

## NCERT CLASS 10

### Civics Notes

#### Chapter – 1. Power Sharing

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##### Important terms of Power Sharing

1. **Sri Lankan Tamils:** Tamil natives of Sri Lanka are called "Sri Lankan Tamils". They constitute 13 percent of the population.
2. **Indian Tamils:** The Tamilians whose forefathers came from India as plantation workers during the colonial period and settled there (Sri Lanka) are called "Indian Tamils". They constitute 5 percent of the population.
3. **Moral:** It is also a set of reasons which emphasize the intrinsic worth of power sharing.
4. **Coalition Government:** When the alliance of two or more parties gets elected and forms a government it is known as the Coalition Government. This is another form of power sharing.
5. **Prudential:** Decisions that are based on carefully calculated gains and losses and not based on purely moral considerations.
6. **Civil war:** It is a situation when a violent conflict starts between opposing groups within a country that becomes so intense that it appears like a war.
7. **Majoritarian:** A belief that a majority community should be able to rule a country in whichever way it wants.
8. **Ethnic:** Social division based on shared culture. People of the same ethnic group believe in their common descent.
9. **Community Government:** A type of Government which is elected by people belonging to the language community is called "Community Government".
10. **Civil War:** A violent conflict between opposing groups within a country is known as a civil war. Sometimes it becomes so intense that it appears like a war.
11. **Prudential:** It is a set of reason which favours power sharing. It is based on prudence, or on careful calculation of gains and losses.
12. **Horizontal Distribution of Power:** A type of distribution in which power is shared among different organs of government, such as the legislature, executive and judiciary.
13. **Checks and Balances:** A system in which each organ of the government checks the others which results in a balance of power among various institutions. It ensures that none of the organs can exercise unlimited power.
14. **Vertical Division of Power:** It is a very of distribution of power that involves the higher and lower levels of government such as central, provincial or regional levels.
15. **Federal government:** Federal Government is a type of Government in which powers are shared among the different levels. Like union level and provincial level. In this the general government for the entire country at the union level is called "Federal Government".
16. **Reserved Constituencies:** It is a system in which constituencies are reserved in Assemblies and the Parliament for minorities in order to give them a fair share in power.

##### BELGIUM SRILANKA

##### Ethnic Composition Of Belgium

A small country in Europe, it has borders with Netherlands, France and Germany. It has a population of a little over one crore. The ethnic composition of this small country is very complex. Of the country's

total population, 59 percent lives in the Flemish region and speaks Dutch language. Another 40 percent people live in the Wallonia region and speak French. Remaining 1 percent of the Belgians speak German. In the capital city Brussels, 80 percent people speak French while 25 percent are Dutch speaking.

**Problems:** The minority French-speaking community was relatively rich and powerful. This was resented by Dutch-speaking community who got the benefit of economic development and education much later. This led to tensions between the Dutch – speaking and French-speaking communities during the 1950s and 1960s. Brussels presented a special problem: The Dutch-speaking people constituted a majority in the country, but a minority in the capital.

### **Ethnic Composition Of Sri Lanka:**

Sri Lanka is an island nation. It has about 2 crore people, Sri Lanka has a diverse population. The major social groups are the Sinhala – speakers (74 percent) and the Tamil- speakers (18 percent). Among Tamils there are two subgroups. Tamil natives of the country are called Sri Lankan Tamils (13 percent). The rest are called Indian Tamils. Most of the Sinhala speaking people are Buddhist, while most of the Tamils are Hindus or Muslims. There are about 7 percent Christians, who both Tamil and Sinhala.

### **MAJORITARIANISM IN SRILANKA**

Majoritarianism is a political philosophy which asserts that a majority of the population (majority by language, religion or any other identifying factor) has the right to take the decisions affecting the society. It means submission of the minority group to the majority group for all the decisions affecting their lives. It often results in preferential policies being followed, favoring the majority group in university positions and government jobs and other opportunities and interests, thus denying the minority equal rights and opportunities.

### **Majoritarian Measures To Establish Sinhala Supremacy:**

In 1956, an Act was passed to recognize Sinhala as the only official language, thus disregarding Tamil. The government followed preferential policies that favored Sinhala applicants for university positions and government jobs. A new constitution stipulated that the state shall protect and foster Buddhism.

### **Outcomes/problems That Emerged:**

Majoritarianism has increased the feeling of alienation among the Sri Lankan Tamils. They felt that the constitution and government policies denied them equal political rights, discriminated against them in getting jobs and other opportunities and ignored their interests. The relations between the Sinhala and Tamil communities strained overtime.

## ACCOMMODATION IN BELGIUM

- Unlike Sri Lanka, the Belgium Government amended their constitution in such a way that it would enable everyone to live together within the same country.
- As per the constitution number of the French and Dutch speaking ministers shall be equal in the central government (compromise by the Dutch speaking people as they were in majority)
- A separate government was formed for the capital city of Brussels and there was equal representation of French and the Dutch speaking people (French compromised as they were in majority)
- State government of the different region were given equal power and equal division of power was maintained between the central and the state government
- A separate community government is formed for every community which is elected by people belonging to one language community
- The community government was formed to promote the cultural, educational and language related issues.
- These arrangements avoided civil strife between the two major communities and a possible division of the country on the linguistic lines.
- When many countries of Europe came together to form European Union, Brussels was chosen as its headquarter.

### Comparison of Power Sharing Models of Belgium and Srilanka:

Belgium	Sri Lanka
I. Leaders realized that for the unity of the country it is important to respect the feelings and interest of different communities.	I. In Sri Lanka, a majority community, the Sinhala, have forced their dominance over Tamils, refusing to share power.
II. The Belgium model of power sharing between the Centre, State and Community Governments have led to unification of the country.	II. In Sri Lanka, the dominance of one community over the other has led to Civil War.
III. Between 1970 and 1993, the Constitution was amended four times to enable all linguistic groups to live together within the same country.	III. In 1956, the government passed an Act to recognize Sinhala as the only official language, thus disregarding Tamil.

### Is Power Sharing Desirable?

In deeply divided societies (divided on ethnic, cultural, religion grounds) equal representation of all the principal groups is called for. Every social group needs a share in the governance to ensure that their interests would be taken care of Power sharing is desirable on two grounds:

#### Prudential Reasons

- Power sharing is good as it reduces the possibilities of tension and conflict between different social groups.
- Power sharing ensures the stability of political order. For example. In Belgium power sharing ensured political stability but not so in Sri Lanka.
- Power sharing avoids bloodshed. For example In Sri Lanka the government did not shared power with the Tamils, which has led to bloodshed.
- If power sharing is not done, in the long run it may lead to disintegration of the nation.
- Unfair use of authority by the majority group is not only oppressive for the minority but it ruins the majority as well sometime.
- Imposing the will of majority community may look line an attractive option in the short run but in the long run it undermines the unity of the nation.

### **Moral Reasons**

- Power sharing is also desirable for moral reasons as power sharing is the spirit / soul / essence of democracy. A legitimate government is one where citizens acquire a stake in the system through participation.
- A democratic rule involves power sharing with those affected by its exercise.
- A legitimate government is one where citizens, through participation, acquire a state in the system.

### **POWER SHARING:**

Power sharing is the very spirit of democracy. A democratic rule involves sharing power with those affected by its exercise, and who have to live with its effects. All communities, social groups get their say in the governance. People have a right to be consulted on how they are to be governed. A legitimate government is one where citizens, through participation, acquire a stake in the system.

### **Power Sharing In India:**

India is a democratic country. People of India elects their representative through direct franchise and representatives elect the government to make or amend rules & regulations and to carry out day to day functioning of governance.

One basic principle of democracy is that people are the source of all political power. In a democracy, people rule themselves through institutions of self-governance. In a good democratic government, due respect is given to diverse groups and views that exist in a society. Everyone has a voice in the shaping of public policies. Therefore, it follows that in a democracy political forms of power sharing power should be distributed among as many citizens as possible.

### **Forms Of Power Sharing:**

In modern democracies, power sharing arrangements can take many forms.

### **POWER SHARING IN DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONSS OF GOVERNMENT:**

Power is shared among different organizations of government, such as the legislature, executive and judiciary. Let us call this horizontal distribution of power because it allows different organizations of government placed at the same level to exercise different powers. Such a separation ensures that none of the organizations can exercise unlimited power. Each organ checks the others. This results in a balance of power among various institutions. For example, ministers and government officials exercise power, they are responsible to the Parliament or State Assemblies. Similarly, judges can check the functioning of executive or laws made by the legislatures. This arrangement is called a system of checks and balances.

### **POWER SHARING AT DIFFERENT LEVELS:**

Power can be shared among governments at different levels – a general government for the entire country and governments at the provincial or regional level. Such a general government for the entire country is usually called Federal Government. In India, we refer to it as the Central or Union Government. The governments at the provincial or regional level are called by different names in different countries. In India, we call them State Governments. State Governments and Central Government have their distinct areas to exercise power. This is called Federal Division of power.

### **POWER SHARING AMONG SOCIAL GROUPS:**

Power may also be shared among different social groups, such as the religious and linguistic groups. Indian constitution has provision for reservation of different communities like minorities, OBCs, SC & ST and women. This is done to ensure their adequate representation in the Government machinery.



### **POWER SHARING AMONG VARIOUS PRESSURE GROUPS:**

Power sharing arrangements can also be seen in the way political parties, pressure groups and movements control or influence those in power. In a democracy, the citizens must have freedom to choose among various contenders for power. In contemporary democracies this takes the form of competition among different parties. Such competition ensures that power does not remain in one hand. In the long run power is shared among different political parties that represent different ideologies and social groups. Sometimes this kind of sharing can be direct, when two or more parties form an alliance to contest elections. If their alliance is elected, they form a coalition government and thus share power. In a democracy, we find interest groups such as those of traders, businessmen, industrialists, farmers and industrial workers. They also will have a share in governmental power,

either through participation in governmental committees or bringing influence on the decision making process.

