

4/7/19

Chapter - 1

Power sharing

• Belgium and Sri Lanka

- * Belgium is a small country in Europe, smaller in India area than the state of Haryana.
 - * The ETHNIC composition of this small country is very complex.
 - * Remaining one percent of the Belgians speak German.
 - * The tension between the two communities was more acute in Brussels.
 - * Let us compare this to the situation in another country.
 - * There are about 7 percent Christians, who are both Tamil and Sinhala.
- #### • Majoritarianism in Sri Lanka
- * Sri Lanka emerged as an independent country in 1948.
 - * As a result, the democratically elected



government adopted a series of MAJORITARIAN measures to establish Sinhala supremacy.

- * A new constitution stipulated that the state shall protect and foster Buddhism.
- * As a result, the relations between the Sinhala and Tamil communities strained over time.
- * The distrust between the two communities turned into widespread conflict.
- Accommodation in Belgium
 - * The Belgian leaders took a different path.
 - * They recognised the existence of regional differences and cultural diversities.
 - * Some special laws require the support of majority of members from each linguistic group.
 - * This government has the power supervising cultural educational



and language related issues.

* A part from the central and the state government, there is a third kind of government.

x. What is

• Why power sharing is desirable?

* Thus, two different sets of reason can be given in favour of power sharing.

* Firstly, power sharing is good because it helps to reduce the possibility of conflict between social groups.

* Tyranny of the majority is not just oppressive for the minority; it often brings ruin to the majority as well.

* There is second, deeper reason why power sharing is good for democracies.

* People have a right to be consulted on how they are to be governed.



• Forms of power sharing

- * The ideas of power-sharing has emerged in opposition to the notions of undivided political power.
- * It was felt that if the power to decide is dispersed.
- * Everyone has a voice in the shaping of public policies.
- * One basic principle of power sharing is that people are source of all political power.
- * Power is share among different organs of government, such as the legislature, executive and judiciary.
- * Such a separation ensures
- * Such a separation ensures that none of the organs can exercise unlimited power.
- * In India, we refer to it as a central or union government.
- * This system is not followed in all countries.



(A) Question - Answer

1. What is the ethnic composition of Belgium?

⇒ A small country is very complex. Of the country's total population, 59 percent live in the Flemish region and speak Dutch language. Another 40 percent people live in the Wallonia region & speak French. Remaining 1 percent of the Belgians speak German.

In capital city, Brussels, about 80 percent people speak French while 20 percent are Dutch speaking.



ethnic Composition of Belgium

2. What is the ethnic composition of Sri Lanka?

⇒ Sri Lanka has a diverse population. The Sinhalese community forms the majority of the population (74%) with Tamils (18%) who are mostly concentrated in the coastal regions.

located in the north and east of the island.

The Tamil natives of the country are called 'Sri Lankan Tamils' (13%).

To work on estate plantations are called the 'Indian Origin Tamils' (5%).

3. Mention any four steps which were taken by the Sri Lankan government to achieve majoritarianism.

⇒ • In 1956, an act was passed under which English was replaced as the country's official language not by the Sinhala and Tamil but by the Sinhala only.

• The governments followed preferential policies that favoured.

• A new constitution stipulated that the state shall protect and foster Buddhism.

• Denial of citizenship to estate Tamils.

4. What is community government?
Explain the concept of community government with context to Belgium.



4. A community government is responsible for
ensuring that its members are able to
participate in the political process in their
communities.

5. The community government is responsible for
people belonging to the community, especially
its elected representatives and their constituents.

6. This government has the primary responsibility
for social, educational and health-related issues.

7. What is the difference between prudential
and moral reasons for sharing?

Prudential Reasons	Moral Reasons
Prudential reasons are based on careful calculation of gains and losses.	Moral reasons are based on principles of moral conduct.

These losses help to reduce the possibility of conflict between groups.	These reasons are considered as the moral basis of democracy.
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- reservation of constituencies for minorities and women in India is a prudential reasons

Decentralisation of power in India is an example of moral reasons

6. Why is Power sharing desirable?

⇒ # Prudential reasons ⇒

- Prudential reasons are based on careful calculation of gains and losses.
- Prudential reasons are good way to ensure political stability.
- Tyranny of the majority is not just oppressive for the majority.

Moral reasons ⇒

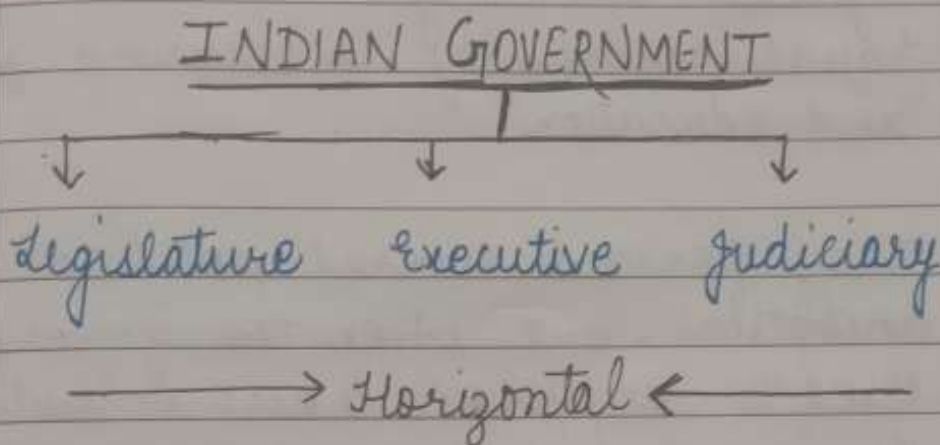
- Power sharing is the basic spirit of democracy.
- A democratic government is chosen by the people.
- Those who have to live with its effects.



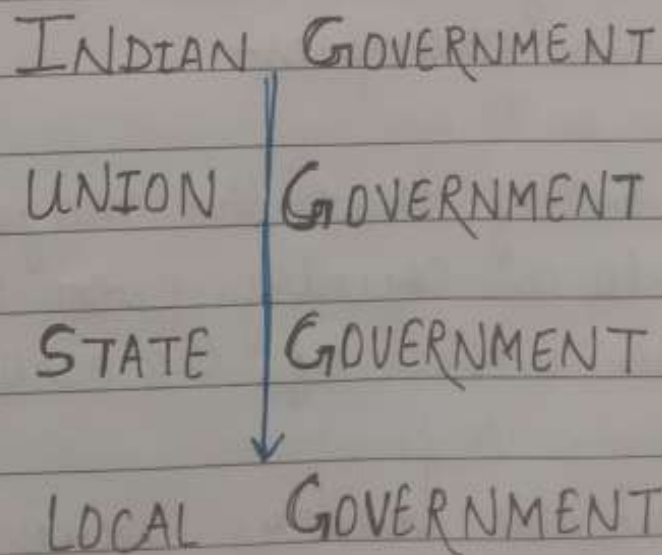
7. Describe horizontal and vertical power sharing in modern democracies.

⇒ In a democracy, power is shared among the different organs of the government such as legislature, executive and judiciary.

This is called the horizontal distribution of power. Each organ has its own powers.



Such a general government for the entire country is usually called a federal government.



Such competition ensures that powers does not remain in one end.

8. Describe any three demands of the Sri Lankan Tamils. How did they struggle for their independence?

⇒ • Recognition of Tamil as an official language.

- Regional autonomy
- Equal opportunity in securing jobs and education.

They formed several political organisations, but when the government tried to suppress their activities by force, this led to a civil war.

9. What is majoritarianism? How has it increased the feeling of alienation among the Sri Lankan Tamils? Explain with examples-

⇒ A belief that the majority should rule a country even at the cost of the wishes of the minority.

- Sinhala leaders were not sensitive to their language and culture.



- They felt the constitution and the government policies denied them equal political rights.
- When they tried to raise their demands, the government used force to suppress their demands which led to a long civil war.

(B) New terms

- (1) Ethnic $\Rightarrow$ They need not always have the same religion or nationality.
- (2) Majoritarianism $\Rightarrow$ A belief that the majority community should be able to rule a country in whichever way it wants.
- (3) Civil war $\Rightarrow$ A violent conflict between the opposing groups within the country that becomes so intense that it appears like a war.
- (4) Federal government $\Rightarrow$ It is a government under which two or more than two sets of governments govern the country.
- (5) Reserved constituency $\Rightarrow$ A reserved constituency which is reserved for a particular section of the society.



(6) Prudential $\Rightarrow$ Based on prudence, or on careful calculation of gains and losses.

(7) Coalition government $\Rightarrow$ A coalition government is a cabinet of parliamentary government in which several parties cooperate.

10- What are the some of basic elements of Belgium model of power sharing? Write any three.

$\Rightarrow$ * Equal number of ministers for both the groups $\Rightarrow$ Thus no single community can take decisions unilaterally.

* More powers to state governments $\Rightarrow$ The state governments were not subordinate to the central government.

* Equal representation and the state and the central level $\Rightarrow$ A separate government has been set up at Brussels in which both the communities have equal representation.



* formation of community government
 ⇒ This government has the powers regarding cultural, educational and language related issues.



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