**Democratic Politics II - Power Sharing**

1. What is the need of sharing power?
   * Power sharing is the very spirit of Democracy. A Democratic rule involves sharing power with those affected by its exercise.

2. Where is Belgium? With which countries does it share border?
   * Belgium is a small country in Europe, smaller in area than the state of Haryana. It has borders with France, the Netherlands, Germany and Luxembourg.

3. What is the reason for tension in Belgium? or Q.2 What was the political problems faced by Belgium?
   
   Ans. A. The Dutch form 59%, the French form 40% and the German about 1% comprises the population of Belgium.
   
   B. But in its capital - 80% French speaking, 20% Dutch speaking. So French community is in majority in the capital of Belgium, Brussels.
   
   C. They are rich and powerful and this is not liked by the Dutch.
   
   D. The Dutch speaking community got the benefit of economic development and education much later showed the resentment.
   
   E. This led to conflict between French and Dutch speaking people.

4. What was a community government?
   
   Ans. It was elected by the people belonging to language community – Dutch French and German speaking no matter where they live. It deals with cultural, educational and language related issues.

5. Describe three demands of Sri Lankan Tamils. How did they struggle for their independence?
   
   Ans: A. Recognition of Tamil as an official language.
   
   B. Regional autonomy
   
   C. Equal opportunity in securing jobs and education.
   
   D. They formed several political organizations, but when the government tried to suppress their activities by force, this led to demand for Tamil Elam (separate state for Tamils).

6. measures were adopted by the Belgium government to accommodate regional and cultural diversities? Or Q.2. Bring out the main features of the Belgian model of governance
   
   Ans: A. In 1970-193, the constitution of Belgium was amended for times to accommodate linguistic, cultural and regional differences.
   
   B. The Dutch and French speaking ministers were equal number in the central government.
   
   C. Special laws required the support of majority of members from each linguistic group.
D. Many powers of the central government had been given to state governments of the two regions of the country.

E. Brussels had a separate government where both communities were given equal representation. F. Community government of each section was also introduced.

7. Describe the population composition of Sri Lanka and the reasons for the formation of Majoritarian government in 1948.

Ans:A. It is an Island nation south of India. Tamil natives are called Sri Lankan Tamils and formed 13% population.

B. The Indian Tamils whose forefathers had come from India as plantation workers formed 5% population.

C. The Sinhala Buddhist, who was 74% of the population, formed the majority government after independence in 1948.

D. Tamils are either Hindus or Muslims, 7% of the people are Christian who are both Tamil and Sinhala.

E. Sinhalese enjoy majority and can impose their will on the entire country.

8. What is Majoritarianism?

Ans.: Majoritarianism is a political philosophy which asserts that a majority of the population has the right to take the decisions affecting the society.

B. It means submission of the majority group for all the decisions affecting their lives.

C. 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.

9. How majoritarianism has led to alienation of majority community in Sri Lanka?

Ans:A. The leaders of the Sinhala community tried to ensure the dominance of their community over the other communities of Sri Lanka after independence.

B. They adopted a series of majoritarian measures to establish Sinhala supremacy.

C. In 1956, an act was passed to recognize Sinhala as the only official language.

D. Sinhala people were given special preference in government jobs and university admissions.

E. Buddhism was declared the national religion.

F. Consequences: All these government measures increased the feeling of alienation among the other Communities. They felt that their language and culture were not given due importance. They also felt that the constitution and the policies of the government denied them to give equal political powers. The government encouraged and protected Buddhism. The distrust has turned into a civil war that has caused a setback to social cultural and economic life of Sri Lanka.

10. What’s wrong with a Majoritarianism?

Ans:A. In Majoritarianism the voice of the minority group will not be given due preference.

B. The majority group makes preferential policies favoring their majority.

C. Majority denies the minority group in equal representation in the governance and equal
political rights.

D. This results in the tyranny of the majority which breeds the feeling of alienation among the minority group

11. Mention any three provisions of the Act which passed in Sri Lanka in 1956 to establish Sinhala Supremacy

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

12. What are the outcomes and the lessons we learnt from the style of governance in Sri Lanka and Belgium?

Ans: A. We realize that the two countries, Sri Lanka and Belgium, are similar in respect of linguistic and ethnic diversity, yet both of them followed opposite policies to resolve the differences.

B. The Majoritarianism measures as followed in Sri Lanka created feeling of alienation among the Tamils leading to tensions in the region. It led to civil war waged by the Tamils who fight to create an independent state named Tamil Elam in the North and east of the Island. It is estimated that the war has claimed the lives of more than 68000 people since 1983 and it has caused significant harms to the population and the economy of the country.

C. The accommodation policies followed in Belgium have worked well so far. They are complicated but nevertheless, have been able to prevent any outbreak of civil war. The policies helped the leaders of the country in creating an enabling environment for everyone to live together with unity without disturbing the social fabric of the country. The policies of the government gave equal representation to the different sections of the society.

D. Therefore it is clear that to be able to hold the country together, it is indispensable to recognize and regard the culture and other identifying differences of various groups and create mutually acceptable policies for sharing power

13. In what way was the Belgian method better?

Ans. The Belgians gave equal importance to all the ethnic groups. At the Centre, there were both French and Dutch ministers, and their number was equal.

- The Centre and the states had equal and independent powers.
- If new laws were made, they had to be passed with the majority in both ethnic groups-voting for them.
- A separate government was elected for the city of Brussels.
- A third community government was elected, comprising Dutch, French and Germanspeaking people. It looked after the language, culture and educational issues.
- In short, the Belgians wisely tried to avoid all tensions and conflicts by accommodating the needs and wishes of all ethnic groups.

14. What is power sharing?

Ans; A. Power sharing is a strategy wherein all the major segments of the society are provided with a permanent share of power in governance of the country.
B. It is a means for sharing practices and established rule and roles to facilitate broad based decision-making, controlling and leading.

C. It is potential tool for solving disputes on the society.

15. Distinguish between power sharing model accepted by Belgium and Sri Lanka.

Both are democracies. Yet, they dealt with the question of power sharing differently.

- In Belgium, the leaders have realised that the unity of the country is possible only by respecting the feelings and interests of different communities and regions. Such a realization resulted in mutually acceptable arrangements for sharing power.
- Sri Lanka shows us a contrasting example. It shows us that if a majority community wants to force its dominance over others and refuses to share power, it can undermine the unity of the country.

16. What do you mean by good democratic front? Explain.

Ans. A. People rule through the representatives elected by them self.

B. Due respect is given to different groups and views that exist in the country.

C. Everyone has right to vote and value of each vote is equal.

D. Everyone has a voice in the shaping of public policies and as many people as possible should share power.

17. Explain the power sharing arrangement among the different organs of the government.

Ans. A. In a democracy power is shared among the different organs of the government such as Legislature, Executive and Judiciary. This is also called as the horizontal distribution of power sharing.

B. Legislature is lawmaking body, Executive is law implementing body and Judiciary is dispute solving body of the Government.

C. Because it also allows different organs of government placed at the same level to exercise different power.

D. Under this kind of power sharing arrangements, no organ of the government can exercise unlimited powers.

E. Each organ has its own power and checks the powers of other.

F. This results in the in a balance of power among various institutions.

18. Explain the power sharing arrangement among the different social groups.

Ans: A. In a democracy, especially in multiethnic society, power is also shared among social groups such as the religious and linguistic groups.

B. Community government in Belgium is a good example of this arrangement.
C. In some countries, there are constitutional and legal arrangements whereby socially weaker sections and women are represented in the legislatures and administration.

D. In India to provide share in power to backward and other classes, a system of reserved constituencies in assemblies and the parliament is followed.

E. This type arrangement is meant to give proper share in the government and administration to diverse social groups who otherwise would feel alienated from the Government.

19. Give reason for which power sharing is desirable?

Ans. Power sharing is desirable because it reduces the possibility of conflict and it ensures the stability of political order and it also strengthens the unity of the country.

20. Explain the power sharing arrangement among the different levels of the government.

Ans: A. Under this people choose separate government at separate levels for example a general government for the entire country and governments at the provincial, sub-national or regional level.

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

C. In India we refer to it as the union government. The governments at the provincial or regional level are called by different names in different countries.

D. In India these are known as state governments. This system is not followed in all the countries of the world.

E. The division of power is more important under such type of Governments. A government at different levels enjoys different powers which are given to them by the constitution.

F. The divisions of power involving higher and lower levels of government are called vertical division of power.

Q20. Does a country get more power by actually dispersing the power?

Ans: A. Power Sharing unites a country as every group gets the representation in the government.

B. It ensures that every group’s interests would be taken care of and everybody, irrespective of his community would be provided with equal political rights and opportunities.

C. It discards discrimination based on caste or creed. It also infuses a spirit of belongingness and trust among the citizens who feel that they have a stake in the system.

D. It therefore reduces political tensions and helps in the smooth functioning and stability of the system.

21. Read the following passage and pick out any one of the prudential reasons for power sharing offered in this.

"We need to give more power to the panchayats to realise the dream of Mahatma Gandhi and the hopes of the makers of our Constitution. Panchayati Raj establishes true democracy. It restores power to the only place where power belongs in a democracy - in the hands of the people. Given power to panchayats is also a way to reduce corruption and
increase administrative efficiency. When people participate in the planning and implementation of developmental schemes, they would naturally exercise greater control over these schemes. This would eliminate the corrupt middlemen. Thus, Panchayati Raj will strengthen the foundations of our democracy."

Ans. The prudential reason for power sharing offered in this passage is giving power to panchayats is also a way to reduce corruption and increase administrative efficiency.

22 State one prudential reason and one moral reason for power sharing with an example from the Indian context.

Answer

Prudential Reason: Power sharing helps in reducing the conflict between various social groups. Hence, power sharing is necessary for maintaining social harmony and peace. In India, seats are reserved for the weaker sections of society. Example: reservation of seats for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. This allows the weaker sections also to participate in the running of the government.

Moral Reason: It upholds the spirit of democracy. In a truly democratic setup, the citizens too have a stake in governance. In India, the citizens can come together to debate and criticise the policies and decisions of the government. This in turn puts pressure on the government to rethink its policies and reconsider its decisions.

23 Differentiate between Horizontal division of power sharing and Vertical division of power sharing?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Horizontal Division of Power Sharing</th>
<th>Vertical Division of Power Sharing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Horizontal division of power, in which power is shared among different organs of the government like legislature, executive and judiciary.</td>
<td>A. In vertical division of Power Sharing power is shared among the different levels of the government like Union Government, state government and Lower levels.</td>
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<td>B. Different organs of the government exercise the power.</td>
<td>B. Different levels of the government exercise the power of the government.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. It specifies the concept of check and balance.</td>
<td>C. No specification of the system of checks and balance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Examples: Legislature, Executive and Judiciary are the organs Government of India.</td>
<td>E. Central Government, State Government and Panchayat Raj are the example of the Vertical division of Power Sharing.</td>
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Q25. Describe the different forms of power-sharing in modern democracies. Give an example of each of these.

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

(i) Among different organs of government: Power is shared among the legislature, executive and judiciary. This is called horizontal distribution of power because it allows the three organs of government placed at the same level to exercise different powers. Each organ checks the others, no organ can exercise unlimited power.

(ii) Among governments at different levels: Here power is shared among governments at the provincial or regional level and a general government for the entire country, called Federal Government. In India, we call it Central or Union Government. In India, the government at the provincial level is called State
government. The Constitution clearly lays down powers of different levels of government. The third level of government is called municipality and panchayat. This arrangement is called vertical division of power.

(iii) Among different social groups: Power may also be shared among different social groups, such as the religious and linguistic groups. For example, Community Government in Belgium. In India, weaker sections of society have ‘reserved constituencies’ in Assemblies and the Parliament. They also have ‘reserved seats’ in government jobs.

(iv) Among political parties, pressure groups and movements: Power is shared among various political parties that represent different ideologies and social groups. Interest groups such as those of traders, businessmen, industrialists, farmers and individual workers also have share in governmental power, either through participation in governmental committees or bringing influence on the decision making process.

Here are some examples of power-sharing. Which of the four types of power sharing do these represent? Who is sharing power with whom?

(i) The Bombay High Court ordered the Maharashtra state government to immediately take action and improve the living conditions for the 2,000-odd children at seven children’s homes in Maharashtra.

(ii) The government of Ontario state in Canada has agreed to a land claim settlement with the aboriginal community. The Minister responsible for Native Affairs announced that the government will work with aboriginal people in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation.

(iii) Russia’s two influential political parties, The Union of Right Forces and the Liberal Yabloko Movement, agreed to unite their organisations into a strong right-wing coalition. They propose to have a common list of candidates in the next parliamentary elections.

(iv) The finance ministers of various states in Nigeria got together and demanded that the federal government declare its sources of income. They also wanted to know the formula by which the revenue is distributed among various state governments.

Ans.

(i) The state judiciary is exercising its power to control the state executive by asking the state government to look into the conditions of its 2,000 children’s home. There is no powersharing between different organs of government.

(ii) The aboriginal people have exercised pressure on the government to agree to their land claims. So power is shared by a social group with the government.

(iii) In this case, two political parties have formed a coalition and are sharing power with mutual consent.

(iv) In the last example, power is being shared at different government levels, the state or regional groups are demanding the government at the Centre to declare its sources of income, so that they can have a larger share of finances for their respective states.

Q.27. How has the idea of power-sharing changed with time?

Ans. For a long time, it was believed that all power of a government must reside in one person or group of persons located at one place. It was felt that dispensing powers would delay in decision-making and their enforcement. But these notions have changed with the emergence of democracy. One basic principle of democracy is that people are the source of all political power. 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
Q.28. What do we learn from the story of Sri Lanka? Should India follow the Belgian model?

Ans. The distrust between the two communities in Sri Lanka turned into a widespread conflict. It soon turned into a civil war in which thousands of people of both the communities were killed, thousands became homeless and were forced to leave the country as refugees. The story of Sri Lanka teaches us the lesson of sharing power among various communities. Various prudential and moral reasons for power sharing are desirable to ensure stability of the political order, unity and integrity of the country. The rule of majority community leads to conflict in society and eventually to a bloody civil war.

India should not follow the Belgian model as it is not suitable for a large multilingual and multireligious country like ours. Our Constitution is best suited and most appropriate for Indian society and culture. Belgian model of power sharing is quite complicated and not suitable for India.

29 What could ethnic problem lead to in Belgium and Sri Lanka?

Ans. In both countries, there could be tension and conflict between different ethnic groups. In Belgium, the majority community of Dutch-speaking people could try to dominate the French and German-speaking people. This could lead to conflict — specially in Brussels. Brussels could have been partitioned as the ratio of the Dutch and the French was different from the rest of the country. In Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese people, already in majority, could try further to dominate the Tamil speaking people. It could even lead to a war.

Thus, size and population do not matter. Ethnic divisions, if not handled with patience and common sense, can lead to a civil war, division of the country and conflict between communities.

30 After reading this chapter, three students drew different conclusions. Which of these do you agree with and why? Give your reasons in about 50 words.

Thomman - Power sharing is necessary only in societies which have religious, linguistic or ethnic divisions.

Mathayi - Power sharing is suitable only for big countries that have regional divisions.

Ouseph - Every society needs some form of power sharing even if it is small or does not have social divisions.

• Ouseph's statement is the most logical, and thus, should be agreed on. Every society needs some form of power sharing even if it is small or does not have social divisions. A democratic society is one where its members or citizens through participation acquire a stake in the system. Power sharing not only prevents conflict between various groups in the society but it also generates a sense of belongingness among them to the society. Power sharing helps to maintain a balance of power among various institutions and also keep a check on how it is exercised. Irrespective of the size of a country or the type of a society, people will be more satisfied where they have a say in the functioning and decision making processes of the system.

31 The Mayor of Mrchtem, a town near Brussels in Belgium, has defended a ban on speaking French in the town’s schools. He said that a ban would help all non-Dutch speakers integrate in this Flemish town. Do you think that this measure is in keeping with the spirit of Belgium’s power sharing arrangements? Give your reasons in about 50 words.

Ans- No, This measure is not in keeping with Belgium's power sharing arrangements. The
arrangements seek to maintain peace between the French and Dutch-speaking communities. By banning French, the mayor will cause civil unrest. Both the languages should be made acceptable in the town's schools. This bilingual education system will be a better way to integrate the people of the town.

32 One of the ways in which power-sharing is done in Indian democracy is by providing reservations for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and OBCs. Now the Muslims and Christian dalits are asking for reservations. Is this demand of power sharing justified?

Ans. Initially, when the reservation of seats was done for the socially weaker sections, the intention of the Constitution was to bring an end to the alienation being faced by the so-called weaker communities, and to now become more of a political gimmick, a means to collect votes, than to genuinely work for their development. It may encourage more and more communities to demand for reservations, thus leading to widening of social division. This is a sort of negative power-sharing in my opinion. Some more positive steps need to be taken to encourage power-sharing as early as possible.