

POWER SHARING

Class X

Subject: CIVICS

Topic: Power sharing

Why to study power sharing?

- To **know** the meaning of Power sharing
- **Understand** how Power sharing takes place in a democracies like Belgium and Sri-Lanka
- **Analyze** how lack of power sharing leads to social conflicts as in Sri Lanka
- **Sensitizing** them the need of power sharing in democracy

POWER SHARING

Meaning of power sharing

- *Sharing of power among different people, parties, social , religious and linguistic groups that usually happens in democracy*

Ethnic composition in Belgium In the country

- 59% **Dutch** speaking
- 40% **French** speaking
- 1% **German** speaking

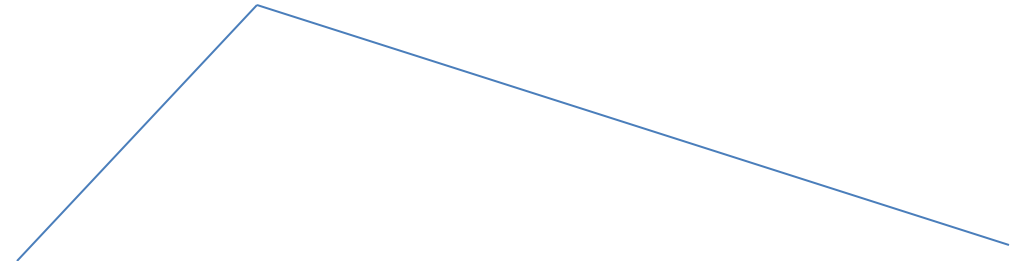
In BRUSSELS

- 80% speak French
- 20 % speak Dutch

Linguistic compositions in Sri Lanka

74% Sinhala speaking (mostly Buddhists)

18% Tamil speaking (Hindus or Muslims)



Sri Lankan Tamils (13%)

Indian Tamils (5%)

7% are Christians (both Tamils and Sinhalas)

So, Sinhala speaking people are the *linguistic* as well as the *religious majority* in Sri Lanka, Which practice **Majoritarianism** in Sri Lanka

Meaning of Majoritarianism

‘A belief that majority community should rule a country which ever way they want disregarding the needs and aspirations of the minority communities

For example; The majority Sinhala community impose their rule on minority Tamils in Sri Lanka without respecting their needs and aspirations

Majoritarian policy of Sri Lankan govt...

1. In 1956 an Act was passed that recognized **Sinhala as the official language**
2. Govt. follows a preferential policy to **favor Sinhala in university positions and govt. jobs**
3. A new constitution declares **Buddhism as state religion**

Consequences on Tamils

- **Feeling of alienation** increased among the Sri Lankan Tamils
- They feel **Sinhala leaders not sensitive** towards their language and culture
- Constitution and **govt. policies deny them** equal rights and opportunities to them
- They are discriminated against by Sinhala's
- Hence, the **relation** between Sinhalas and the Tamils **strained**

What did Sri Lankan Tamils do?

- They **organized parties and struggled** for **recognition** of Tamil as an official language
- Demand for **regional autonomy** to provinces populated by Tamils
- Demanded **equality of opportunity in education and jobs**
- By 1980s they started demanding an **independent Tamil Eelam** (state, in N&E part of Sri Lanka)

Q. What is the full form of LTTE? (FOR YOU TO PONDER)..

Civil war

- The **increasing distrust** between the two communities led into a **civil war**
- **Thousands** of people were **killed**
- Many **Tamils were forced to leave** the country as refugees
- **Socio-economic and cultural** life of the country was terribly **disturbed**

Accommodation in Belgium

- Situations, *and arrangement* made in *Belgium* are **different** from that of *Sri Lanka*
- Belgian leaders **recognized the differences and diversities** in the country
- Between 1970 and 1993 **constitution was amended four times** to accommodate everyone live together

Constitutional changes b/w 1970 & 1993

Constitution prescribes that:

- Number of **Dutch and French speaking ministers** in the central govt. will be **equal**
- Some **special laws** requires the support of both **communities**
- **No decision** can be taken by any community **unilaterally**
- Many **powers of the central govt.** were given to the **state governments**

Continues.....

- Now, state governments **not subordinate** to the central government
- **Brussels has a separate** govt. with **equal representation** from both communities

Que. *Can anybody tell why the French accept equal representations in Brussels (even, though majority in Brussels)*

(FOR YOU TO PONDER)....

Why power sharing is desirable ?

There are two set of reasons :

1. Firstly, it reduces the possibility of conflicts between social groups leading to violence and political instability. Leads to disunity of the country. This is called **prudential* reason**

2. Secondly, because it is the very spirit of democracy

In democracy powers can't vest in one hand, it is exercised by people. A **legitimate government** is one which consults people in the decision making, people participate and have a stake in the government. This one is called **Moral reasons**

Forms of Power Sharing

Power sharing takes different form in democracy

1. **HORIZONTAL POWER SHARING**: Sharing of power among **different organs of government** that is executive, legislature and judiciary. This is called separation of power which results in **balance of power** so that no single organ can enjoy unlimited power. Here, executive exercises power but remains responsible to legislature. Judges are appointed by executive but they (judges) can check the laws passed by legislature

2. VERTICAL POWER SHARING:

sharing of power among different levels of government i.e **central government, state government and Local government**. This is called division of power . This kind of arrangements are found in a federal state.

3. POWER SHARING AMONG DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS:

Such as the linguistic and religious groups for example the community government in Belgium, and such arrangement is also done in India through reserved constituencies for diff. social groups

4. POWER SHARING AMONG POLITICAL PARTIES PRESSURE GROUPS AND MOVEMENTS:

In democracy various political parties contest election some have stakes in government as a **ruling party or parties** as in case of a coalition government , others as opposition parties

Many such groups as **pressure groups and interest** groups of traders, businessmen, employees, etc claim **stakes in the government** (by indirectly participating or pressurizing the government

Test your understanding

- Q. WHAT LED TO ETHNIC TENSIONS IN BELGIUM? WHY WAS IT MORE ACCUTE IN BRUSSELS?
- Q.WHAT IS MAJORITARIANISM? WHAT MAJORITARIAN STEPS WERE TAKEN BY THE SINHALA GOVT IN SRI LANKA?
- Q. WHY IS POWER SHARING DESIRABLE? GIVE TWO REASONS.
- Q. DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN VERTICAL FORM AND HORIZONTAL FORM OF POWER SHARING.
- Q. WHAT IS MEANT BY THE SYSTEM OF ‘ CHECKS AND BALANCES’?