## These government. they also distribute persuasive literature



These "pressure groups", which are also known as 'interest groups', pursue-their political goals through lobbying – "the process by which individuals and groups communicate with public officials in order to influence decisions of government. They also distribute persuasive literature and launch public campaigns to build grass root support for their political objectives." The pressure groups attempt to force their will on a resistant public. In the view of functionalists, such groups play a constructive role in decision-making. They prepare the ground for the orderly political participation. They also provide legislators with a useful flow of information.

They also provide legislators with a useful flow of information. Conflict theorists, on the other hand, argue that although a few organisations work on behalf of the poor and disadvantaged, most of the pressure groups represent the vested interests of the business leaders, the lobbies of multinational companies, rich professionals and disgruntled political leaders. The conflict theorists further assert that these powerful lobbies discourage political participation by the individual citizens. The enormous lobbying work of the pressure group raises serious questions about who actually rules a democratic nation.

The pressure groups play a greater role in a democracy than in a totalitarian state. The party in power in a totalitarian state does not recognize the existence of such pressure groups and does not tolerate them also. In a democratic system, the role of the pressure groups becomes conspicuous especially at the time of elections. The different levels of electoral process such as filing of nomination or fielding of the candidates, canvassing and campaigning, financing the parties, etc.

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These groups bring heavy pressures to win favours to their side. In spite of their limitations and defects, they have become an essential part of the modern democratic process.