

Popular Struggles and Movements

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS (4 MARKS)

Previous Years' Questions

Q.1. Describe four main features of popular mass struggle for restoring democracy in Nepal.

[Foreign 2008]

Ans. Nepal witnessed an extraordinary popular mass struggle in April 2006 for restoring democracy in Nepal.

Main features :

- In the very first the mass struggle for democracy was launched by a Seven-Party Alliance i.e., SPA. Later the Maoists and other insurgent groups joined hands.
 - The struggle/movement put forward three demands :
 - (i) Restoration of Parliament.
 - (ii) Transfer of power to an all party government.
 - (iii) Constitution of a new Constituent Assembly.
 - Then, there was a call for an indefinite strike by the SPA. The alliance had some members of the parliament and of some other big parties.
 - The Monarchy of Nepal responded by adopting various repressive measures, but the movement could not be suppressed. Here, SPA was not the only organisation supporting the mass upsurge-Nepalese Communist Party (Maoist) was also a part of it. It did not believe in parliamentary democracy. It had opposed the Nepali government and controlled large parts of Nepal.
- Ultimately, the king was forced to concede all the demands and an interim government was immediately formed.

Q.2. Describe four main features of the popular struggle against privatisation of water in Bolivia.

[Foreign 2008]

Ans. Bolivia, a poor country in Latin America, witnessed popular struggles against privatisation of water i.e., it was against an elected democratic government. Main features :

- The story started when the Bolivian elected government sold its municipal water supply rights to a multinational company [MNC]. The company immediately raised the price of water four times.
- In reaction people rose to mass struggle but it was not led by any political party, A new alliance of labour human rights and community leaders organised a successful four-day general strike in the city in January 2000. Ultimately the government agreed to negotiate and the strike was called off. But yet nothing happened.

- Later on, an organisation comprising local professionals, engineers and environmentalists, farmers, confederation of factory workers union, middle class students, street children, formed the FEDECOR. They called another strike in April and the government imposed martial law.
But the power of the people forced the officials of the MNC to free the city and made the government concede the demands of the protesters.
- Lastly, the contract with the MNC was cancelled and water supply was restored to the municipality at old rates. This came to be known as 'Bolivia's water war'.

Q.3. State the similarities and levels of popular mass struggles of Nepal and Bolivia.

[Foreign 2008]

Ans. Nepal and Bolivia had political conflicts which involved mass uprisings and popular struggles. In Nepal, the common man supported the demand for restoring democracy and in Bolivia people supported the struggle against the high handedness of the MNCs over municipal water supply i.e., against the policy of an elected government.

Similarities

Both these struggles were similar on many grounds and shared some common elements, like :

- Both these were the instances of popular political conflict that led to popular struggles.
- In both the cases struggle involved mass mobilisation. Public demonstration of mass support, clinched the dispute.
- Lastly, both instances involved critical role of political organisations.

Level of Popular struggle

The two movements involved mass mobilisation and public demonstration of mass support. Both these struggles showed how democracy evolved all over the world like :

- Democracy evolved through popular struggle.
- Democratic conflict and mobilisation.
- Democracy and political organisation.

Thus, both the struggles reveal that people's participation and the critical role of political organisations led to the success of their struggles.

NCERT Questions

Q.4. Explain how the activities of Pressure Groups are useful in the functioning of a democratic government.

Or

In what ways do Pressure Groups and movements exert influence on politics.

Ans. The activities of pressure groups and movements exert influence on politics as well as democracy in a variety of ways :

- (i) **Gain Public Support and Sympathy** : pressure groups try to gain public support and sympathy for their goals and their activity by carrying out information campaigns, organising, meetings, file petitions, etc.
Most of these groups try to influence the media into giving more attention to these issues.
- (ii) **Role of Invisible Government and Unofficial Government** : pressure groups are part of a under political process. They protect the collective interests of its members and try to influence those in power like the ministers, bureaucrats, politicians, etc, to change the direction of policy and not to capture power.
- (iii) **Articulate, Forms and Linkage of Communication** : Pressure groups articulate the claims of their members. They are a form of linkage and means of communication between the masses and the elite. Pressure groups provide a scope for expending participation and are barometers of the political climate.
- (iv) **Organise Protest Activity** : Pressure groups often organise protest activity like strikes or disrupting government programmes. Workers organisations, employees, associations and most of the movement groups often resort to these tactics in order to force the government to take note of their demand.
In this way Interest Pressure Groups and movements do not directly engage in party politics, they seek to exert influence on political parties.

Additional Questions

Q.5. List out the organisations involved in the mass upsurge of the Nepal's struggle movement.

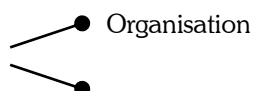
Ans. In Nepal the "Popular Struggle" was accompanied by various organisations which made these struggle successful like :

- (i) In the begining the call for indefinite strike was given by the SPA or the seven party Alliance in Nepal.
- (ii) This alliance included some big parties that had some members in the Parliament.
- (iii) The protest was joined by the "Nepalese Communist party" known as "Maoist" which did not believe in Parliamentary democracy.
- (iv) Later on, all the major labour unions and their federations also joined this movement.
- (v) Many other organisations like the organisation of the indigenous people, teachers, lawyers and human rights groups also extended support to the movement.

In this way, in Nepal the struggle involved many organisations other than Political parties.

Q.6. How do struggle and movements shape democaeey.

Ans. "Struggles and movements" are the principal ways of public participation in politics and democracy as well. They are varied in nature and shape democracy on the basis of popular demands. The nature of struggles and movements can be analysed in the following ways likeinitially in the forms of :



Movement

- (i) Organisations,
- (ii) Movements.

Sometimes they take the forms of pressure groups, Interest groups.

Pressure groups and Interest groups exert influence in their own ways

like :



Sectional	Public	Single-	Long-
Interest	Interest	Issue	Term
Groups	Groups	Movement	Movement

Thus, all these forms and ways of Popular struggle and organisations shape democracy in some of or the other ways.

Q.7. Give a brief description of mobilisation and organisations keeping in view their activities in Nepal and Bolivia ?

Ans. The movement in Nepal was to establish democracy and the struggle in Bolivia was about one specific policy and claims on a elected democratic government.

Popular sturggle in Nepal in the forms of mobilisation and organisations : In Nepal the struggle started as the protest movement by SPA which soon turned into an indefinite strike in which Maxist insurgents and various other organisations joined hands.

The struggle involved many organisations other than Political parties. All the major labour unions and their fedrations joined this movement. Many other organisations like the organisations of the indigenous people, teachers, lawyers, and human rights groups extended support to the movements.

Struggle in Bolivia : The protest against water privatisation in Bolivia was not led by any political party. It was led by an organisation FEDECOR. This organisation comprised local professionals, including environmentalists.

They are supported by a federation of farmers. Confederation of factory worker's unions, middle class students from the university and the city's growing population of homeless street children. The movement was supported by the "Socialist party as well."

Outcome of popular struggle under organisation and mobilisation :

From both these examples we can see that in democracy several different kinds of organisation work behind any big struggle.

Q.8. Examine the methods adopted by the Interest Groups in India to put pressure on Government.

Ans. Individual interest groups generally function in a pragmatic and opportunistic fashion, using any method or technique which they believe will serve their purpose effectively. The techniques and tactics which any particular group uses to put pressure on government will be determined largely by factors like :

- Size of the Group
 - Quality of leadership and staff
 - Relation with the political parties and other organised groups.
- (i) Electioneering : Elections are an object of primary concern to interest groups as these afford them an opportunity of pushing their 'favoured' men into the agencies of administrative mechanism. They use all means to get tickets for their own candidates and finance political parties. This technique is labelled as "electioneering."
- (ii) Conference and Seminars : Conference, seminars, debates, etc, are organised by powerful pressure groups where legislators and administrators are also invited. By these they try to influence the government as well as the opinion.
- (iii) Political parties : The medium of political parties is used by these groups to further their interest. Interest group pressure is sometimes exerted through political parties and Trade unions.
- (iv) Mass demonstration : Interest groups of students, teachers, government servants, and various trade unions often resort to mass demonstrations, hartals, strikes, and civil disobedience.
- (v) Rasta Roko : Sometimes, Rasta Roko, rallies and other types of stir are resorted to by peasants and Kissan Sabhas to put pressure on government.
- (vi) Propagandising : Lastly nowadays the use of media-both press and electronic-is increasing. This is used by the pressure groups to create and articulate public opinion. Pressure groups or Interest groups try to influence the experts, news makers and producers to give more coverage to their activities and to present their case favourably. This technique is called "Propagandising". (Any four)