

## Political Elite

The 'elite' are those persons who are recognized as outstanding leaders in a given field that are political, religious, scientific, business and artistic. According to Parry Cheriant, "Elite is a small minority who play an exceptionally influential part in the affairs of society in specific fields." Bank (1966) has described elite as decision makers whose power is not subject to control by any other body in the society."

The members of an elite group have important influence in shaping the values and attitudes held by their segment of society. Political elite includes those:

- (1) Who are elected/nominated to central and state legislatures,
- (2) Who occupy important positions in national or state-level political parties,
- (3) Individuals who do not hold any formal positions either in the government or political parties but are still considered as persons of great pol. prestige and power because they control power exercises.

This elite mobility may be explained in terms of:

- (a) The rise of new pol. interests; and
- (b) The rise of new elite with more manipulating qualities.

## Political Elite, Social Change and Modernisation -

- (1) Development system Elite
- (2) Maintenance system Elite

08 The former seek to reconstruct society by attempting to mobilise and tap available resources and pol. energies. They create new institutions or change old institutions to remove obstacles to economic and social growth. The latter, by contrast, are those who give high priority to maintaining and preserving the existing pol. system instead of advocating economic and social change. They believe in compromise among competing political and interest groups.

13 The present political elite in India belong more to maintenance system than to development system.

15 The main problems they face -

- 16 (1) The problem of split ideologies
- 17 (2) The problem of confusion of cross-cutting issues and alternative preferences, and
- 18 (3) The problem of in-fighting among the elite for power-sharing.

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