as soon as possible after the war. In August 1942, Gandhiji demanded that Britishers should voluntarily quit India failing which the
Congress will start mass civil disobedience. The “Quit India” movement gained unprecedented momentum in the country. The Congress was declared illegal. Gandhi and other top congress leaders were jailed. The Muslim League did not co-operate with the congress in the quit India Movement. On the other hand, the Muslim League became more aggressive in its communal demand of Pakistan. It repudiated the theory of national unity, maintaining that the partition of India was the only solution of independent India’s future constitution. The Muslim League remained firm on its political demand of India’s partition and creation of a separate independent state of Pakistan. The demand of Pakistan greatly affected the politics of India.

Political events moved fast towards India’s independence and fulfillment of Muslim League’s unflinching demand, for Pakistan. The so-called Sir Stafford Cripps proposals of 1942 providing for dominion status and the formation of an elected constitution making body after the War, were rejected by both the Congress and the Muslim League. On June 14, 1945, Lord Wavell the new Viceroy of India presented his proposal. The Wavell Plan-for a political solution. The Congress objected to the fixity of parity between caste–Hindus and Muslims rejected the Plan. The Muslim League rejected the Plan when its leader Mohammed Ali Jinnah was told by the Viceroy that he could not recognize the rights of the Muslim League alone to nominate all Muslim members on the Viceroy’s Executive Council the international situation was undergoing a drastic change. The World War II ended with the surrender of Japan and victory of Allies. The General election of 1945 in Britain resulted in a change of government. The Labour Government under Prime Minister Clement
Attlee was determined to end the political deadlock in India and transfer power to India at the earliest. In March 1946, he sent Cabinet Mission to India for “the early realization of full self-government in India”. The Muslim League was not ready to give up its communal demand for a sovereign independent Pakistan. Hence it rejected the Cabinet Mission’s proposals and resolved to take “Direct Action” to achieve that end. This resulted in country wide Hindu-Muslim riots over the Pakistan issue.

The British Government went ahead with the plan for the transfer of power. Elections were held for the constituent Assembly in July 1946. In September 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru was appointed by the Viceroy as the Prime Minister of the interim government. The Muslim League nominees also joined the ministry but it did not co-operate with the congress nominees. It appeared that the Hindu and the Muslim communities could not co-operate and work in harmony and that the creation of Pakistan was the only solution of ending permanently the political deadlock in India. On February 20, 1947, the British Prime Minister Attlee announced the British Governments intention to transfer power and quit India before June, 1948. Lord Mountbatten was appointed the last Viceroy of India to succeed Lord Wavell to arrange for the transfer of power. Perhaps, because of country wide communal riots partition of India appeared inevitable. The provinces with Muslim majority were to form a separate Islamic state, and to draw up their own Constitution. Thus, Pakistan was ultimately created. The princely States, freed form British paramountcy, were given the freedom to accede to India or Pakistan. On August 15, 1947, India, though partitioned, became an independent nation by the Indian
Independence Act, 1947. The Constituent Assembly of India drafted the Constitution of India under the Chairmanships of the veteran congress leader-Dr. Rajendra Prasad. The new constitution came into effect on January 26, 1950-the day which is celebrated every year as Republic Day.

The preamble of India’s Constitution reflects the political aspirations of the people of India by constituting India into a sovereign democratic socialist and secular Republic. It secures to all its citizens social-economic and political justice, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and opportunity; and to promote among all citizens fraternity assuming the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation. Free India is constitutionally a parliamentary democracy on the British pattern of government. It is federal in structure, republican in imbibing socialist principles and secular. The constitution guarantees basic fundamental rights, namely, the right to equality, the right to freedom of religion, cultural and educational rights, the right to property, and the right to constitutional remedies. The fundamental Rights reflect the desire of the people of India for basic social-economic and political freedom which was denied under the British rule. These freedoms are, however, not without their limitations. There are Emergency Provisions in the Constitution under which the President of India may suspend these rights to freedom including the right to constitutional remedies. The constitution also lays down he Directive Principles of State Policy which though not justifiable, that is, not enforceable by judiciary, yet serve as a guide for the legislatures in framing socio-economic legislation. The constitutionality of an legislative enactment is determined by its power of judicial review by the Supreme Court which stand at
the apex of the judiciary and is the interpreter and guardian of the Constitution of India.

The nature of the constitutional frame work as well as the politics and society in India has resulted in developing and strengthening the role and manifestation of multifarious socio-economic and politically oriented pressure groups in India. Since India’s polity is basically based on democratic principles and basic human freedoms, pressure groups and interest groups play a significant role in channelizing and configuration moulding politics of the country. The introduction of universal adult franchise, the vast expansion in the functions of modern government, the five year plans and economic development programme since India’s independence have further contributed to the strength and active role of numerous pressure groups in the politics and society in India.

TRADITIONAL IDEAS AND MODERN POLITICAL FORCES:

Traditional ideas and modern political forces have further given political impetus to the pressure groups in a modern Indian society. It may be observed that a striking feature of the developing and under-developed countries of Asia is that they are hierarchical societies in which the pattern of the society is characterized by social and economic inequalities. In India, the relations between the social strata were organized according to the hierarchical values of the caste system which provided ideological legitimation for the traditional pattern of social stratification. However, after Independence India is committed to the creation of an egalitarian society or ‘a socialistic pattern of society’, in
which there will be greater equalization of opportunity and a more equitable
distribution of income, power and privilege. The Indian Five Year Plans have
been explicitly oriented to the achievement of the egalitarian ideals enshrined in
the Constitution. The social objectives which these Plans seek are to raise the
standard of living, especially of the less privileged sections of society. “The
benefits of development should accrue in increasing measure to the common
man and to the weaker sections of society by reducing disparities of income
and wealth”.¹⁰

The other pressing problems of society in India are the problem of
educated unemployment, population growth, vicious circle of poverty, illiteracy
and malnutrition which results in disease. The economically privileged people
succeeded in forming well-organized groups, mostly in urban areas and
succeeded in gaining political power to the group’s benefit. Their political
activities related to the governmental activities, political parties, interest groups,
pressure groups and electorates. Organized pressure groups can more likely
sway administrative policies. Freedom from colonial rule and inauguration of
Republican Constitution of India have resulted in the sovereignty of the people
in the political sphere. The people of India are their own rulers. The present
system of universal adult franchise grants the right of voting to every male and
female of India who is less than twenty-one years of age and is not otherwise
disqualified. There is no doubt that universal adult franchise is in itself a radical
step in view of the rampant illiteracy and poverty prevalent in the country. Adult
suffrage has been regarded as the true basis of democracy to safeguard the
welfare of the masses. The elections are the life and blood of democracy.
The effective participation of the people in governmental process. In a welfare state wedded to the ideals of secularism, democracy and socialism in governmental process can alone ensure an increase in the capacity and strength of democratic system prevailing in the country. The conception regarding caste – system and other social variables is fast changing from traditional ideas regarding political culture of society are to great extent affected and modified by modern democratic political forces. People of free India is trying to modernize and at the same time establish and maintain free institutions. By availing of opportunities provided in a society for organize free political institutions, to press the government to fulfill their socio-economic and political demands and needs through their organized groups. Freedom of forming associations, freedom of assembly, a free press and free speech are the basic freedoms guaranteed in a democratic society to enable the citizens to direct and affect the policies of the government. Through the functioning of freed democratic institutions in India, the Indian society has been politicized. With the introduction of universal adult franchise, large numbers of the Indian population both male and female-have been drawn into the political system. This has resulted in the operation and interaction of traditional as well as changing social, economic and political environments. Tradition and modernity are reaching each other in shaping politics of modern India. To take an example in India, caste which is the basis of social structure in Indian society, has responded to changes in its political and economic environment by transforming itself from below and within. Hierarchy, privilege, and moral parochialism no longer exhaust its secular significance. Modern political forces has destroyed its moral basis and social structure. Caste has helped peasants
and other professional groups to seek representation by associating themselves to the processes and institutions of democracy. Caste has been adopted to the exigencies of electoral politics. Democratic systems recognize strength in numbers. Even the poorest and lowest castes can muster substantial political influence when they succeed in joining those who share common interests. Thus they become potent political organizations, capable of articulating their social, economic and political interests. As a result of such socio-political interaction, political parties, interest groups and pressure groups are playing a significant role in participating governmental activities and conveying the wishes of the people to the government. In a political democracy, such associations of people contest elections to the country’s legislature and if they succeed in gaining majority, they may even form the government.

In India the political values growing in the context of liberal democratic institutions are sharply different from the general cultural orientation developed for long in the context of India’s traditional rural society, causing much strain to the political system. Again, not only general culture conditions political culture but the latter may also influence the former. Thus the political institutions and political beliefs generated by a democratic political system may often go beyond political boundaries and pervade the wider sphere of social life and thereby end to democratize the social process. In recent years, the introduction of the Panchayati Raj system of local government in India has given a great impetus for representation of local factions and local pressure groups in the governmental hierarchy. The rapid spread of education and rural developmental programmes the recent efforts by the government and non-
governmental agencies for the implementation of Twenty Points Programme, have all contributed to the expanding participation and the emergence of multifarious pressure groups in the political development of modern Indian in tune with India’s cultural and democratic traditions. The operation and interaction of traditional socio-economic and political structures and patterns of behavior are fast changing and adopting to new environments under the pressure of modern political forces. Political participation is on the increase throughout India and is manifesting in the polity of the country through numerous associations, political parties, political elites and pressure groups which try to influence decision-makers. The government and its agencies are responsive to organized demands in the public interests within the constraints of its resources. The pressure groups in India are a means of political communication and their institutionalization plays a powerful role in the development of a responsive political system. In fact, the socio-religious and political considerations in modern India are being replaced by economic interests as the real motive force behind the activities of the pressure groups.

EMERGING PERSPECTIVE OF PRESSURE GROUPS IN INDIA:

The developments of pressure groups in India has rather been slow during the British rule only those individuals and groups who represented the traditional sources of power were able to exert pressure on the government to get their demand conceded. The mass of the people possessed hardly any access to the administration and were hence powerless. In this regard the Indian national Congress emerged as first well organized pressure group which sought to influence the policies of government with view to protect the special
interests of its members with the passage of time the Indian national Congress, extended its interests and in 1930 its objectives was declared as attain mental independence for the country.

It was only in the post independence period that dispersion and democratization of power took place and large number of people were drawn into political system. But the low sense of political efficacy prevented the people from having many interest groups. Hard grave has rightly observed. “The problem for India as for most developing societies has been in having not too many interest groups but too few”.

Prof. Myron Weiner Blames : The Congress parties for Jeopardizing the growth of large number of pressure groups. He says, the congress party itself has been an important link between local groups and the state governments acting as a middle man in applying pressure on the state administration apparatus in state where congress in power the administration has proved sensitive to such pressure.

Another reason for the slow progress of pressure groups in India has been the unfavorable opinion of the government officials who have looked all interest groups activity with great distrust. They look upon the activates of such interest groups going against national interest. This has naturally given rise to agitation has further given strength to the feeling all actions which enjoys mass support acquire legitimate character.

Hardgrave has Greatly emphasized the important role which the interest groups in India can play He says “Interest groups in India are a formal linkage
and a means of Communication between the mass and elite”.[11] They provide channels of elements in the development of responsive political system.

In independent India the groups and associations which articulate varied socio-economic and political interests of the modern developing society have been influencing the decision of policy makers. These interest and pressure groups have emerged as centres of political power by assisting and directing the political parties and the institutions of modern democratic government. These pressure groups articulate the demands of the groups and are an emerging force in our power structure. Some of the powerful pressure groups such as representing business community in India are dominant power-holders. Their interests have been kept constantly alive by interested political parties. Many of the interest and pressure groups of India are reservoirs of social and political leadership. These groups are playing an important role in socio-political integration and have contributed much in the development of democratic traditions in meeting the needs generated at different levels of society. The diversity of social and economic interests have stimulated and formation of pressure groups in India. In the pluralistic and developing society of India, they are not merely the agencies of interest articulation but are vehicles of political pressure. They exhibit multidimensional activities of the individuals in a free society. An individual expresses himself within the social, cultural and prevailing political system.

During colonial rule in India, the citizen could not enjoy political freedom. Their impact on political and governmental agencies was not great. The political parties and pressure groups were more concerned with the
independence of the country. Prior to independence, the political parties advocated political demands of the Indian population along with the socio-economic demands of multiparous groups commanding traditional sources of power mostly exerted pressure at the local administrative level. Most mass organizations in India developed from political activities of the nationalist movement, and even in the post–independence days, most of the pressure groups representing vested interest are associated with political parties. Such pressure groups instead of functioning as agencies of interest articulation of the groups have acted as organization of mass mobilization in their favour.

The opposition parties have utilized such groups organizations in mass action to rally party support and strengthen the party. The Indian National Congress of India which had been founded in 1885 as an influential group of elites including a group of Englishmen as a focus for political discussion. Starting as medium of making a number of specific demands from the British Government, such as an increase in the number of Indians recruited to higher civil services in India, the Congress Party soon became the most influential opponent of the Government and the foremost embodiment of Indian nationalism. As the Congress gained popularity, its demand extended for self-government and later for complete independence. During British rule in India, the Congress was a vast umbrella, sheltering people of all castes and creeds, of all types of association and organized groups as could be persuaded to extend in their support. The political awakening was evinced by a rapid growth of nationalism, a more and more intense demand for democratic institutions and the demand for complete independence. The chief line of advance has
been towards popular control of the administration and representation of the Indian people and various castes and interests chiefly in the legislative bodies and the public services. There was a general awakening among the various classes of the population and the different interests. The pervading poverty, illiteracy and disintegration of the country had aroused seriously thinking people to introduce reforms in the social and religious life. A number of sects or societies such as the Brahman Samaj, the Aray Samaj and the Theosophical Society were established for the reform of the existing society and orthodoxy of religion. The entry of Gandhi in to the political arena in 1920 gave a great impetus to the nationalist movement of India and it under his leadership which won freedom for the country. Within the Congress party, varied social service Groups were established in all parts of the country. The Community Development Scheme and Panchayati Raj were inspired by Gandhian plan of decentralization. Since Independence the opposition parties and groups in India have formed organizations and are driven into the politics of pressure.

In India, caste system, sanctioned by tradition, has its most powerful hold. Most of the castes are confined to relatively small geographical areas written in linguistic region. The members of each caste share, by tradition, a common lot and occupy by virtue of their birth a defined status and role. Each caste is hierarchically ranked according to the ritual purity of its traditional occupation. The behaviour of each caste is socially restricted and any deviation from following caste rituals may lining penal action form the caste panchayat. In the political field, electoral competition encourages caste conflict. We have witnessed such caste factionalism during General Elections to State
Assemblies and Union Parliament Caste has provided a far more fertile field for pressure group activities. Primarily, the caste associations were primarily concerned with the behaviour of their own members and with the preservation of distinctive caste practices. They were predominantly local and non-political caste is, however, a highly adaptive structure, and modern caste associations have emerged in response to social, political and economic change. Casteism, in modern India, represents traditionalism and modernity. Many of these caste associations are powerful groups influencing people of their castes to exercise franchise a caste consideration and they often succeed in their narrow sectarian motives. Although very much concerned with caste rituals, they tend to concentrate on achieving more economic and political benefits for their members, e.g., facilities in educational institutions and reservations of seats in civil services. The scheduled and backward castes and tribal peoples have also become very much susceptible to pressure groups politics. They have formed separate political parties or secessionist groups. Demand for a separate Nagaland and Gorkhaland are such examples. Similarly, linguistic groups, sometimes very well organized, have also played a very important role in Indian political life. The current demand of a group of Sikhs—the Akali Dal in the Punjab for Khalistan or a Punjab Sabha is an example of such a type of pressure groups. Such groups tend to subside into inactivity once their specific demands have been satisfied. Such pressure groups have significantly emerged in India, particularly after independence which unfortunately led to the partition of the country primarily on communal considerations.

The scheduled castes and tribes have emerged as a powerful pressure
group. Though Hindus by caste, suffered socio-political discrimination. The government responded to this situation through a system of protective discrimination. Special favour in education, government employment and political representation were granted to the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes. Of all the benefits to the Scheduled castes and Tribes, one of the most important has been the reservation of seats in Parliament and State Assemblies in proportion to their population. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, leader of the scheduled Castes until his death in 1956, had sought to unite the so called untouchables and depressed classes into a separate organization for political action and benefits.

Peasant interests have emerged much as very much influential groups since freedom movement. In the beginning, however, agrarian interests were articulated primarily through landlords and rich Zamindars. The peasants though they ploughed the soil and produced rich harvests, yet they were economically dependent in the hands of Zamindars and villages money lenders who were known as Sahukars. The average peasant lacked financial resources and organization representing the interests of poor peasants and landless labourers. The Kissan Sabha has have today emerged as powerful pressure groups articulating peasant interests.

In the politics of today, organized business has emerged as the one of the most important and politically very powerful pressure groups of India. The businessmen are concerned with the control of political power as essential to their survival as successful businessmen. The business groups seek access to decision makers through their independent groups or through the political
partying power. Their financial assistance to political parties in elections is immense and meaningful. The business organizations like the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry has a very effective role in shaping the business policy of the government. Industrial workers have also formed trade unions to protect the workers against exploitation of the business men and safeguard the interests of the labourers and factory workers.

The trade union movement has in recent times emerged as a powerful pressure movement of the labour class in India. The movement is split along party lines. The Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), formed under the auspices of the Congress Party in 1947, is the labour front of that party. The Hind Mazdoor Sabha is also the labour front of other political parties. The communist Party of India (CPI) has very much worked among the labourer and manual workers and has been championing the cause of the labourers and other categories of workers for better living wages and better living conditions.

In recent times, with the spread of education in the country, student community have emerged as a new powerful group demanding qualitative improvement in education and better facilities for employment for educated unemployed young persons in India. Among the many student organizations, the main examples are the student Congress or youth Congress dominated by the congress and communist dominated All India Student Federation. We shall consider the organization.

Since Independence, along with political parties, several pressure groups have been growing in number and size in India. The social life is made up of many organized groups some of which have a direct bearing on the
economic and political process. A pressure group owes its origin to socio-economic and political dynamics of the present day society. It is an association of people organized in support of or against some principle or policy of the government which by constitutional or extra-constitutional modes its seek to remedy and achieve the common objectives of the group. Social and economic forces are constantly at work in regulating the groups behaviour. A pressure group is expected to organize public opinion and to communicate demands to the decision makers, and secondly, it must organize and articulate demands of its followers as forcibly as possible through all modern mediums of publicity and demonstration which may be peaceful or violent in nature. A particular pressure group representing the common interest of its member, harmonizes and correlate those interests. A pressure groups thus becomes a vocal agency of the group’s demands, and group’s culture. The phenomenon of group’s interest is often manifestation of the process of socio-economic influence which is reflected in the perceptions of the followers of a particular pressure groups. Exigencies of regional and regional politics have resulted in emergence of regional groups and parties in India such as Akali Dal in Punjab, Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, Lachit Sean in Assam, DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) in Tamilnadu etc., These organization started functioning as socio-religious pressure groups and after gaining popular support converted themselves into major political groups which are playing an important role in the socio-political life of the country as powerful pressure groups seeking to control the government. The complexities of the modern industrial and urbanized civilization have resulted in the expansion of the functions of the State. Today we find that an individual is concerned with the affairs of the State an each
stage of his social, cultural, economic and political life. This has led to multiplicity of organized demand of the people in India in almost each sphere of life. Expansion of the socio-economic activities and implementation of 20 Point Programmers of the ruling Congress (I) Party in India have resulted in the growth of several pressure groups in India influencing governmental policies. The programme has considerable psychological effect in terms of motivations and attitudes of the masses and thus a regulating political behaviour of the masses. The pressure groups develop contacts with influential politicians, political parties, bureaucrats and the press.\textsuperscript{12} The influence that an effective pressure group exercised and the interests that they articulate cannot be ignored by elected legislators.

The pressure groups in India are organized with high degree of politicization and an acute sense of political efficacy. They pray as significant a role in socio-economic and cultural life of the country as they do in politics. They have resources and support adequate to muster mass following. It is found that pressure groups and with adverse and warring interests at stake, have opposed the governmental policies. Political elites are undoubtedly professionals share power structure in India is diversified. The infra-structural forces like caste, religion, language and region as well as the elite based on the support of infra-structural forces has a great say in the power pattern in India. The General Elections in India have exhibited this trend of tradition from ideological to infra-structural or interest politics. Press, radio, television and public relations experts are utilized in order to build up good will for their objectives and to create favourable attitudes among the people that are helpful
in the achievement of specific objectives of the pressure group.

A significant trend in Indian politics is that pressure groups, by and large, tend to exert pressure on the government policy formation agencies before a legislative measure which the group finds detrimental to its interests, is introduced in the legislature or parliament. The government is always susceptible to pressure groups. Student, youth and cultural fronts have all worked in India as powerful pressure groups and as party adjuncts. They can mobilize both talent and organizing ability. Regarding labour movements in India, the trade union is turned into an effective instrument of political movement. Businessmen safeguard and advance their sectarian interest by contributing to the political finances of the ruling party and thereby get their interests promoted. Each pressure group tries to influence the decision-making by the government in its own favour and adopts a strategy for the purpose suited to the situation and its own resources.

It is observed that almost all pressure groups in India exercise pressure upon the government to accept their demands and the common strategies adopted by them have varied from constitutional ones, such as submitting memoranda, organizing peaceful demonstrations, participating in the elections, to extra-constitutional strategies such as satyagraha and courting arrest. The intensity of the pressure has varied from struggle to struggle, depending upon the popularity of the organized demands of the group or association attitude of an government and proximity of remoteness of country’s general elections. The government adopts responsive attitude on issues championed by responsible pressure groups and the public opinion that is expressed widely and with an
intense degree on certain specific issues. Gandhiji who spiritualized politics in India always pleaded to the political parties, and to interest and pressure groups to adhere to the basic moral principle of non-violence in though and action. According to Gandhiji, all political and group activities should be moral efforts to establish just social relations between man and man, and not a drive for aggrandizement of power to himself. And so insisted an every workers in any movements to take vows for the strict maintenance of Satya and Ahmisa (Truth and Non-violence). In democratic India of today, the pressure groups and associations which articulate varied socio-economic and political interests of the modern developing society have been influencing the decisions of the policy makers. These interest and pressure groups have emerged as centres of political power. They are playing the role of directing current political issues. In fact, many of the interest and pressure groups of India are reservoirs of political leadership.

They are institutions of social and political integration and are of great importance in the development of a stable and responsible government. Preamble to free India’s Constitution emphasizes that India’s Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic and secures to all its citizens : Justice, social, economic, and political, Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, Equality of the status and opportunity, Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation. In order to achieve these objectives the fathers (framers) of the constitution, many of whom had actively participated in the freedom to the citizens such, freedom of forming associations, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, a free press and
freedom of speech to enable the people and their associations to exert
influenced an policy makers and the governmental agencies in public interest.
Pressure groups and other associations have emerged mainly in fulfillment of
these basic aspirations of the people in a modern political system.

In the development if political links in India, besides political factors,
social factors are still considered more effective, Casteism, for example, has
provided a very strong incentive and a far more favourable ground for pressure
group activities since long. The people every where are more devoted to their
caste organizations than to other activities of their localities. The role of caste
can be viewed from the points of view of the responses of the electorates to the
caste appeal by the politicians. The caste appeal as an instrument of political
exploitation by the caste leaders and their supporters is quite common at the
time of allotment of party tickets, ministry formation and the like. Caste
propagation is made, both openly and other wise to capture votes during
elections. The caste system not only determines, the individual’s social status
on the basis of the caste in which he is born but also differentiates the persons
by assigning occupational roles to them.

The organization of caste is essentially a division of society into various
classes according to the profession or occupational roles to them. The
organization of caste is essentially division of society into various classes
according to the profession or occupation of the members. Broadly speaking,
powers at the common of Indian social life have been divided into those of:
Learning and spiritual strength, Physical strength, Wealth, Physical service and
manual labour.
These powers have been allotted to different classes or castes, commonly known as Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. The criterion of determining one’s caste is one’s birth. Inter-dining and inter-marriage are not permitted according to rigid caste rules. Caste system has apparently resulted in gross injuries being perpetrated (done) to various persons and classes of persons. It has deprived many able man of his right to rise higher in society and has presented many able persons of lower castes from achieving success and serviceable to humanity at large without any fault of their caste system has thus resulted in a deplorable state of affairs. However, as a result of the efforts of social and religious reformers, spread of education and democratic institutions, rigidity of caste system is fast vanishing. The people of lower castes and their powerful pressure groups and associations of scheduled castes and backward tribes claiming equality of socio-economic and political rights have very much succeeded in achieving equal access to political power. An individual cannot shift from one caste to another, but castes do adjust their ritual position to accord with shifting economic status and political power. Enormous development of modern means of communications and transports, growth of democratic institutions from the local level upwards have increasingly challenged the traditional concept of caste.

Caste associations are increasingly playing an important role in determining political behaviour, particularly at the time of elections to popular bodies in India. Not only the dominant caste groups of the country but the minorities, such as the Sikhs, Christians, scheduled tribes and backward classes through the medium of their respective interest and pressure groups
exert political pressure in the interests of their respective caste associations. The seek to influence legislation and the policy by their access to national legislative bodies, state legislatures, local bodies and even village panchayats. The casteism gradually transformed into powerful caste groups articulating the segmental interest of different castes in the pluralistic Indian society and modern politics. Many of present days powerful caste associations originated in the desire for higher social mobility on the part of economically prosperous castes. They are more active in politics and in participating in country’s elections to the legislature and other elected bodies. They are also very much concerned with achieving more material benefits for their members. They demand more places in their civil services, facilities for admission to educational institutions and other job providing agencies. They also provide a variety of service to the caste members by founding schools, colleges, hospitals, hotels and other charitable institutions.

The backward castes, the scheduled castes and tribal peoples of India whose number run into millions, have also become very much sensitive (susceptible to pressure group organization. In recently days, such groups have well organized and are taking a very part in Indian political life. The tribal proposals of Assam, Nagaland and Darjeeling region in west Bengal, for example, have formed separate recessions groups demanding the creation of a separate autonomous state. The caste associations have thus emerged themselves into pressure groups in India and have become potent political organizations representing the views of different castes in India and articulating and safeguarding their social, economic and political interests. Often they
associate with political parties which promise to product and plead their sectarian interests. The known communal groups of the country are the Nayars in Kerala, Reddies in Andhra, Rajputs in Himachal Pradesh, Lingayats in Karnataka, Marathas in Maharashtra, the Sikhs in Punjab and Jats in Haryana.

Besides pressure groups which have emerged in Indian politics, based on religion and caste, numerous pressure groups have come into existence based on regionalism, particularly after Independence. Regionalism is a sentimental attachment of the people towards particular region in preference to the Indian Nation as a whole. Regionalism has assumed the form of well-organized regional pressure groups demanding a particular area of the country or a state for secession form the Indian Union or separate statehood. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in Tamil Nadu (Madras), the Akali Dal in Punjab, the Jharkhand party in Bihar or the Gorkhal League in West Bengal are regional parties or groups, representing the interest of particular regional, linguistic, ethnic or cultural groups. Such regional groups interests are limited to specific issues of common concern to those who reside in such areas. Such a group is confined to a limited geographical area. The usual demand of regional groups is more autonomy over matters or policies that have special significance to them in their every day routine life. The influence of regional parties is the concentration of their supporters in limited geographical areas and bound together by common language and other ethnic tics. The Akali Dal in the Punjab and the DMK in Tamil Nadu are powerful political groups pressure groups cum political parties which gained enormous electoral successes in Parliamentary and State Assembly elections. These regional organizations
even forced the government for the redrawing of state boundaries. For example, the efforts of regional groups such as the akali Dal eventual led to the creation of Punjab as a Sikh dominated state. The success of the regional groups in election of legislative assemblies in several states led to the formation of coalition governments which were unstable.

Linguistic groups have also played a very prominent part in Indian political life. Regionalism in India is closely associated with language. Linguistic considerations have played powerful role in the creation of pressure groups demanding autonomy based on regional languages. The first Telugu-speaking State of Andhra was created in 1953 as a result of the Andhra Maha Sabha movement for the creation of separate state of Andhra. In 1956, India’s states were reorganized along linguistic lines. Many languages or dialects are spoken in India. The Government intends to make Hindi, the most widely spoken Indian language of India. The non-Hindi speaking people in some parts of India as in Tamilnadu have formed powerful linguistic groups to oppose the imposition of Hindi in non-Hindi speaking regions. They led to anti-Hindi demonstration resulting in violence. Provincialism is encouraged by the separate languages. The demands of each region for a separate state is led largely by literate, urban and middle class interests. Their associations act pressure groups in attaining their political power. Separate statehood movements, varying in their popularity and intensity, exist in many parts of India. The political demand of Akali Dal of Sikhs in Punjab for a separate Khalistan is rooted in regional fanaticism. The Dal is at present a very powerful group of extremist Sikhs resorting to agitational politics and indulging in wide spread violence.
Pressure groups which operate as caste, language and community based organizations propagate and incite sectarian feelings to mobilize mass support and thereby serve their objectives. The government's opposition to parochial feelings of casteism, communalism, regionalism, and provincialism has not weakened community organizations. On the other hand, the government's opposition to their demands has resulted in the form of community outbursts leading to strikes and sometimes outburst of violent acts. Some communal organizations emerge in the form of extreme communalist pressure groups and play communal politics by trading a communal hatred against other communities. Such communal groups are a threat to the unity and integrity of the country and are dealt with strong hand by the government and public protest. As political mobilization has increased, the role of communal and regional pressure groups has also increased. Electoral politics and the democratic process involve these groups into active politics. The political parties often invoke casteism and regionalism to seek their support. The regional units in the Indian federation, being separate, self-sustaining help the growth of opposition pressure groups and parties by providing them an arena for effective operation without having to extend nationally. Their size number and homogeneity or heterogeneity also affect the functioning of groups politics and their participation in the electoral politics. If the regions are large in size and few in number, they encourage the tendency to organize groups on a regional basis. Where they are relatively homogenous, pressure groups tend to be influenced by regional solidarity as we observe in Andhra, Punjab and several hilly regions of India.
Besides, caste community and language based pressure groups, economic interests are also more organized and active in India. It is the pace of industrial development and consequent growth of political consciousness in India since Independence which created a favorable climate for the industrialization of the country and growth in agricultural production. The level of economic growth and pace of industrialization along with the spread of education in articulating people in defending their interests and in converting them into a potential pressure groups have resulted in the emergence of strong trade union movement in India. The exploitation of factory workers by the capitalist class at the beginning of the present century led to the formation of trade unions in India. During nationalist movement, the all India Trade Union Congress was established in 1920. Later, it had fallen under Communist control. The Indian National Trade Union Congress, formed under the auspices of the congress Party in 1947, is the labour front of that party. When the Socialist Party defected from Congress in 1948, it established another labour front of the workers, namely Hind Mazdoor Sabha. The Communist Party of India has been constantly worked hard on the labour front and dominates the All India Union Congress. Trade Unions are spread throughout the country. Demand for higher wages improvement in working conditions and working hours, safeguard against arbitrary for participation in management and such other facilities in the interest of the workers are the common functions of every trade union. It is the spokesmen of labour interest and has been articulating labour demands at all fronts. On many occasions, trade unions have played the successful role of pressure groups in forcing the management and the government to accede to the labour demand of better working conditions.
The Indian business community has also emerged as a powerful pressure groups by influencing public policy in favour of top businessmen. Several trade and industrial organizations exist in India, but most important to business and industries are the chambers of commerce which stands for the protection of the business interests of industrialists and seeks all possible facilities and industrial concessions for the business community. The business community seem political affiliation to gain favour in the legislative matters. Important as are the business associations with the ruling political party, it there are other methods too by which big industrialists bring their influence to bear. A big business such as the Biral or Tata groups of companies is a highly effective pressure group which makes extensive use of its patronage to pressurize legislators and administrators who have favours to offer.

For a land so overwhelmingly rural there is little specific representation of peasant interests. Indian peasants, as is well known, do not command the educated leadership required for the articulation of their interests. Peasants are patronized by political parties which usually have political motives and purposes going considerably beyond the improvement of India, the Indian National Congress organized peasants and formed their association as a means of mobilizing the rural masses for the nationalist causes. The Congress could not, however make it strong organization for championing the interests of the peasants, since this would have brought the party into conflict with the landlords which it also wished to include in the freedom struggle. Later, communist controlled Kissan Sabha, that is, Farmers Association emerged. Other parties also created the Farmers Forum as the peasants wing of the
party. Since Independence, peasant struggles are witnessed in several states for ameliorating the socio-economic status of the peasants. However, due to widespread illiteracy and economic backwardness, most peasants and labourers remain unorganized, but the recent concern of the Government, intensified by enormous financial aid to agricultural purposes, 20 points programme and several concessions to the peasants have brought relief to India’s agrarian class. As a result, there has emerged the powerful peasants or the farm lobby. The political parties are very well conscious of their dependence on the votes and the influence of the peasants and their organizations.

India’s power system is developing with new dimensions with the emergence of the Indian Youth, particularly, or student community, as a new power force in public life. Student power is diffused and is vocal socio-economic and political levels. It is difficult to define the manumits of student power but it exists with all its fury. It is difficult to be located like the other pressure groups in society. Quantitatively, it has a big energy force behind it and it has increased its tempo by its alliance with political forces. It is under a magical spell of communist philosophy. Student unrest is visible all over the world. Indian society at present is passing through the strains of transformation. The emergence of student unrest and student pressure groups seem to be a part of it and represents their response to the need of transforming the society into a democratic and egalitarian one. This well-established fact that the youth and literate students form an important section of society. Their new emerging power perspective has asserted their importance in society and their activities
now contribute to the political development in the country. In the process of modernization this seems to be a new dimension in which the young mind is functioning to feel the responsibility of making its own destiny and we hope that this transitional phase in due course of time will give them proper place in modern developing society of Indian.

Rural India and rural society form as very important segment of Indian population. Since independence, political mobilization is taking place faster in rural areas than in urban areas in spite of rural poverty and illiterate population. Expansion of political participation in rural areas is the result of the advent of universal adult suffrage in the make of country’s independence. Village factions are very common. Inevitably village conflicts are drawn into the elections to elective bodies. The establishment of Panchayati Raj has given direct impetus to the rural masses to participate in constituting elected bodies to manage public affairs of every days concern to them. Panchayati Raj is the basis of democratic decentralization for rural India. It sets up a three tiers of Panchayati Raj institution, providing for a Gram Panchayat at the village level, a Janpada Panchayat at the Block level and the Zila Parishad at the district level, besides the Nyaya Panchayats. Political parties and pressure groups have great stake in Panchayati Raj institutions at the village, block and district levels. They are interested in awakening the rural masses politically, rallying them round their programme and ideological stand and thus prepare a favourable political atmosphere and a strong rural base to win elections at the centre and the State levels. They play an important role in defining goals for a developing Panchayati Raj and thus encouraging the rural society to work for these goals.
The rural pressure groups may be divided simply into those protecting sectional interests and those which exist to promote the rural causes. By encouraging the wider political participation pressure groups are said to extend the liberal democratic concept of representation in the Panchayati Raj in rural India. It may be said that pressure groups provide the only source of opposition to the ruling political party.

The Rural elite groups have emerged in the village Panchayats and rural society. Panchayati Raj politics has come to be identified with rural politics and consequently with the rural socio-economic and political power structure. The Panchayats have assumed the role of basic elected institutions in the rural system and have become the key focus in all development plans of the villages. The rural elites has thus emerged as a catalytic agent of rural development in all aspects. Often the rural elite with its higher social, educational and economic status have their links with their counterparts in the upper level elite strata. As a result of the above factors, the rural elite is also a better recipient of political information. Its members make greater use of the modern means of communication such as newspapers, radio, television etc., Since a majority of the upper positional elite belongs to a high social economic and educational background, it has emerged as a segment of politically powerful pressure group which holds socio-economic superiority and enhances its prospects of access to political power and also helps it to become politically resourceful.

**NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIAN PRESSURE GROUPS:**

As we have seen pressure groups are playing a very vital and dominant
role in the process of political mobilization as well as political modernization. Since Independence, the opposition parties and varied and varied socio-economic groups are driven into the politics of pressure. Sometimes, even the ruling political party is fragmented from within resulting in caste, linguistic and regional lobbies which weaken the party organization. Before Independence, the Indian National Congress, as the party of the freedom movement, claimed unity and loyalty. Due to deep—rooted feeling of nationalism, the Congress in its early years of birth, endured persistent regional stresses. The stresses and factionalism within the congress were not always visible beneath a surface unity. Yet they were there from the start. The Hindi-speaking regions as a powerful regional groups dominated the Congress. As a result, the non-Hindi regions have had to fight for their appropriate representation in Congress bodies against Hindi speaking provinces of Utter Prades, Bihar and Mahakoshal region of Madhya Pradesh. The representation of non Hindi regions in the congress came about only with the persistent demand of the regional groups concerned. It is only under pressure from the non-Hindi regions that the ruling congress agreed to the reorganization of provinces on linguistic basis in 1956.

The Congress unity was threatened most fundamentally saw after Independence with the decision by the Congress Government to designate Hindi in the Devnagri scripts as the federal language. This decision provoked non-Hindi Congress leaders, particularly of the South who opposed vehemently to such an arbitrary thrusting of Hindi upon the people of the South. Many illustration can be cited to convince that parochial pressure groups based on
language and region are active and powerful even today in India’s political system. These forces are a threat to the unity and integrity of India.

The other political parties of India are also inflected with sectarian feelings. However, their common demand is a more revolutionary policy for the socio-economic development of the country. The modern power forces which are now growing with new dimensions with the emergence of the peasants, the educated unemployment youth, the student community and such other power forces in all spheres of life, are closely associated with such parties as powerful pressure groups. No doubt, a number of political parties in opposition to the party in power are operating as interest articulating groups in all states. They may or may not be designated as pressure groups, but their motives are undoubtedly political. These pressure groups succeed in their group feelings to mobilize public support and thereby fulfill (serve) their objectives. It is observed that with widespread education and growing opportunities for jobs, economic progress of the people is the real concern of almost all categories of pressure groups in India.¹³

An outstanding characteristic of the pressure groups in India is that dominant and privileged interests are getting organized as pressure groups. There is found a constant interaction under the impact of democratic politics between such infra-structural bases as religion, caste, region and the like on the one hand and category of profession or occupation on the other. Regarding the role and attitude of political parties towards pressure groups in terms of sponsorship and control it is observed that political parties patronize pressure groups in their own interest. Some political parties born of people’s political
frustration are in fact pressure groups organized to achieve group interest. It may be said that the intra-party factions within the ruling Congress party of India have reduced these factions to the position of pressure groups within the party.

A characteristic of the pressure groups of India is that many of them are neither political parties nor effective pressure groups. They may be called "Fronts" which come into existence to accomplish short-lived needs of a section of the people. Political parties and pressure usually articulate the interests of the wider section of people. Our people, by and large, have demonstrated a remarkable capacity for political wisdom. In spite of limitations imposed by widespread illiteracy and other concomitants of socio-economic backwardness, the Indian electorate has politically behaved admirably and displayed powers of shrewd judgment. In recent years, in spite of many factors calling for an integrated and dispassionate approach to politics, almost every political party in India has fallen into a sort of dismay due to non-fulfillment of party's objectives. It is perhaps not possible in the present day conditions of India's to have party system as nearly as possible fashioned on the pattern of British party system. In India, the masses are faced with numerous social, economic and political levels. Pressure groups in India have succeeded in fulfilling group's objectives to possible extent. Some pressure groups, therefore, play the temporary role of a Front to achieve its objective in a limited sphere. Such Fronts aim at achieving a particular objectives related to farmers, students and other categories of professions. There are also found various fronts within a party. Since fronts which, as in many western countries have reshaped society.
Hence one of the characteristic features of pressure groups is the birth of more fronts or rather than pressure groups in Indian political system.

Another characteristic feature of pressure groups in India’s that they are mostly loose organizations of persons articulating limited sectional interest of people or a locality characterized by factional conflicts. The group conflict is not ideological but personal. It is characterized by shifting political loyalties. Alliances, splits and group bickering are witnessed because of mutual convenience and political ambitions of the group leaders. Factional conflict broadens the base of participation within the party as each faction competes for wider groups support. In the name of caste and religion, the pressure groups have politicized them factionalism may lead to immobility and non-accomplishment of the group’s objective as each faction tries to pull down the other. The group’s main objective is lost in wilderness. The factional character of the Indian National Congress was witnessed from its very foundation and is seen even today. The inside factions within various groups of the congress party ultimately gave birth to opposition groups to the congress government. Rifts between the Prime Minister and Congress Presidents over implementation of economic problems and inability of the Government to take effective measure towards socialism led to governing inside factions within the party and its powerful constituent groups. The Presidential election of 1969 increased the factionalism between the Government and the organizational wings of the party to the point of open conflicts among variant influential groups within the Congress. Several times the congress was split among several loose groups representing vested interest of the groups. The present ruling Congress (I)
party came out successful in securing the support of the electorates in the elections due to loose and factional nature of opposition groups.

Pressure groups in India are further characterized by weak socio-economic and political programmers. They lack definite policy and therefore to attract public mobilization in their interests. It if often seen that the political promises championed by sectional pressure groups are hardly fulfilled. People lose faith in the leadership of such groups. They begin to realize that the leaders of these groups have personal ambitions to fulfil by making their followers as their political tools. The absence of a viable democratic alternative and a powerful pressure group to the ruling congress party in India which has been continuously in power at the centre as also in most of the States since independence is one the major factors militating against democracy in India. Multiplicity of opposition groups and the consequent splitting up of the opposition votes has enabled the congress party to capture majority and form the government in successive elections on the political strength of getting just about 40 percent of the polled votes. In some elections to State legislatures, the congress failed to get a clear majority. The absence of any one single party in the opposition resulted in the formation of conditional governments which were downed to failure from their very inception. The electorates desire a change but they do not see any single powerful group in the opposition which might provide a viable democratic alternative to the congress party in the government. It is, therefore, imperative that the influential groups in the opposition get polarized to be able to provide an alternative to the ruling party. Pressure groups in India instead of functioning as ineffective loose and divide
amongst themselves due to groups inner rifts will have to take courageous
decisions and be ready to merge, on a principled basis, in fronts blocs or
groups which may serve the winder and genuine cause of the people and not
merely the pursuit any sectional benefit.

An outstanding characteristic of pressure groups in India is that they are
mostly racial, caste, linguistic, religious or regional groups and this basic factors
of self-consciousness has depended existing rifts or cleavages away than.
These divisions and mutual conflicts of religion, language, caste and tribe have
posed a national problem and a serious threat to the secularism, unity and
integrity of India. We are witnessing ugly political scenes in Punjab, in the
South and in the tribal areas of India. These social variables however,
represent the traditional social; conception of class consciousness and play a
deterministic role in mostly backward areas of the country. However, with
growing educational facilities, political consciousness and tremendous pressure
change, these communities based on caste, language, religion etc., are being
transformed as agencies of modernization. In modern polity, economic factors
play a relatively more deterministic role. Hence, pressure groups advocating
the cause of the down-trodden masses and preaching economic ideologies are
greatly patronized by the people as well as political parties. A pressure group
representing casteism, religion, language or a regional issues lowers its image
in the public eye, because of its supporting cleavages in Indian society instead
of national unity.

A further characteristic of a pressure group is that it has an objective of
immediate socio-economic or political gain. The leaders of most of the pressure
groups seldom depict integrity and devotion to the public cause. Sometimes, public leaders constitute new pressure groups out of personal despondency or their failure to achieve political award because a winning political party which is supported by such groups in elections fails to oblige them. Indian pressure groups are not yet as influential and politically as mature as we find them in European democratic countries where they function as a political power. In India, many of the pressure groups are often indulging in creating problems for maintenance of law and order by resisting to violence strikes, ‘bandhs’ etc., In spite of the weakness of the pressure groups in India, it may be observed, however, that national and political consciousness has certainly increased in the wake of independence. Some pressure groups representing business, trade unions and peasants are playing an effective role in the legislative and decision making processes in their close association with major political parties of the country and their leaders. People have certainly become conscious of their rights. Many of them are becoming a leveler in socio-economic disparities and are gradually getting submerged in political affiliations. There is growing consciousness of obligations among followers of a group towards the community. Pressure groups are thus emerging as powerful, influential and organized lobbies of socio-economic and political transformation.

**TYPOLOGY OF ACTIVITIES:**

It might be expected in Indian social conditions, caste would form the ideal and the most popular base for a pressure, but in fact we find fewer pressure groups with exclusive caste affiliations. Caste divisions and caste antagonisms alone are no more powerful characteristic features of a pressure
group. On the other hand, all pressure groups now aim at implementation of socialist programmers aiming at socio-economic equality in the society. The education would appear to provide political parties and pressure groups with a high proportion of their most consistent supporters.

The week organizational base of the pressure groups in India, combined with their lack of access to patronage, has made them very much dependent upon the quality of their leadership. Even since independence, the people of India, both at the urban and rural levels, have been engaged in a constant struggle for establishing a socialist democratic Republic. This struggle for socio-economic renovation has been in progress till now. While this transition continues in an political life with the implementation of country's Five Year Plans, 20 Point Programme and several other programmers, doubts are expressed from many quarters about the real participation of the masses and the genuine leadership of the people in the implementation of these programmers. Elections play a powerful role in a democratic system. The elections become the determinant factors that shape the character of the leaders and the destiny of the nation. Successful government, whatever might be its nature, always depends and prompt implementation. All that is commonly required is that the leader must claim popular representation and possess qualities of democratic leadership of encouraging and enthusing the people to play their respective role in developmental work. Traditional leadership of representative bodies could not be expected to possess the qualities required for a new leadership is based on caste, age, wealth etc., Traditional leadership depended on natural qualities of birth, whereas the new leader of a pressure
groups which attempts to influence decision makers does not, however, confine itself to the local polity which remains the principal stage of his preparation and emergence. It pre-supposes higher levels of operation such as a region the state and ultimately the national. Local politics figures predominantly at a regional or local level. The sum total of various local issues forms the framework of state level political activity. The politically conscious leadership links the locality to state and the state to the nation. The environmental factor characterized by too rigid devotion to one’s caste, language, religion of region is not congenial for the growth of healthy leadership of pressure groups in India. These factors continue to be effective, though, the degree of their influence has varied from area to area. The role of traditional factors is on the decline, but economic power or wealth still remains the most important base of leadership. To some extent education is also believed to be playing a vital role in the make-up of leaders of pressure groups established for rural emancipation.

An important landmark in leadership pattern is a new emerging elite in our pressure groups system. Political elite, as distinct from other types of elite comprise the power holders of a body-politics from which leaders emerge. Leadership is essentially a sum total of the degree and extent of influence to which the rest of the members of a group are amenable. A leader of a pressure group is an influential person of the groups and account of his personal qualities of character and his past contribution to the service of the group which he represents. The followers of the groups are the loyal followers of the group leader and his commands. A leader subordinates his personal interest to the
cause of the group. At times, the leader has to undergo personal sufferings. A group leader’s guidance and direction are supposed to be accepted by the group people because they consist of various factors such as a sense of common good, charismatic appeal, personal influence and so on. A modern group leader regards himself as a public servant who is oriented to the goals of the community. In a developing country, as in India, group leadership has to function in societies in which there is widespread poverty, illiteracy and economic inequality. It is in these conditions of under development that new patterns of leadership are emerging in urban and rural India. These new leaders, who belong to the traditional social status and economic power to gain entry into positions of power in the local, regional and national bodies of policy formation and political decision-making.

The performance and development of leadership pattern in India received new impetus after Independence. The constitution of India aims at creating `a socialist pattern of society', in which there will be greater equalization of opportunity and amore equitable distribution of income, power and privilege. The Indian Five Year Plans have been explicitly oriented to the achievement of the egalitarian ideals enshrined in the Constitution. The social objectives they seek are to raise the standard of living, especially of the privileged sections of society. But it should be noted that the egalitarian values embodied in the Constitutions of India and various social and economic legislations, have not brought about any significant transformation of social and economic inequalities in the existing order. Poverty continues a pervasive phenomenon. The human dignity and freedom is, therefore, meaning less
unless the masses are liberated from the vicious circle of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and disease. The western educated, and economically prosperous groups maintain their control over positions of political power because they monopolies access to the decision–makers. In India, no doubt, there are numerous pressure groups representing socio-economic and political interest, but many of the so-called pressure groups of India have no strong voice in influencing governmental policy. The association of some of the pressure groups with political parties is not publicized. The leaders of such pressure groups desert the group on petty inside rifts in the groups with political parties is not publicized. The leaders of such pressure groups desert the group on petty inside rifts in the group. A few pressure groups are headed by strong leaders and they have succeed in their demands. In West Bengal, for example, the politics of protest by various pressure groups weakened the Congress Party and non-congress Governments came to power. Tribal communities are coming into forefront as powerful pressure groups in modern socio-political life. Tribal groups are in evidence in the north-east hilly regions, in Assam, Bihar, Orissa and in other states. Their leaders are also very vocal about their demand for education, economic, economic development and greater autonomy. The Jhardkhhand group in Bihar is a political force in that State. Though the approach of the various pressure groups and their leaders has been constitutional and democratic in meeting their demands, sometimes, the leaders of some groups resort to violent methods which is deplorable as we witness in Punjab. Leaders of students organizations have also been active in the current politics of the country. The new leaders are mostly utilizing the technique of protest and dissent to gain popularity.
The introduction of modern democratic institution of political decision-making along with the introduction of democratically elected new institutions of political participation such as Panchayats, party membership and cooperative bodies have brought about important changes in the leadership pattern of pressure groups in India. The pre-independence freedom movements representing the national will and unity of the Indian people, irrespective of caste, colour or creed for liberation from colonial bondage. Pre-independence unity weakened social, religious, regional and political differences. After Independence, the combination of linguistic, religious and regional pressure split the national unity and a new leadership emerged that was responsive to caste, cultural affinity, local and regional needs. The emergence of this new leadership was further fostered by the introduction of community development programmers and the promotion of institutions of local self-government, such as Panchayati Raj and other type of elected bodies. This has strengthened and separatist forces of casteism, linguism and regionalism, and brought about a change in the attitudes an styles of modern leadership of pressure groups. The social, religious, tribal, peasant and workers’ group are being exploited by leaders motivated by a desire for personal gain and for benefiting their own group at the cost of national interest.

Rajni Kothari writes: “Both in the course of the national movement and since independence there took place a significant shift in leadership from the Westernized modernists to the traditionalist modernizers-. The electoral and democratic process has shifted the levers of power from the hands of the first generation leadership to those in charge of state and district organizations,
caste federations, and rural panchayats and cooperatives. The important point here is not that this new leadership does not speak the idiom of the more Westernized elites at the national level for in fact they are well socialized in the Nehruvain concepts of democracy and socialism which have acquired respectability at all levels but rather that their style of communication and organization is not as remote and alien as that of the higher ups. Their interpretation of religious and caste symbols is more acceptable, and their cross cutting between the secular and the scared establish them as the natural interpreters of the national political culture".15

Studies of pressure group leadership seek to point out the emergence of better educated and comparatively young leadership. In rural India, leadership positions among various pressure groups have been acquired by persons belonging to high caste and as such enjoying social status, possessing wealth and holding power caste, economic power, personal influence and power thus go together in the emergence of leadership positions in rural India. In urban India, the personal image of the leader his selfless services toward the promotion of a particular groups interests over a long period, the nature of the cause which the leader advocates, that is, whether the cause is national and not confined to a particular sect or caste and the popularity which the leader gains among their followers of his group, determine ultimately the success of the leaders of the pressure groups. With Independence and in the wake of universal adult franchise accompanied with decentralization of power, there has been spurt of opposition groups headed by professional leaders whose loyalties to the groups have been shifting to suit their personal political gains
with the spread of education in the country. Student population has enormously increased. The dynamism of student power is being exploited by various pressure groups to sent their political ends. Student politicization and the politics of dissent and protest which student community has mostly adopted to buy popularity has developed new leaders and leadership comparatively young leadership is thus emerging among the present pressure groups of India.

Pressure groups do not appeal to the electorate on the basis of any programme but they are concerned with specific socio-economic or political issues. They are not solely political organizations like political parties and donot aim at forming the government. They do not directly put up candidates for election. They are groups of persons with common interests and may endeavour to affect the course of public affairs without attempting to gain formal control of the government. There pressure groups which do not directly or indirectly exercise any political pressure, but which by their association with the major political parties of the country influence political decisions. Besides the above mentioned pressure groups, these have emerged in Independent India pressure groups representing the unions of different categories of civil servants and presscoring the government to raise their salary scales and provide other economic facilities. The proliferation of pressure groups of all types in a free and democratic society and their growing influence on policy formulating agencies, particularly, the legislative organ have given an importance and status to the pressure groups. The powerful pressure groups, particularly commercial organizations have close relationship with legislators in influencing effectively public policy. The pressure group lobby is often
designated a legislature behind a legislature or which is called ‘anonymous empire’. The political parties seek the support of the pressure groups. It is true that pressure groups based on caste community, language and region invoke narrow sectarian and parochial feelings to mobilize mass support. However, with growing political consciousness and spread of education, sectarian considerations are no more the yard stick to assess a pressure group’s political strength.

Pressure groups are emerging to seek all round economic welfare of the people in response to the changing social, economic and political conditions in post-independent India. Obviously the most challenging problem for Indian democracy has been to safeguard the unity and integrity of the country against too locally oriented politics of pressure groups.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


2. Shri. Ram Maheshwari, “Anomic Situations and Political Legitimacy in India,” Political Science Review (Jaipur), January – December 1974, p. 188.


