

# UNIQUE STUDY POINT

BY SUMEET SAHU

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Amitesh Nagar, Indore, MP | Contact: 8103405051 | Download App: Play Store

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## Chapter 1 : Power Sharing

### SECTION A : Multiple Choice Questions

(1 Mark Each)

Q1. Which of the following is NOT a form of power sharing? [CBSE 2023] [1]

- (a) Horizontal distribution (b) Vertical distribution  
(c) Power sharing among different social groups (d) Dictatorship

**Ans: (d) Dictatorship. Power sharing includes horizontal (among organs of govt), vertical (among levels of govt), among social groups, and among political parties.**

Q2. Belgium shifted from a unitary to a federal form of government in: [CBSE 2022] [1]

- (a) 1990 (b) 1993 (c) 2000 (d) 1947

**Ans: (b) 1993. Belgium amended its constitution four times between 1970 and 1993 to work out an arrangement acceptable to both Dutch and French communities.**

Q3. The ethnic composition of Belgium includes: [CBSE 2024] [1]

- (a) 59% Dutch, 40% French, 1% German  
(b) 50% Dutch, 50% French  
(c) 70% French, 30% Dutch  
(d) 80% Dutch, 20% French

**Ans: (a) 59% Dutch-speaking, 40% French-speaking, and 1% German-speaking. This diversity led to tensions and eventually power-sharing arrangements.**

Q4. Majoritarianism in Sri Lanka led to: [CBSE 2021] [1]

- (a) Economic prosperity (b) Civil war  
(c) Better democracy (d) Federal system

**Ans: (b) Civil war. The Sinhala-majority government policies alienated the Tamil minority, leading to a devastating civil war that lasted for nearly three decades.**

Q5. The community government in Belgium is elected by: [CBSE 2020] [1]

- (a) All citizens (b) People belonging to one language community  
(c) Only Dutch speakers (d) Only French speakers

**Ans: (b) People belonging to one language community (Dutch, French, or German-speaking), no matter where they live, can vote for their community government.**

Q6. Which of the following is a prudential reason for power sharing? [CBSE 2023] [1]

- (a) It is morally correct (b) It reduces conflict between social groups  
(c) It upholds the spirit of democracy (d) People have a right to be consulted

**Ans: (b) It reduces conflict between social groups. Prudential reasons focus on practical/beneficial outcomes like political stability and reduced violence.**

Q7. In Sri Lanka, the Official Language Act of 1956 recognised: [CBSE 2022] [1]

- (a) Tamil as official language (b) Sinhala as the only official language  
(c) Both Sinhala and Tamil (d) English as official language

**Ans: (b) Sinhala as the only official language. This discriminatory measure ignored the Tamil-speaking minority and became a major source of ethnic conflict.**

Q8. The system of checks and balances ensures that: [CBSE 2021] [1]

- (a) One organ of government has all the power  
(b) Power is shared among legislature, executive, and judiciary

(c) Only the President has power (d) Military controls the government

**Ans: (b) Power is shared among legislature, executive, and judiciary. Each organ checks the others, preventing concentration of power in any single body.**

**Q9.** What percentage of the population in Brussels speaks French? [CBSE 2024] [1]

(a) 40% (b) 59% (c) 80% (d) 20%

**Ans: (c) 80%. Although Dutch-speaking people are majority in Belgium overall, Brussels (the capital) has 80% French-speaking population.**

**Q10.** Assertion (A): Power sharing is the very spirit of democracy. Reason (R): A democratic rule involves sharing power with those affected by its exercise. [CBSE 2024] [1]

(a) Both true and (R) correctly explains (A) (b) Both true but (R) does not explain (A)

(c) (A) is true but (R) is false (d) (A) is false

**Ans: (a) Both true and (R) correctly explains (A). Democracy is fundamentally about people having a say in governance, which requires power sharing.**

### SECTION B : Short Answer Questions

(3 Marks Each)

**Q11.** Compare the approaches of Belgium and Sri Lanka towards power sharing. [CBSE 2023] [3]

- **Belgium:** Recognised the existence of regional differences and cultural diversities. Amended constitution to give equal representation to both communities in central government.
- **Sri Lanka:** Adopted majoritarianism – Sinhala-only language policy, preferential treatment to Sinhalese in university and government jobs, state protection to Buddhism.
- **Result:** Belgium achieved unity and avoided civil strife through accommodation. Sri Lanka faced a terrible civil war lasting decades due to alienation of Tamils.

**Q12.** Explain any three forms of power sharing in modern democracies. [CBSE 2024] [3]

- **Horizontal:** Power shared among different organs – legislature, executive, and judiciary at the same level. Each organ checks the others (checks and balances).
- **Vertical:** Power shared among different levels of government – central, state, and local governments. Constitution clearly defines powers of each level (federalism).
- **Among Social Groups:** Power shared among different social groups like religious and linguistic groups through reserved constituencies, community governments, etc.

**Q13.** Why is power sharing desirable? Give prudential and moral reasons. [CBSE 2022] [3]

- **Prudential:** Reduces conflict between social groups. Countries like Sri Lanka show that concentration of power in one group leads to civil war and instability.
- **Moral:** Power sharing is the very spirit of democracy. People have a right to be consulted in how they are governed. It is the fundamental principle of democracy.
- **Practical:** It ensures that different communities, regions, and interests have a voice in governance, leading to better decisions and greater legitimacy of the government.

**Q14.** Describe the accommodation made in Belgium to solve its ethnic problem. [CBSE 2021] [3]

- **Equal Representation:** Dutch and French-speaking ministers got equal representation in the central government. No single community could make decisions unilaterally.
- **State Governments:** State governments were given many powers and were not subordinate to central government, allowing regional autonomy.
- **Community Government:** A third kind of government (community government) was created, elected by one language community to deal with cultural, educational, and language-related issues.

**Q15.** How did majoritarianism in Sri Lanka lead to civil war? [CBSE 2020] [3]

- **Language Policy:** In 1956, Sinhala was made the only official language, disregarding Tamil. This alienated the Tamil-speaking minority from the very beginning.
- **Preferential Policies:** Sinhalese were given preferential access to universities and government jobs. Buddhism was given special status as state religion.
- **Civil War:** Tamil parties demanded autonomy and equal rights. When denied, militant groups took up arms, leading to a devastating civil war from 1983 to 2009.

### SECTION C : Long Answer Questions

(5 Marks Each)

**Q16.** "Power sharing is the very spirit of democracy." Justify this statement with suitable arguments. [CBSE 2024] [5]

**Ans: Power sharing is fundamental to democracy:**

- **Against Tyranny:** Democracy is against concentration of power in one person or group. Power sharing ensures no single entity can impose its will on all others.
- **Legitimacy:** When citizens feel they have a stake in governance through representation, the government enjoys greater legitimacy and public trust.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Belgium shows that accommodating diverse groups through power sharing prevents conflicts. Sri Lanka shows what happens when power is not shared.
- **Better Decisions:** When power is distributed, decisions are taken after consultation with affected communities, leading to more balanced and inclusive policies.
- **Unity in Diversity:** In diverse societies like India, power sharing among linguistic, religious, and regional groups holds the nation together and prevents disintegration.

**Q17.** Compare the power-sharing model of Belgium with that of Sri Lanka. What lessons can be drawn? [CBSE 2023] [5]

**Ans: The two countries offer contrasting lessons:**

- **Belgium - Accommodation:** Despite a complex ethnic composition (Dutch 59%, French 40%, German 1%), Belgium chose to share power equally through constitutional amendments.
- **Belgium - Innovations:** Created community governments, equal cabinet representation, and a separate arrangement for Brussels to satisfy all communities.
- **Sri Lanka - Majoritarianism:** The Sinhala majority (74%) imposed its language, religion, and preferential policies on the Tamil minority (18%).
- **Sri Lanka - Consequences:** This led to alienation of Tamils, rise of militant groups, and a devastating civil war (1983-2009) that killed thousands.
- **Lesson:** Power sharing and accommodation of diversity leads to unity and stability. Majoritarianism leads to conflict, civil war, and national disintegration.

**Q18.** Describe the different forms of power sharing in Indian democracy with examples. [CBSE 2022] [5]

**Ans: Indian democracy practises multiple forms of power sharing:**

- **Horizontal:** Power divided between Legislature (Parliament), Executive (PM and Council), and Judiciary (Supreme Court). Each checks the others.
- **Vertical/Federal:** Power shared between Central Government, State Governments, and Local Bodies (Panchayats, Municipalities). Constitution defines each level's powers.
- **Among Social Groups:** Reserved constituencies for SCs, STs, and OBCs ensure representation. Community-based bodies address specific group interests.
- **Among Political Parties:** Coalition governments, opposition parties, and pressure groups all share political space. No single party monopolises power.
- **Decentralisation:** 73rd and 74th Amendments strengthened local self-government, bringing power closer to the people through Panchayati Raj and Municipal bodies.

**Q19.** Why did the makers of the Indian Constitution opt for power sharing? Explain with examples. [CBSE 2021] [5]

**Ans: India chose power sharing due to its immense diversity:**

- **Diverse Society:** India has hundreds of languages, multiple religions, and thousands of castes. No single group can claim to represent all Indians.
- **Federal Structure:** India adopted a federal system with a strong centre and powerful states, allowing regions to govern their own affairs while maintaining national unity.
- **Reserved Seats:** Seats reserved for SCs, STs, and OBCs in Parliament and Assemblies ensure that historically marginalised communities have political representation.
- **Three Tiers:** Central government, state governments, and local self-government (Panchayats and Municipalities) ensure power reaches the grassroots level.
- **Learning from History:** The Partition of 1947 showed the devastating consequences of failing to accommodate diverse groups. Power sharing prevents such tragedies.

**Q20.** Explain the concept of horizontal and vertical power sharing with examples from India. [CBSE 2020] [5]

**Ans: Power is shared both horizontally and vertically:**

- **Horizontal:** At the same level - Legislature makes laws, Executive implements them, Judiciary interprets them. Parliament can make laws but courts can strike them down if unconstitutional.

- **Example:** Supreme Court declared the NJAC Act unconstitutional in 2015, checking the power of Parliament. This is horizontal power sharing in action.
- **Vertical:** Among different levels - Union Government handles defence, foreign affairs; State Governments handle police, health; Local bodies handle local issues.
- **Constitutional Division:** The Constitution has Union List, State List, and Concurrent List to clearly define which level handles what subjects.
- **Significance:** Both forms together ensure no single body accumulates excessive power, protecting citizens' rights and maintaining democratic governance.

--- End of Chapter 1 PYQ ---

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