Polity & Governance · GS - II

How do pressure groups influence Indian political process? Do you agree with this view that informal pressure groups have emerged as powerful than formal pressure groups in recent years?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2017	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Interest articulation; lobbying; policy advocacy; collective mobilisation; social media; democratic accountability

Model Answer

Introduction

Pressure groups seek to influence public policy without directly contesting elections for political power. They connect citizens, organised interests and policymakers, thereby shaping India's democratic process.

Influence on the Political Process

- **Policy advocacy:** Industry associations, trade unions and farmers' organisations submit demands and recommendations to governments.
- **Public mobilisation:** Protests, campaigns and strikes bring public attention to neglected issues.
- **Legislative influence:** Expert submissions and consultations can shape bills and regulations.
- **Electoral influence:** Groups may influence voting preferences through endorsements and public campaigns.
- **Accountability:** Civil society organisations monitor governance and expose corruption or rights violations.

Have Informal Groups Become More Powerful?

Informal groups, including online networks, community movements and citizen campaigns, can mobilise rapidly without formal organisational structures. Social media amplifies their reach and helps them influence public debate.

However, formal groups such as established trade unions, professional associations and industry bodies retain advantages in expertise, resources, continuity and direct institutional engagement. Informal mobilisation may also be short-lived, unrepresentative or vulnerable to misinformation.

Conclusion

Informal pressure groups have gained visibility and mobilisation capacity, but they have not universally displaced formal groups. Transparent lobbying, inclusive consultation and accountability can ensure that pressure-group activity strengthens democratic participation.

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