CHAPTER – VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study of pressure groups occupies a very important place in modern political systems, whether western or non-western. There was a time when these pressure groups were viewed with alarm and moral indignation. It was held that they lead to a distortion of democratic process. However pressure groups came to be gradually recognized by society as indispensable and today they are regarded not only as a necessary evil but as a healthy factor in political dynamics. Organized groups may be regarded as a system of private government while the organs of state represent a system of public government.

The development of ‘pressure groups’ in India’s political system was generally regarded as a vital element for political modernization but gradually they emerged as the most dominant interest articulators in India. Since independence they have failed to promote greater social and economic interests and have become more powerful to protect communal interests of caste, community, region, religion etc., Thus, ‘unity in diversity’, the basic inherent motto of Indian political democracy, is facing a great threat and challenge. It is only due to the increasing influence of ‘pressure groups’ in Indian polities, India has been failure to strengthen the spirit of ‘nation building’ and to inculcate the ethos of meaningful ‘citizenship’ in the society.¹ There needs to be a political cultue which is to be shared equally by all citizen independent of their respective religious or cultural identity. It should essentially be neutral and separated from all particularistic cultures and ‘narrow-collective’ identities.
Pressure groups can address controversial issues which political parties might initially seek to avoid and likely also that as new issues reach the political agenda new pressure groups can be formed to address these issues. Pressure groups enable their members and supporters to participate more fully in the political process on a continuing basis between general elections and this likely to enhance political understanding and thereby to strengthen support for the liberal democratic system as a whole.

Pressure groups may also sometimes be able to provide governments with important information not otherwise available to them thereby improving government decision making. Once policy has been decided relevant pressure groups may also encourage their members to carry out government policy and may also scrutinize government performance to assess whether policies are being implemented effectively. Pressure groups may contribute to government effectiveness by stimulating debate by the provision of useful information by help with the implementation of policy and the scrutiny of government performance. Pressure groups indirectly help to ensure that citizens do not turn to more radical methods in their attempts to pressurize the government so that pressure groups are seen as providing a safety valve preventing establishing opposition to government and thereby increasing the overall legitimacy of liberal democratic political system, pressure groups activity may in some cases underline in various respects the principle of liberal democracy. ²

It is claim that liberal democratic governments favour disproportionately the interest of well funded well organized pro-capitalist pressure groups because governments depend for their very survival on the profitability and
efficiency of private capitalism on which in turn levels of employment living standards and economic growth depend, Governments are therefore unlikely to introduce policies which are not supported by private enterprises. Further more pro-capitalist pressure groups are likely to be granted insider status which means that their negotiations with government are often secretive which under mines both their own and government’s accountability to the general public.

Most pressure groups apart from trade unions, are joined mainly by relatively affluent middle class people and most pressure groups leaders who may not be chosen by especially democratic methods are even more likely to be middle class although we cannot automatically assume that pressure groups middle class members and leaders will not attempt to represent the interests of other social groups.

The dynamics and role of pressure groups on the politics and the present constitutional government of India. Observed their present day made of functioning and achievements in the Socio-economic and political areas. Along with political parties, pressure groups have emerged more active and purposive in the wake of the transformation of urban and rural society of India brought about by the expansion of industrial enterprises, a growth-oriented approach as the basic thrust of the industrial policy and a radical transformation of urban and rural society (mainly agrarian) structure as a consequence of the decentralization of powers by establishing panchayati raj, community development programmers a revised 20-point programme announced in the two houses of Parliament on August 20, 1986 with a major thrust on poverty alleviation programmes so that they reach all the poor in every village. The
reconstructed programmers renews the commitment to eradicating poverty, raising productivity, reducing income inequalities, reducing income inequalities, removing social and economic disparities and improving the quality of life.  

With the widespread socio-economic and political reforms in the country, particularly since India’s independence, there has been an unprecedented proliferation of political parties and pressure groups which tend to multiply in India at such prodigious rates and are found scattered throughout the length and breadth of India. Many of them are made up of people, who cluster round economically. Well off and influential local leaders or hang on to sheer parochialisms. Many of the regional political parties and pressure groups come to life during election time then go into oblivion till the next election.

The recent electoral reform that reduced the voter’s age for the Lok Sabha and the State Assembly to the Constitution has resulted in an increase in the number of voters by 47 millions. This is indication of the faith of the government in the political maturity of the people. India is a fast developing country and is definitely on the way to socio-economic amelioration of its rapidly growing population. Seven Five – Year Plans have been implemented for the economic prosperity of the country. The Eighth Five Year Plan (1990-95) is envisages an overall growth rate in various sectors – agriculture, industrial, domestic products, export etc., Education is also on the increase. The National Policy on Education approved by the Parliament in 1986, accords a very high priority to the programmers of Universalization of Elementary Education to ensure essential minimum education to all children upto the age of the 14 years. A new drive called ‘Operation Blackboard’ to improve the basic
infra – structure for primary schools has been launched. All these factors have contributed to the political awareness of the matter leading to the multiplication of political parties and factions which operates as pressure groups and interest groups.\textsuperscript{4}

Pressure groups make important contribution to democratic politics. They play an indispensable function in identifying the multifarious interest in society to which the political system must respond. Very little work has been done on the study of pressure groups in India. The importance of the study of pressure groups has been increasingly recognized in recent years. Many pressure groups work from within and not publicly. By permitting a more precise expression of specific interest than can be expected through the political parties, pressure groups may prevent a sense of alienation and enhance the stability of the system. Both political parties and pressure groups have become more issue oriented as a result of the shift to public relations techniques. The expansion of programmers of public relations by business, industries, and pressure groups aim to control government policy by controlling or molding public opinion in group’s interest. The aim of pressure groups is to persuade the government in seeking favour in group’s interest. Many of the powerful pressure groups can always count on having a considerable number of supporters in the Lok Sabha. They can generally find a group of members sympathetic to their point of view on issues that come up. They constantly trying to create opinion in the house and in the country by wide publicity. The highly organized and well financed pressure groups have their headquarters in New Delhi the seat of the Union Government of India. The pressure of these
Pressure groups are very much in existence in India though the study of pressure groups as such is a comparatively recent one. Their actual extent of influence on decision making process is difficult to assess. Many pressure groups associate with political parties and assist the parties in an anonymous manner. Pressure groups in India are not considered so significant as in U.S.A due to nature of government. U.S.A has a Presidential type of government which based on separation of the legislature, executive and judiciary. There is separation of the powers. The powerful business groups assist the major political parties in winning the Presidential Election. Lobbying is, therefore, a common practice in USA in the American Congress. In India due to parliamentary types of government, instead of separation of powers, there is cohesion between the executive and the legislature. The Cabinet is responsible to the Legislature and thereby form the government. The party-system is therefore, very important in India, and pressure groups are considered the outer wings of the party. Nevertheless, as said before, the large business, industrial, occupational, professional, labour, youth federations and other associations of citizens in modern India are growing in importance as powerful and influential pressure groups for molding and expressing public opinion.
people find them very convenient mouth pieces or agencies for political expression.

Pressure groups play a very significant role in the political system of India. We have analysed their operational mechanisms at different levels of government, their functioning techniques and the performance of powerful pressure groups within parliament and State Legislatures. The most disturbing features of the present day Indian political scene are, perhaps, the multiplicity and heterogeneous nature of our political parties and numerous pressure groups based on caste and creed race, region and language. Among the political parties, there is the lack of a consensus about fundamentals even a commitment to democratic methods for the achievement of political objectives the presence of the `rightist' and the `leftist' faction within practically every political party. The electoral apparatus simply provides the means for the exercise of voter – sovereignty. The political parties perform the major function by mobilizing public opinion in support of the party's manifesto on the eve of general elections to parliamentary and assembly seats. In perhaps less obvious ways, the organized and unorganized groups, designated as interest groups and pressure groups also perform similar function by structuring pattern of choices for the citizens relating to political parties, candidates and to general policies. This kind of popular participation in the political process of the country's democratic government is certainly less apparent but it is nonetheless as real and important. It is, in fact, one of the most obvious forms of influence and the channel of influence which such pressure groups direct to country's major political parties, public policies and public officials, but their techniques of
functioning often remain anonymous and goes unnoticed as a form of political pressure.

The concept of pressure group serves to fill much of the void in democratic theory. Political parties are the main popular agencies to decide the political rulers of the State. However, the powerful pressure groups actively assist political parties with men and money power to win elections. Thereafter, they bring all types of pressures, politics parties to secure legislative and administrative benefit for gaining the groups interest. The purpose of the pressure groups is thus to achieve influence over specific policies rather than to achieve control over the government as a whole. The political party concentrate mainly on winning elections, but the pressure groups never submits it own candidates. The pressure group may be vitally concerned with every stage of the election process, but it does not campaign in favour f the groups though it is as much interested influencing policy as it is elections. Hence it is an organized groups attempt to seek legislative favours in policy decisions without officially entering election contests. A great expansion has been brought about since independence in India’s industrial growth, education and at all levels of socio-economic and cultural life of the people. This has resulted in spontaneous group life in ever increasing number. The mass circulation of newspapers, mail service, telephone, radio, television, fast means of modern communication have made it possible for people from all pars of the country and with common motives to establish personal contact to discuss their shared attitudes to form new pressure groups like multifarious, commercial and business associations, bankers’ associations, unions of students, teachers, civil servants, rural and
urban labourers etc., The immediate objective of gaining access to the key points by decision making agencies in government.\textsuperscript{7}

The alienation of pressure groups from each other and from the political system as a whole is the key note of sub-culture, and their creation is historically attributable to the unevenness of social and economic change. A fragmented political culture arises not merely from the unevenness of change but also from the conflict and interaction between a rigid class system and a newly emerging industrial society. In India, most of the pressure groups operate in the filed of economic activity. As already said, the labour unions in India have been highly political. The All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) and many other labour unions are powerful pressure groups seeking better working facilities, an they have greatly succeeded in raising economic conditions of the labour class in India. The huge economic power of the business houses the Birlas, Tatas, Mafatlals and singhanias and others have increased enormously since Independence. For example, the federation of India Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the first among the top business organizations, has contributed much in the formulation of successive Five Year Plans of India. The assets of the top 20 big business houses have increased enormously with Tatas at the top with their assets amounting to Rs. 4,939 crores while the Birlas ranked second with their assets amounting to Rs. 4,771 crores in 1986-87.\textsuperscript{8} These business houses are indeed very powerful business lobbies. With the money power which these business pressure groups posses, they provide finances for elections to political parties and they also maintain organizations to influence political and
administrative decision makers. We have witnessed the General Elections to the national parliament and state assemblies since the First General Election held in 1952 upto Fourteenth General Elections to Lok Sabha held in April, 2007. The General Elections to the Parliament and State Assemblies were held simultaneously till 1970. In 1971 this policy was given up. The national and state elections are de linked and held separately. It was probably the divergence or clash of interests between national and stage parties that prompted this change. However in Ninth Lok Sabha Elections of 1989, simultaneous elections to the state Assemblies were held in Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh.

In these General Elections, we have particularly observed the influence of the business lobby. The elections in India have greatly politicized the society and socio-economic pressure groups. The major pressure groups are competing for political power.

The main reason for the birth of multiple pressure groups in India is the existence of numerous political parties of varied interests that have come into existence since Independence. Of the hundred and odd parties scattered throughout the country at national and state levels hardly a score of these political parties deserve notice. The rest is made up of the people, who cluster round local leaders and are mainly interested in local problems. Many of these parties are communal in character supported by communal pressure groups. Many of the pressure groups came to life during election time and then go into oblivion till the next election. They exist only to swell the number of candidates during election cloud the major issues, and spread confusion all round. Our reason for the multiple political parties and pressure groups is that polarization
of political parties did not take place in India. The Indian National Congress
dominated the politics of India for a long time. The Sixth General Election
(March 1977) dethroned the Congress government and brought the Janata
Government to power. The birth of the Janata Party was the outcome of the
great dissatisfaction, people’s annoyance and suspension of the fundamental
rights of the citizens as a result of the declaration of an emergency by the
President on 26th June 1975. This emergency was lifted after the results of the
sixth general elections were announced, namely on the 22nd March 1977.

The social groups, particularly the communal groups of India are
projecting a dangerous problem top the peace, unity and integrity of India. The
growing menace of communalism should engage the attention of the
government and the political parties of the country. Have already mentioned
the communal cum regional pressure groups of the Punjab going to the extent
of demanding a separate independent State Punjab to be known as khalistan.
The violent groups of terrorist of the present State of Punjab, in their demand
for greater autonomy of the state. It is really so sad that so many innocent lives
are being taken everyday by the terrorists in the Punjab and in Jammu and
Kashmir. Similarly the regional agitation in the hilly regions of North-East hilly
tracts and elsewhere for autonomy are the present regional instances of
regional pressure groups.

The Ninth Lok Sabha and Assembly elections held in November 1989
and February 1990 witnessed a spirit of several communal and regional
pressure groups supporting or opposing political parties contesting elections.
For example, the Shiva Sena’s Chief Bal Tackeray and the members of the
Shiv Sena actively participated in the election. In Maharashtra, the Shiv Sena in charged to have developed alliance with the `Bhartiya Janata Party if the BJP could come to power in Assembly elections.

The net result of subservient attitude of various towards their like minded political parties has been their inability to exercise any substantial influence over the public policy in the country. Father quite often, one or the other pressure groups appeared to place their services at e disposal of the political parties to use them for advocating the policy decisions taken by the government.

The most significant consequence of the failure of the pressure groups to integrate them with the overall policy process of the country has been to leave the activity of interest articulation to some other illegitimate and extra – constitutional players of the politics whose pet passion appears to be articulation of the interests through the political tactics of the street. Instead of putting forth their argument at the time of the formulation of the policy and reasoning out for an alternative coursed of action, the aberrant social and political formations tend to indulge into agitational politics such as marches, demonstration, strikes  fasts, gheraos, bandhs, and other confrontational techniques which are bound to back fire and result into violence in society.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


