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Class 10 | Political Science (Civics) | Chapter 1

## POWER-SHARING

### Comprehensive Question Bank & Answer Workbook

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■■■ *Teacher's Note: Dear students, this workbook has been designed keeping in mind the exact pattern of CBSE board examinations, UP Board, and UPPSC Civil Services. Every answer here is written the way a thoughtful student should write — not just to score marks, but to truly understand. — Om Sikarwar*

**SECTION A — Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) [ 30 Questions × 1 Mark = 30 Marks ]**

■■■ *Teacher's Note: Read every option carefully before choosing. In MCQs, two options often look similar. The key is to find the BEST answer, not just a correct-sounding one.*

**Q1. Which of the following best describes 'Power-Sharing' in a democracy?**

- A. All power is held by the elected government
- B. Power is distributed among different organs, levels and groups
- C. The majority community holds all political authority
- D. Only the judiciary has real power in a democracy

✓ Correct Answer: (B) | Explanation: Power-sharing means distributing power among different organs of government, levels of administration, and various social groups so that no single entity becomes all-powerful.

**Q2. Belgium is smaller in area than which Indian state?**

- A. Punjab
- B. Kerala
- C. Haryana
- D. Goa

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: Belgium has an area of about 30,528 sq km, which is smaller than Haryana (44,212 sq km). This is a standard comparison used in the NCERT textbook.

**Q3. What percentage of Belgium's total population speaks Dutch?**

- A. 40%
- B. 50%
- C. 59%
- D. 70%

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: Approximately 59% of Belgium's population lives in the Flemish region and speaks Dutch. About 40% live in the Wallonia region and speak French.

**Q4. In which city of Belgium do French-speaking people form a majority, despite being a minority in the country?**

- A. Antwerp
- B. Brussels
- C. Ghent
- D. Bruges

✓ Correct Answer: (B) | Explanation: Brussels, the capital city, has about 80% French-speaking residents, though French speakers are only 40% of Belgium's total population.

**Q5. Which type of government did Belgium create specifically to deal with cultural and linguistic matters?**

- A. Federal Government
- B. State Government
- C. Community Government
- D. Coalition Government

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: Belgium created a unique 'Community Government' — a third tier of government elected by people belonging to one language community, regardless of where they live.

**Q6. Sri Lanka became an independent country in which year?**

- A. 1945
- B. 1947
- C. 1948
- D. 1950

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) gained independence from British rule in 1948, the year after India's independence.

**Q7. The Sri Lanka Act of 1956 recognised which language as the sole official language?**

- A. Tamil
- B. English
- C. Pali
- D. Sinhala

✓ Correct Answer: (D) | Explanation: The 'Sinhala Only Act' of 1956 recognised Sinhala as the sole official language, completely disregarding Tamil, which was deeply resented by the Tamil community.

**Q8. What does 'Majoritarianism' mean in the context of Sri Lanka?**

- A. Giving equal rights to all communities
- B. The belief that the majority community should rule without sharing power
- C. A federal system of government
- D. Giving special rights to minorities

✓ Correct Answer: (B) | Explanation: Majoritarianism is the belief that the majority community has the right to rule a country as it wishes, often ignoring the needs and rights of minorities.

**Q9. LTTE stands for:**

- A. Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
- B. Liberation Tamils of Tamil Eelam
- C. Lankan Tigers of Tamil Elite
- D. Liberation Tigers of Tamil Era

✓ Correct Answer: (A) | Explanation: LTTE — Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam — was the militant organisation that fought for a separate Tamil homeland called 'Tamil Eelam' in northern and eastern Sri Lanka.

**Q10. Which of the following is a 'Prudential' reason for power-sharing?**

- A. It is morally right to share power
- B. Every citizen has a right to participate in government
- C. It reduces the possibility of conflict between social groups
- D. It upholds democratic values and dignity

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: The prudential reason is practical — power-sharing reduces conflicts, brings stability, and prevents any one group from becoming a threat to others.

**Q11. Which of the following is a 'Moral' reason for power-sharing?**

- A. It brings political stability
- B. It reduces chances of civil war
- C. It reflects the very spirit of democracy and equal participation
- D. It prevents majoritarianism

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: The moral reason is that democracy is, by its very nature, about equal participation. Power-sharing is not just a practical tool — it is the right thing to do.

**Q12. In modern democracies, which organ of government makes laws?**

- A. Executive
- B. Judiciary
- C. Legislature
- D. Bureaucracy

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: The Legislature (Parliament / State Assembly) is the law-making body in a democracy. The Executive implements laws, and the Judiciary interprets them.

**Q13. The system where the constitution clearly lays down the powers of different levels of government is called:**

- A. Unitary System
- B. Federal System
- C. Parliamentary System
- D. Presidential System

✓ Correct Answer: (B) | Explanation: A Federal System divides power between the Central Government and the State Governments through constitutional provisions.

**Q14. 'Checks and Balances' in a democracy refers to:**

- A. Budget management by the Finance Ministry
- B. Each organ of government keeping watch over the others
- C. The president checking the parliament's work
- D. Courts balancing the number of cases

✓ Correct Answer: (B) | Explanation: Checks and Balances means that the Legislature, Executive and Judiciary each have powers to restrain the other, preventing any one organ from becoming too powerful.

**Q15. Which of the following is the best example of 'Vertical Distribution' of power?**

- A. Power shared between Legislature and Judiciary
- B. Power shared between political parties
- C. Power shared between Central and State Governments
- D. Power shared between the Prime Minister and the Cabinet

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: Vertical distribution involves sharing power across different levels — Central, State and Local Bodies. This is the basis of Federalism.

**Q16. Community Government in Belgium has power over which of the following?**

- A. Defence and foreign policy
- B. Cultural, educational and language-related issues
- C. Taxation and revenue
- D. Law and order

✓ Correct Answer: (B) | Explanation: The Community Government deals with culture, education and language matters. It is a unique arrangement to accommodate the linguistic diversity of Belgium.

**Q17. Which form of power-sharing is seen when different political parties contest elections?**

- A. Horizontal distribution
- B. Distribution among social groups
- C. Distribution among different levels of government
- D. Distribution among political parties and pressure groups

✓ Correct Answer: (D) | Explanation: When power is distributed through political competition — parties, pressure groups, movements — it represents the fourth form of power-sharing.

**Q18. What is a 'Coalition Government'?**

- A. A government elected by a single dominant party
- B. A government formed by two or more political parties sharing power
- C. A government where the president holds all power
- D. A government formed only in federal states

✓ Correct Answer: (B) | Explanation: A Coalition Government is formed when no single party wins an outright majority, so two or more parties come together, sharing power and ministerial portfolios.

**Q19. Sri Lanka's civil war formally ended in which year?**

- A. 2001
- B. 2005
- C. 2009
- D. 2012

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: The decades-long civil war in Sri Lanka between the government and the LTTE came to an end in 2009 when the Sri Lankan military defeated the LTTE.

**Q20. Which of the following statements about Belgium is CORRECT?**

- A. Brussels has a Dutch-speaking majority
- B. German speakers are the majority in Belgium
- C. The Dutch-speaking community is a majority in Belgium but a minority in Brussels
- D. Belgium has only two linguistic communities

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: The Dutch speakers form 59% of Belgium's population but are a minority in the capital Brussels, where French speakers dominate.

**Q21. Why did the Tamils of Sri Lanka feel alienated after 1948?**

- A. They were denied the right to vote
- B. They were forced to leave the country
- C. The government adopted policies that ignored their language, culture and jobs
- D. They were made to pay higher taxes

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: The Sinhala-dominated government passed laws favouring Sinhala language, gave preferential treatment to Sinhala in government jobs and universities, and disregarded Tamil cultural and religious identity.

**Q22. Which country chose to share power and became a model for other nations?**

- A. Sri Lanka
- B. Myanmar
- C. Belgium
- D. Pakistan

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: Belgium is widely regarded as a model of successful power-sharing. Its accommodation of linguistic and cultural diversity through constitutional arrangements has kept the country united.

**Q23. Power shared among different social groups such as religious and linguistic minorities is an example of:**

- A. Horizontal distribution of power
- B. Power-sharing among social groups
- C. Vertical distribution of power
- D. Power-sharing among political parties

✓ Correct Answer: (B) | Explanation: When power is distributed to accommodate social groups — through reservations, community governments, or minority rights — it is power-sharing among social groups.

**Q24. Which of the following is NOT a form of power-sharing?**

- A. A system of checks and balances
- B. A federal structure with Central and State governments
- C. A military dictatorship with a civilian cabinet
- D. A coalition government

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: A military dictatorship, even with a civilian cabinet as a facade, does not genuinely share power. Real power-sharing requires meaningful participation and accountability.

**Q25. 'Ethnic' in political science refers to:**

- A. Economic groups based on income
- B. Social groups bound by shared culture, language, history or religion
- C. Groups formed on the basis of political ideology
- D. International groups with shared trade interests

✓ Correct Answer: (B) | Explanation: An ethnic group is a group of people who share a common culture, language, history, ancestry or religion. Ethnic diversity is a key reason why power-sharing becomes necessary.

**Q26. In Belgium, the number of Dutch and French-speaking ministers in the Central Government shall be:**

- A. Decided by the Prime Minister
- B. Equal — neither side can have more
- C. Based on population ratio
- D. Decided by the King

✓ Correct Answer: (B) | Explanation: The Belgian constitution requires that the number of Dutch-speaking and French-speaking ministers shall be equal in the Central Government, giving neither community a numerical advantage.

**Q27. Which of the following best explains why Sri Lanka's model failed while Belgium's succeeded?**

- A. Sri Lanka is a smaller country
- B. Belgium had a stronger economy
- C. Belgium accommodated diversity; Sri Lanka imposed the majority's will
- D. Sri Lanka did not have a written constitution

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: Belgium chose accommodation — respecting all communities — while Sri Lanka chose majoritarianism, imposing Sinhala dominance on Tamils. This is the fundamental difference.

**Q28. Power-sharing arrangements in India include which of the following?**

- A. Reservation for Scheduled Castes and Tribes in legislatures
- B. A unitary government where Centre has all powers
- C. A single national language for all official purposes
- D. A presidential form of government

✓ Correct Answer: (A) | Explanation: India's reservation system for SC, ST and OBC communities in legislatures and government jobs is a direct form of power-sharing among social groups.

**Q29. Which of the following pairs is CORRECTLY matched?**

- A. Horizontal Distribution — Central and State Governments
- B. Vertical Distribution — Legislature, Executive and Judiciary
- C. Community Government — Cultural and linguistic matters in Belgium
- D. Coalition Government — Single party rule

✓ Correct Answer: (C) | Explanation: Community Government in Belgium deals specifically with cultural, educational and language-related issues for each linguistic community. This is the correct match.

**Q30. Brussels, the headquarters of the European Union, is located in:**

- A. France
- B. Netherlands
- C. Germany
- D. Belgium

✓ Correct Answer: (D) | Explanation: Brussels, the capital of Belgium, serves as the de facto capital of the European Union. Many countries of Europe came together to form the EU, with Brussels as its administrative hub.

**SECTION B — Fill in the Blanks [ 20 Questions × 1 Mark = 20 Marks ]**

■■■ *Teacher's Note: Fill in the blanks test your memory of precise facts — names, percentages, years and key terms. Practise writing these out without looking at the answers first!*

**Q1. Belgium is a small country in Europe, smaller in area than the Indian state of \_\_\_\_\_.**

Answer: Haryana | Why: NCERT explicitly states Belgium is smaller than Haryana. This fact is frequently tested.

**Q2. The ethnic composition of Belgium is very complex. About \_\_\_\_\_ per cent of the population lives in the Flemish region and speaks Dutch.**

Answer: 59 | Why: 59% Dutch-speaking (Flemish), 40% French-speaking (Walloon), 1% German-speaking.

**Q3. In Brussels, about \_\_\_\_\_ per cent of the people speak French.**

Answer: 80 | Why: Despite French speakers being a minority nationally, they form 80% of Brussels' population.

**Q4. Sri Lanka emerged as an independent country in the year \_\_\_\_\_.**

Answer: 1948 | Why: Sri Lanka (Ceylon) became independent in 1948, one year after India.

**Q5. The Sinhala community accounts for \_\_\_\_\_ per cent of Sri Lanka's total population.**

Answer: 74 | Why: Sinhala: 74%, Sri Lankan Tamils: 13%, Indian Tamils: 5%, others including Muslims: 8%.

**Q6. The Sri Lankan government passed an Act in 1956 to recognise \_\_\_\_\_ as the only official language.**

Answer: Sinhala | Why: The Sinhala Only Act of 1956 is the pivotal piece of legislation that triggered Tamil resentment.

**Q7. The militants among the Tamils of Sri Lanka demanded a separate state called \_\_\_\_\_.**

Answer: Tamil Eelam | Why: Tamil Eelam was the name of the proposed independent Tamil homeland in northern and eastern Sri Lanka.

**Q8. LTTE stands for \_\_\_\_\_.**

Answer: Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam | Why: The LTTE was the militant organisation that led the armed struggle for Tamil Eelam.

**Q9. The civil war in Sri Lanka came to an end in the year \_\_\_\_\_.**

Answer: 2009 | Why: The Sri Lankan military defeated the LTTE in May 2009, formally ending the civil war.

**Q10. The sharing of power among different organs of government — legislature, executive and judiciary — is called \_\_\_\_\_ distribution of power.**

Answer: Horizontal | Why: Horizontal distribution keeps all three organs at the same level, each checking the others.

**Q11. Power shared between the Central Government and the State Governments is called \_\_\_\_\_ distribution of power.**

Answer: Vertical | Why: Vertical distribution operates across levels — Central, State and Local — forming the basis of Federalism.

**Q12. The arrangement by which power is shared among different social groups such as religious and linguistic minorities is known as \_\_\_\_\_.**

Answer: Community Government (or power-sharing among social groups) | Why: Belgium's Community Government is the finest example of this form of power-sharing.

**Q13. A \_\_\_\_\_ government is formed when two or more political parties share power after elections.**

Answer: Coalition | Why: Coalition governments are common in countries like India, where no single party often wins an outright majority.

**Q14. The prudential reason for power-sharing focuses on reducing the possibility of \_\_\_\_\_ between different social groups.**

Answer: conflict | Why: The prudential argument is that power-sharing is wise because it maintains peace and prevents power struggles.

**Q15. The moral reason for power-sharing states that it upholds the spirit of \_\_\_\_\_.**

Answer: democracy | Why: Morally, democracy demands that all citizens have a stake in governance — power-sharing makes this possible.

**Q16. In Belgium, the number of Dutch-speaking and French-speaking ministers in the Central Cabinet shall be \_\_\_\_\_.**

Answer: equal | Why: This constitutional provision ensures neither community can dominate the Central Government.

**Q17. The Community Government in Belgium has power over cultural, educational and \_\_\_\_\_ issues.**

Answer: language | Why: The Community Government deals specifically with matters of culture, education and language.

**Q18. The concept where each organ of government checks the functioning of others is called \_\_\_\_\_ and Balances.**

Answer: Checks | Why: Checks and Balances ensures that no organ of government exercises unlimited or unchecked power.

**Q19. Power-sharing is the very spirit of \_\_\_\_\_ governance and is not merely a practical arrangement.**

Answer: democratic | Why: This philosophical point distinguishes power-sharing as a moral value, not just a political convenience.

**Q20. Sri Lanka's policy of giving preference to the Sinhala community in all matters of state is called \_\_\_\_\_.**

Answer: Majoritarianism | Why: Majoritarianism means ruling in the exclusive interest of the majority, disregarding minority rights entirely.

## SECTION C — Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) — Q & A [ 20 Questions ]

■■■ *Teacher's Note: These are the questions that students and teachers discuss most often in class. Reading the answers carefully — not just memorising them — will genuinely help you understand the chapter and write excellent board exam answers.*

### FAQ 1: What is power-sharing? Why is it important in a democracy?

Power-sharing means distributing authority among different organs, levels and groups in a political system so that no single entity holds all power. It is important because it prevents authoritarianism, reduces conflict between communities, ensures all citizens have a voice in governance, and upholds the moral principle that in a democracy, everyone deserves a stake in decision-making.

*Exam Tip: This is the most fundamental question of the chapter. Always define it clearly and then explain with at least two reasons.*

### FAQ 2: What do you understand by 'Majoritarianism'? How did it affect Sri Lanka?

Majoritarianism is the belief that the community which forms the numerical majority in a country has the right to rule it as it pleases, without accommodating the concerns of minority communities. In Sri Lanka, the Sinhala-dominated government passed laws recognising Sinhala as the sole official language, gave preferential treatment to Sinhala in government jobs and universities, and promoted Buddhism as the state religion. Tamil citizens felt humiliated, discriminated against, and were denied equal opportunities. This led to growing alienation, the rise of militant groups like the LTTE, and ultimately a devastating civil war that lasted for decades.

*Exam Tip: A 4-mark question on this topic appears almost every year. Include the 1956 Act, employment discrimination, and the civil war.*

### FAQ 3: What was the ethnic composition of Belgium, and why did it create a problem?

Belgium's population has three main linguistic communities: Dutch-speaking (Flemish) people in the northern Flanders region constitute about 59% of the population; French-speaking (Walloon) people in the southern Wallonia region constitute about 40%; and a small German-speaking community of about 1% lives near the eastern border. The problem arose because French-speaking people, though a minority nationally, were economically better-off and historically more powerful. In the capital Brussels, 80% of residents speak French. The Dutch-speaking majority felt disadvantaged. This tension could easily have torn the country apart, making power-sharing arrangements essential.

*Exam Tip: Always present figures: 59% Dutch, 40% French, 1% German. The Brussels paradox (French majority in a Sinhala—wait, Dutch-majority country) is always tested.*

### FAQ 4: What is the 'Community Government' in Belgium? What issues does it handle?

The Community Government is a unique third tier of government created in Belgium specifically to manage cultural and linguistic affairs. It is elected by people belonging to one language community — Dutch, French or German — regardless of where they live in the country. Unlike the Central or State Governments, it has power over matters such as culture (arts, heritage, media), education (schools, universities, curriculum), and language-related policies. This arrangement ensures that no linguistic group can have its culture or language suppressed by any other group.

*Exam Tip: Students often confuse Community Government with State Government. Remember: State Government is based on geography; Community Government is based on language/culture.*

**FAQ 5: Describe the key features of Belgium's power-sharing model.**

Belgium developed a sophisticated power-sharing model through constitutional amendments between 1970 and 1993. Its key features are: (1) Equal representation in the Central Cabinet — the constitution mandates that the number of Dutch and French ministers shall be equal, irrespective of their proportion in the population. (2) State Governments are not subordinate to the Central Government — they have independent powers, unlike a purely unitary state. (3) Brussels has a separate government with equal representation from both communities, because both groups have agreed to this special arrangement. (4) A Community Government has been created that is elected by linguistic communities and deals with cultural, educational and language matters. This model is globally admired as an example of successful accommodation of diversity.

*Exam Tip: Four features are ideal for a 5-mark answer. Write them as numbered points for clarity in board exams.*

**FAQ 6: What are the two main reasons for power-sharing? Distinguish between them.**

The two reasons for power-sharing are: (1) Prudential Reason: This is a practical, wisdom-based reason. Sharing power reduces the possibility of conflict between social groups. When different communities have a stake in the system, they are less likely to feel excluded and resort to violence. Power concentrated in one place is dangerous — it creates resentment, instability and eventually conflict. Sri Lanka is the tragic example. (2) Moral Reason: This is a principled, value-based reason. In a democracy, power-sharing is not just a practical necessity — it is morally right. Every citizen deserves to participate in governing the country. Denying people a voice in decisions that affect their lives violates the fundamental spirit of democracy. Belgium exemplifies this moral commitment.

*Exam Tip: The distinction between prudential (practical) and moral (principled) reasons is a classic 3-mark question.*

**FAQ 7: What are the four forms of power-sharing in modern democracies? Give one example of each.**

(1) Horizontal Distribution: Power is shared among different organs of government — Legislature, Executive and Judiciary. Example: In India, Parliament makes laws, the government (cabinet) implements them, and the Supreme Court interprets them. (2) Vertical Distribution (Federalism): Power is divided across different levels — Central, State and Local governments. Example: India's federal structure with Union List, State List and Concurrent List. (3) Power-sharing among Social Groups: Religious, linguistic and other minority groups are given representation. Example: Belgium's Community Government; India's reservation for SC/ST communities. (4) Power-sharing among Political Parties and Pressure Groups: Power is shared through political competition, coalition governments, and the influence of pressure groups and movements. Example: Coalition governments in India; role of trade unions.

*Exam Tip: This is the most comprehensive question in the chapter. Write it as four numbered points with a specific example for each — ideal for a 6-mark answer.*

**FAQ 8: How does the 'Checks and Balances' system work as a form of power-sharing?**

In a democracy, no single organ of government should have unlimited power. The system of Checks and Balances ensures that each organ — Legislature, Executive and Judiciary — monitors and limits the functioning of the others. For instance, the Parliament can make laws, but the courts can strike down a law that violates the Constitution. The Executive (government) is responsible to the Legislature and can be voted out. The Legislature itself is elected by the people. This creates a horizontal distribution of power where no organ can act arbitrarily. It prevents tyranny and ensures accountability at every level of governance.

*Exam Tip: Link this clearly to 'Horizontal Distribution of Power' — they are essentially the same concept presented differently.*

**FAQ 9: Compare the outcomes of Belgium's and Sri Lanka's approach to power-sharing.**

Belgium and Sri Lanka are two contrasting case studies in power-sharing. Belgium, despite having complex ethnic and linguistic divisions, chose accommodation — it gave all communities equal representation, created independent State Governments, and even devised a unique Community Government for cultural matters. The result: Belgium remained united, peaceful, and prosperous. It became the headquarters of the European Union. Sri Lanka, on the other hand, chose majoritarianism. The Sinhala majority dominated all institutions, passed discriminatory laws against Tamils, and refused to share power meaningfully. The result: decades of civil war, thousands of lives lost, immense economic damage, and lasting social wounds. The lesson is clear — accommodation preserves nations; majoritarianism destroys them.

*Exam Tip: This comparative question is extremely popular in CBSE and UPPSC. Structure it as Belgium vs Sri Lanka on at least three parameters.*

**FAQ 10: What is a 'pressure group' and how does it contribute to power-sharing?**

A pressure group is an organised group of citizens that seeks to influence government decisions without directly contesting elections. Examples include trade unions, farmers' associations, student bodies, women's organisations and environmental groups. They contribute to power-sharing by ensuring that the voices of ordinary citizens, workers, students and marginalised communities reach decision-makers. When a government ignores a pressure group, it risks losing public support. This informal but powerful form of influence ensures that political power is not monopolised by elected representatives alone — it remains distributed among civil society as well.

*Exam Tip: Pressure groups and movements are often underestimated by students. They are a key example of the fourth form of power-sharing.*

**FAQ 11: Why did Tamils in Sri Lanka demand a separate nation?**

The Tamil demand for a separate nation — Tamil Eelam — grew gradually as a response to sustained discrimination. After independence in 1948, the Sinhala-dominated government systematically marginalised Tamils: the 1956 Act made Sinhala the only official language, Tamil candidates were disadvantaged in university admissions and government employment, and the government promoted Buddhist Sinhala culture at the expense of Tamil Hindu identity. Tamil political parties initially demanded autonomy and equal rights through democratic means. When these demands were consistently rejected, extremist groups emerged, believing that only an independent Tamil homeland could protect their identity and rights.

*Exam Tip: Show the progression: discrimination → peaceful protest → extremism → civil war. This shows deep understanding.*

**FAQ 12: What is the significance of the phrase 'power-sharing is the very spirit of democracy'?**

This phrase captures the philosophical heart of the chapter. It means that democracy is not merely about elections or majority rule — it is fundamentally about ensuring that all citizens, regardless of their community, language or religion, have a meaningful share in political power. If a majority can simply outvote and silence a minority, that is not true democracy — it is tyranny dressed in democratic clothes. Power-sharing acknowledges that every group's interests deserve respect. It is not a compromise or a weakness in a democracy; it is its very essence. This is why Belgium's model is celebrated, and Sri Lanka's majoritarian path is considered a failure of democratic values.

*Exam Tip: This is a philosophical question that tests deeper thinking. Ideal for a 5-mark answer in board exams and for UPSC Mains.*

**FAQ 13: Explain the structure of the Belgian model of power-sharing with reference to its three tiers.**

The Belgian model operates at three tiers: First, the Central Government, where the constitution ensures equal numbers of Dutch and French ministers, giving neither community a dominant position at the national level. Second, the State Governments, which have independent powers and are not subordinate to the Centre. Unlike a purely unitary system, Belgian states can make their own decisions on matters assigned to them. Third, the Community Government, a unique tier elected by people of a particular language community regardless of geography. It governs cultural, educational and language matters. Together, these three tiers ensure that every linguistic and cultural group is heard, protected and empowered.

*Exam Tip: Tiers: Central → State → Community Government. This three-tier structure is unique to Belgium and a favourite examination topic.*

**FAQ 14: How do political parties contribute to power-sharing in a democracy?**

Political parties are central to power-sharing because they represent different sections of society — workers, farmers, minorities, business communities — and compete for power through elections. This competition itself distributes power because no single party can ignore the concerns of large voter groups. When elections result in no clear majority, parties form coalition governments, directly sharing ministerial portfolios. Moreover, the existence of a strong Opposition ensures that the ruling party cannot act unchecked — the Opposition holds the government accountable in Parliament. Political parties thus make power-sharing dynamic, competitive and representative.

*Exam Tip: Link political parties to both elections (competition) and coalition governments (direct sharing). These two mechanisms are key.*

**FAQ 15: What lessons does the chapter draw from the case studies of Belgium and Sri Lanka?**

The chapter draws two powerful lessons. First, from Belgium: that when a country faces social and ethnic diversity, the wisest path is to accommodate different groups through genuine power-sharing arrangements. Belgium's leaders, rather than letting majority community dominance tear the country apart, chose to build constitutional guarantees for all communities. The result was peace and unity. Second, from Sri Lanka: that when a majority community uses its electoral strength to dominate minorities and refuses to share power, it creates deep resentment, leads to violent conflict, and ultimately weakens the nation. The broader lesson is that democracy is not about majority rule alone — it is about ensuring that all communities feel safe, respected and represented.

*Exam Tip: Always conclude FAQ answers with the broader lesson. This shows maturity and earns full marks.*

**FAQ 16: What do you understand by 'social divisions' and how does power-sharing address them?**

Social divisions refer to differences between people based on language, religion, caste, ethnicity or culture. In diverse societies, these divisions can lead to political exclusion, discrimination and conflict if one group dominates others. Power-sharing addresses social divisions by ensuring that different groups are represented in government, their languages and cultures are protected, and their interests are considered in policymaking. Examples include reservations for historically marginalised communities, official recognition of multiple languages, and community governments that protect cultural identities. By giving every group a stake in the system, power-sharing transforms social divisions from a source of conflict into a source of democratic strength.

*Exam Tip: Social divisions connect this chapter to Chapter 3 (Gender, Religion and Caste). Mentioning this link in your answer shows breadth.*

**FAQ 17: Why is power concentrated in a single place dangerous for a democracy?**

When power is concentrated in a single person, party or community, several dangers arise. First, decision-making becomes arbitrary — there is no check on what the powerful can do. Second, minorities and other groups feel excluded and resentful, which breeds conflict and instability. Third, the powerful tend to abuse their position for personal or group gain rather than serving the public interest. Fourth, mistakes made by a single centre of power can have catastrophic consequences with no corrective mechanism. Sri Lanka illustrates this vividly — Sinhala dominance led to civil war that lasted thirty years. Power-sharing, by distributing authority, creates accountability, reduces the risk of error, and makes governance genuinely representative.

*Exam Tip: This is effectively asking for the case AGAINST concentrating power — mirror image of the case FOR power-sharing.*

**FAQ 18: What is the relationship between federalism and power-sharing?**

Federalism is one of the most important expressions of vertical power-sharing. In a federal system, the constitution clearly defines the powers of the Central Government and the State Governments, and neither can encroach on the other's domain. This ensures that power is not concentrated at the national level but is genuinely shared across different geographical and administrative units. India is a federal state where the Union List, State List and Concurrent List distribute legislative powers. Belgium's model is also partially federal — State Governments there are independent rather than subordinate to the Centre. Federalism thus transforms power-sharing from an abstract principle into a concrete constitutional reality.

*Exam Tip: Federalism is covered in depth in Chapter 2 — connect the concepts early so students see the big picture.*

**FAQ 19: How does an 'independent judiciary' contribute to power-sharing in a democracy?**

An independent judiciary is a vital pillar of power-sharing because it acts as the guardian of the constitution and the rights of citizens against potential abuses by the executive or legislature. When the government passes a law that violates constitutional rights, the courts can strike it down. When citizens are wronged by state action, they can approach courts for redress. Judges are not elected by political parties — they are appointed through a process designed to insulate them from political pressure. This independence ensures that even the most powerful executive cannot override the rule of law. In this way, the judiciary is not merely a passive institution — it actively participates in distributing power and ensuring accountability.

*Exam Tip: Judiciary as a power-sharing institution is sometimes overlooked. This is a thinking-level question ideal for UPSC and board toppers.*

**FAQ 20: Give two examples each of power-sharing 'among different organs of government' and 'among different levels of government'.**

Power-sharing among different organs: (1) In India, the Parliament (Legislature) passes the Union Budget, but the Supreme Court (Judiciary) has the power to declare a constitutional amendment invalid if it violates basic structure. (2) The Executive (Council of Ministers) implements policies, but it is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha (Legislature), which can pass a vote of no-confidence to remove the government. Power-sharing among different levels: (1) Law and order is a state subject in India — the Central Government cannot ordinarily deploy the army within a state without the state's request. (2) Panchayati Raj institutions handle local development work — roads, sanitation, water supply — independently of state or central directives in many matters.

*Exam Tip: Give specific, accurate examples rather than vague statements — this earns full marks in both board exams and UPSC.*

**FAQ 21: Why did Belgium's leaders succeed in resolving ethnic tensions where Sri Lanka's leaders failed?**

Belgium's leaders succeeded because they had the political wisdom and courage to recognise that no community — however large — should be allowed to dominate others in a diverse society. They understood that short-term compromise was better than long-term conflict. They were willing to give up the majority community's numerical advantage in the Cabinet, grant genuine autonomy to State Governments, and create an entirely new institution (Community Government) to protect minority cultures. Sri Lanka's leaders, by contrast, prioritised short-term electoral gains by appealing to Sinhala nationalism. They passed discriminatory laws, refused to accommodate Tamil demands, and treated power-sharing as a threat rather than a solution. The difference in political courage and vision was the decisive factor.

*Exam Tip: This is a high-order thinking question. The answer should focus on leadership choices, not just policies.*

**SECTION D — Short Answer Questions [ 3–4 Marks Each ]**

■■■ *Teacher's Note: For 3-4 mark answers, aim for 3-4 clear sentences or 2-3 well-developed points. Do not write one-word answers — explain and illustrate.*

**Q1. What is the 'Prudential' reason for power-sharing? Give one example.**

The prudential reason is a practical argument — it says that sharing power is wise because it reduces the possibility of conflict between social groups. When all groups feel included in the system, they are less likely to resort to protest or violence. Example: Belgium's equal cabinet representation ensures that Dutch and French communities do not compete destructively for power, thereby maintaining internal peace.

**Q2. What is the 'Moral' reason for power-sharing?**

The moral reason states that power-sharing is right in principle because democracy is, by its very nature, a system where citizens participate in governance. It is not merely a practical tool — it upholds human dignity and the idea that every person and community deserves a voice in decisions that affect their lives. Denying power to any group violates this fundamental democratic value.

**Q3. Mention any two features of Belgium's power-sharing arrangements.**

(1) The Belgian constitution mandates that the number of Dutch-speaking and French-speaking ministers in the Central Cabinet shall be equal — giving neither community a numerical advantage. (2) The State Governments in Belgium are not subordinate to the Central Government; they have independent constitutional powers, making Belgium a genuinely federal state.

**Q4. What is 'Horizontal Distribution of Power'? Name the three organs involved.**

Horizontal distribution of power means sharing authority among the three principal organs of government at the same constitutional level, so that each can check and balance the others. The three organs are: (1) Legislature — which makes laws; (2) Executive — which implements laws and runs the government; (3) Judiciary — which interprets laws and dispenses justice.

**Q5. Distinguish between 'Prudential' and 'Moral' reasons for power-sharing in two points.**

(1) The prudential reason is practical — it focuses on reducing conflict and ensuring stability, whereas the moral reason is principled — it focuses on the right of every citizen to participate in governance. (2) The prudential reason looks at power-sharing as a tool to manage diversity and prevent conflict; the moral reason sees it as an intrinsic democratic value regardless of its practical benefits.

**Q6. What do you understand by 'Vertical Distribution of Power'? Give one example from India.**

Vertical distribution of power means dividing authority across different levels of government — Central, State and Local — each with its own constitutional jurisdiction. In India, the Central Government handles defence, foreign affairs and currency (Union List), while State Governments manage law and order, agriculture and health (State List). Both levels share certain subjects through the Concurrent List.

**Q7. What were the main demands of the Sri Lankan Tamils?**

The Sri Lankan Tamils demanded: (1) Recognition of Tamil as an official language alongside Sinhala. (2) Regional autonomy for Tamil-majority areas in the north and east. (3) Equal opportunity in government employment and university admissions. (4) Protection of their cultural and religious identity. These were initially peaceful, constitutional demands before the situation escalated into armed conflict.

**Q8. What is a 'Community Government'? In which country does it exist?**

A Community Government is a unique third tier of government elected not on the basis of geography but on the basis of language community. It exists in Belgium. Each linguistic community — Dutch, French and German — has its own Community Government that deals with cultural, educational and language-related matters. This arrangement ensures that no community's culture or language is suppressed by any other.

**Q9. How does a coalition government represent power-sharing?**

A coalition government is formed when no single party wins an outright majority, and two or more parties come together to form the government. Power is directly shared — ministries are distributed among coalition partners, and major policy decisions require agreement between them. This ensures that a single party cannot dominate governance and that diverse political interests are accommodated in the running of the country.

**Q10. Why did the Tamils of Sri Lanka feel alienated? Give any two reasons.**

(1) The Sinhala Only Act of 1956 made Sinhala the sole official language, stripping Tamil of any official status and putting Tamil-speaking government employees and students at a severe disadvantage. (2) The government's preferential policies in university admissions and government jobs favoured Sinhala applicants, effectively closing many professional and career pathways for Tamil citizens.

**Q11. What is the significance of 'Checks and Balances' in a democracy?**

Checks and Balances is the mechanism by which each organ of government — Legislature, Executive and Judiciary — monitors and limits the power of the others, preventing any single organ from becoming all-powerful. It ensures accountability: the Executive is answerable to the Legislature; the Legislature must respect the Constitution as interpreted by the Judiciary; and the Judiciary itself is appointed through processes involving the Executive and Legislature. This system safeguards against tyranny and protects citizens' rights.

**Q12. What lesson do we learn from the comparison between Belgium and Sri Lanka?**

The central lesson is that in a diverse society, accommodation — genuine power-sharing — is the only sustainable path to peace and unity. Belgium's willingness to give all linguistic communities equal representation kept it together as a prosperous nation. Sri Lanka's choice of majoritarianism — imposing the Sinhala majority's will on the Tamil minority — led to decades of brutal civil war and immense human suffering. Diversity, managed wisely through power-sharing, is a strength; imposed upon through majoritarianism, it becomes a source of tragedy.

## SECTION E — Long Answer Questions [ 5–6 Marks Each ]

■■■ *Teacher's Note: Long answers should be well-structured — write an introduction, develop 3-4 main points with examples, and always conclude. In board exams, presentation matters as much as content. Use headings or numbering within your answers.*

### Q1. Explain in detail the power-sharing arrangements in Belgium. Why is it considered a successful model of accommodation?

Belgium, a small European country smaller than the Indian state of Haryana, has a remarkably complex ethnic composition. Approximately 59% of its population speaks Dutch (Flemish), about 40% speaks French (Walloon), and a small German-speaking community of 1% lives near the eastern border. The capital, Brussels, further complicates matters — while French speakers are a national minority, they form 80% of Brussels' residents.

Rather than allowing these differences to become sources of conflict, Belgian leaders undertook a series of constitutional amendments between 1970 and 1993, creating one of the world's most sophisticated power-sharing systems. Its key elements are:

- (1) Equal Cabinet Representation: The Central Cabinet must have equal numbers of Dutch-speaking and French-speaking ministers, irrespective of population proportions. No single community can dominate national decision-making.
- (2) Independent State Governments: State Governments have their own constitutionally guaranteed powers. They are not subordinate to the Central Government, making Belgium genuinely federal.
- (3) Brussels's Special Status: Brussels has a separate government with equal representation from both linguistic communities. Both groups have accepted this arrangement, recognising that the capital belongs equally to all.
- (4) Community Government: Perhaps Belgium's most innovative feature — a third tier of government elected by linguistic community members regardless of where they live. This Community Government handles cultural, educational and language-related policies for each community.

Belgium is admired globally because its leaders chose accommodation over confrontation. They understood that imposing the Dutch majority's will over the French minority — or vice versa — would destroy the country. By giving every community a constitutional guarantee of equality, Belgium has maintained peace, unity and prosperity. It even became the headquarters of the European Union, a testament to its capacity to manage diversity. Belgium teaches the world that the wiser path in a diverse society is always to share power generously.

### Q2. Describe how Sri Lanka's policy of Majoritarianism led to a prolonged civil war. What could have been done differently?

Sri Lanka, an island nation just south of India, became independent in 1948. Its population comprises Sinhala-speaking Buddhists (approximately 74%), Tamil-speaking Hindus and Muslims (about 18% Sri Lankan Tamils and 5% Indian Tamils), and other communities.

Shortly after independence, Sinhala political leaders began adopting policies designed to establish Sinhala dominance across all institutions of the state. This approach — Majoritarianism — had devastating consequences:

**The 1956 Act:** The government passed the Sinhala Only Act, recognising Sinhala as the sole official language. Tamil civil servants who had worked under the British in English suddenly found themselves disadvantaged. A whole generation of Tamil students was penalised in examinations because they wrote in Tamil.

**Educational and Employment Discrimination:** Universities began giving preferential admission to Sinhala students. Government jobs were filled disproportionately by Sinhala candidates. Tamil professionals found the doors of

advancement closing before them.

**Cultural Suppression:** The government promoted Buddhism as the state religion and Sinhala culture as the national identity, marginalising Tamil Hindu and Muslim traditions.

**Tamil Response:** Tamil political parties initially responded through democratic means — strikes, protests, negotiations — demanding federalism, equal language rights and regional autonomy. When these were consistently rejected, a younger generation of Tamils turned to militancy. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) emerged, demanding an entirely separate Tamil nation — Tamil Eelam — in the north and east.

**Civil War:** What followed was decades of brutal civil war, with immense loss of life on both sides, displacement of hundreds of thousands, and economic devastation. The war ended only in 2009 when the Sri Lankan military defeated the LTTE militarily — but the underlying grievances remain unresolved.

What could have been different? Had Sri Lanka's leaders followed Belgium's model — giving Tamil its official status alongside Sinhala, ensuring proportional representation in government, creating federal arrangements for Tamil-majority regions — there is every reason to believe the civil war could have been avoided. Sri Lanka's tragedy is, at its heart, a story of what happens when a majority community refuses to acknowledge that minorities have equal rights and dignity.

### **Q3. What are the different forms of power-sharing in modern democracies? Explain each with a suitable example.**

Power-sharing is the defining characteristic of a mature democracy. It operates through four distinct but complementary forms:

(1) **Horizontal Distribution of Power:** This form distributes authority among the three principal organs of government — Legislature, Executive and Judiciary — all at the same constitutional level. The Legislature (Parliament) makes laws; the Executive (government/cabinet) implements them; the Judiciary (courts) interprets them and ensures they conform to the Constitution. Crucially, each organ checks the others — this is the system of Checks and Balances. In India, the Supreme Court can strike down a constitutional amendment that violates the Basic Structure doctrine, even if it was passed unanimously by Parliament. This prevents any organ from accumulating unchecked power.

(2) **Vertical Distribution of Power (Federalism):** This form distributes power across different levels of government — Central, State and Local. The constitution clearly assigns subjects to each level. In India, Defence and Foreign Affairs fall under the Union List (Central Government's exclusive domain); Police and Agriculture fall under the State List; and subjects like Education and Forests fall under the Concurrent List (shared by both). The Panchayati Raj system adds a third level — Local Self-Government. Federalism ensures that power is not concentrated at the national level.

(3) **Power-Sharing Among Social Groups:** In diverse societies, representation of various social, religious and linguistic communities is essential. This can take the form of reservations (as in India for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes in legislatures and government employment) or Community Governments (as in Belgium, where each linguistic community has its own government for cultural and educational matters). This form acknowledges that democracy must represent all sections of society, not just the dominant majority.

(4) **Power-Sharing Among Political Parties and Pressure Groups:** Power is also distributed through political competition and civil society. Political parties contest elections, and when no party wins a majority, coalition governments are formed where power is directly shared among partners. Additionally, pressure groups — trade unions, farmers' organisations, student bodies, environmental movements — exercise informal but real influence over government decisions. This keeps power from being monopolised even by elected majorities.

Together, these four forms create a robust democratic architecture where power is distributed, balanced and accountable at every level.

**Q4. 'Power-sharing is the very spirit of democracy.' Analyse this statement in the context of the chapter.**

The statement captures the philosophical core of Chapter 1. To analyse it, we must first understand what democracy means — not merely as a system of elections, but as a form of government where every citizen has a stake, every voice matters, and no group — however large — can silence another.

Power-sharing, in this light, is not a compromise or a concession. It is the very definition of democratic governance. Here is why:

First, consider what happens without power-sharing. Sri Lanka is the textbook example. A Sinhala majority used its electoral strength to pass laws that marginalised Tamil citizens — in language, employment and culture. Elections were held, but minorities had no real stake in the outcomes. Was Sri Lanka truly democratic? In form, perhaps — in spirit, no. The majority was ruling as though only they mattered.

Second, consider Belgium. A country with deep linguistic divisions chose to guarantee every community equal representation in the Cabinet, independent state powers, and a unique Community Government for cultural matters. No community could override another. Every group had a stake in the system. Belgium was, in its spirit, more deeply democratic because it extended the promise of democracy — equality, dignity, participation — to every community.

Third, the two reasons for power-sharing reinforce this analysis. The prudential reason shows that sharing power produces better practical outcomes — less conflict, more stability. But the moral reason goes further: it says that power-sharing is right in principle. Every citizen's life is affected by government decisions; therefore, every citizen deserves a meaningful share in making those decisions. This is the spirit of democracy.

Finally, the four forms of power-sharing demonstrate that this spirit is not just an abstract ideal — it can be and must be embedded in constitutional structures, federal arrangements, social representations and political competition.

In conclusion, power-sharing is not a feature of democracy — it is democracy. Without it, elections become an instrument of majority tyranny rather than a vehicle for inclusive self-governance.

**Q5. Explain how the Checks and Balances system works as a form of power-sharing. Why is an independent judiciary essential?**

The system of Checks and Balances is the operational expression of Horizontal Distribution of Power. It works by giving each of the three organs of government — Legislature, Executive and Judiciary — specific powers to monitor and restrain the others, so that no single organ can act arbitrarily or accumulate unchecked authority.

How It Works: The Legislature (Parliament) makes laws, but these laws must conform to the Constitution. The Executive (government/cabinet) implements laws and is collectively responsible to the Legislature — if it loses the Legislature's confidence, it falls from power. The Judiciary interprets laws, and if any law or executive action violates constitutional provisions, the courts can strike it down. Each organ thus acts as a check on the others.

In India, this system has produced landmark moments of accountability: the Supreme Court's annulment of the Emergency in the Kesavananda Bharati case (Basic Structure doctrine), parliamentary censure motions removing governments, and courts ordering the release of citizens unlawfully detained by the state. These are not abstract principles — they are living mechanisms of democratic power-sharing.

Why an Independent Judiciary is Essential: An independent judiciary is the cornerstone of this system. If judges were appointed by and answerable to the ruling government, they would become an extension of executive power rather than a check upon it. Independence means judges are appointed through processes designed to insulate them from political interference, serve for fixed terms, and can only be removed through a rigorous constitutional process.

Without an independent judiciary, the Executive could pass any law it wished, deprive citizens of rights, and face no legal challenge. The entire system of Checks and Balances would collapse. Sri Lanka, for instance, saw its judiciary increasingly pressured by the executive during the civil war years, weakening the protection of Tamil citizens' rights.

In summary, the Checks and Balances system ensures that democracy is not merely about who wins elections — it is about ensuring that even winners are accountable, and that citizens are protected from the abuse of power by any organ of government.

#### **Q6. 'Belgium succeeded because it accommodated diversity; Sri Lanka failed because it imposed uniformity.' Do you agree? Give reasons.**

Yes, this statement captures the essence of the two contrasting case studies in Chapter 1, and it merits a detailed examination.

**Belgium: Accommodation of Diversity:** Belgium is a country where Dutch speakers form 59% of the population, French speakers 40%, and German speakers 1%. Rather than allowing the Dutch majority to simply impose its language and culture on others, Belgian leaders made a historic choice: to write constitutional guarantees of equality for all communities. The Central Cabinet has equal Dutch and French ministers regardless of population ratios. State Governments have independent, constitutionally guaranteed powers. Brussels — where French speakers dominate despite being a national minority — has its own government with equal representation. A Community Government deals with cultural and linguistic matters for each community.

This accommodation was not easy. It required political courage, compromise, and the willingness of the majority community to relinquish its numerical advantage. But the results speak for themselves: Belgium remained united, peaceful and prosperous. It became the headquarters of the European Union and NATO.

**Sri Lanka: Imposition of Uniformity:** Sri Lanka made the opposite choice. The Sinhala-dominated government used its electoral majority to impose Sinhala language as the only official medium, to give preferential treatment to Sinhala in jobs and universities, and to promote Buddhist Sinhala culture as the national identity. Tamil citizens were expected to abandon their language, adapt to a culture not their own, and accept second-class status.

This imposition of uniformity — the pretence that a multi-ethnic, multi-religious society can be made culturally uniform through legislation — was a catastrophic failure. It alienated the Tamil community, radicalised a generation of Tamil youth, gave birth to the LTTE, and produced decades of civil war that claimed tens of thousands of lives.

**Conclusion:** Belgium and Sri Lanka teach us that diversity is a social reality that cannot be wished away. The question is not whether a country is diverse, but how its leaders choose to respond to that diversity. Accommodation — acknowledging difference, sharing power, building constitutional guarantees — leads to unity and peace. Imposition — pretending difference does not exist, or using majority power to suppress it — leads to resentment, conflict and national tragedy. In this sense, the statement is not merely a description of two countries — it is a prescription for democratic governance in every diverse society.

#### **Q7. How do pressure groups and political parties contribute to power-sharing in a democracy? Give examples.**

Power-sharing in a democracy extends beyond formal constitutional arrangements — it also operates through the informal but powerful mechanisms of political parties and pressure groups.

**Political Parties and Power-Sharing:** Political parties are the primary vehicles of representative democracy. They contest elections, represent diverse sections of society, and form governments when they win majorities. But their contribution to power-sharing is more nuanced than this:

First, competition itself distributes power. When multiple parties compete for votes, they must appeal to diverse communities, regions and interests. A party that ignores minorities, workers or farmers risks losing elections. This forces even majority-community parties to take minority interests seriously.

Second, coalition governments are direct power-sharing arrangements. In India, governments like the UPA and NDA were coalitions where diverse regional and national parties shared Cabinet positions. Each coalition partner brought

a different constituency's interests to the table — farmers from one region, minorities from another, industrial workers from a third. No single party could dominate.

Third, the Opposition is itself a form of power-sharing. Even parties that lose elections hold real power — they can demand accountability, expose corruption, and force the government to defend its decisions in Parliament.

**Pressure Groups and Power-Sharing:** Pressure groups are organised bodies that seek to influence government policy without contesting elections. They include trade unions (representing workers), farmers' associations, student bodies, women's organisations, environmental groups and business chambers.

Their contribution is to ensure that power does not remain exclusively in the hands of elected politicians. A strong trade union can bring an industry to a standstill, forcing the government to reconsider labour policies. An environmental movement can delay a dam project until ecological concerns are addressed. A women's rights group can campaign for legislative change. These groups distribute real decision-making influence across civil society.

Together, political parties and pressure groups ensure that power in a democracy is genuinely shared — not just during elections, but continuously, through debate, negotiation and accountability.

### **Q8. Why is power-sharing essential for a stable and peaceful democracy? Use the examples of Belgium and Sri Lanka to support your answer.**

Power-sharing is essential for a stable and peaceful democracy because without it, diversity becomes a source of conflict rather than strength. The experiences of Belgium and Sri Lanka — two countries that faced similar challenges of ethnic and linguistic diversity — demonstrate this with striking clarity.

**The Argument for Stability:** When power is shared among different communities, all groups feel they have a stake in the political system. They are invested in its success rather than alienated from it. Even if a community does not form the governing majority, it knows that its interests are protected by constitutional guarantees, its culture is respected, and its representatives have a meaningful voice in national decisions. This sense of inclusion is the foundation of political stability.

When power is NOT shared, excluded communities feel that the state is their adversary rather than their protector. Frustration builds. Peaceful protest is replaced by militancy. Stability unravels.

**Belgium — Stability Through Power-Sharing:** Belgium faced a genuine risk of fracturing along linguistic lines in the 1960s and 70s. The Dutch-speaking community resented the historic economic advantages of the French-speaking minority; French speakers in Brussels resisted Dutch influence in the capital. Belgian leaders responded with creative constitutional engineering — equal Cabinet representation, independent State Governments, Community Governments for cultural matters.

The result: despite its deep divisions, Belgium has not experienced ethnic conflict. It has remained a stable, prosperous democracy. The peaceful coexistence of its linguistic communities has been so successful that it became the chosen headquarters of the European Union — the very organisation dedicated to peaceful cooperation among nations.

**Sri Lanka — Instability Through Power Concentration:** Sri Lanka chose the path of Sinhala dominance — majority rule without minority accommodation. The result was predictable: Tamil alienation, the rise of the LTTE, and a civil war lasting over thirty years. The war ended militarily in 2009, but the underlying inequalities and resentments were not resolved by military victory. Sri Lanka continues to grapple with reconciliation and the question of how to build genuine national unity.

**Conclusion:** Power-sharing is not an optional feature of democracy — it is a necessity for any diverse society that wishes to remain peaceful and united. Belgium proves that it works. Sri Lanka proves what happens when it is absent. For India, with its extraordinary diversity of language, religion, caste and region, the lesson could not be more relevant: genuine power-sharing at every level — federal, social and political — is the bedrock of our democracy.

## SECTION F — Matching Table Exercises

■■■ *Teacher's Note: Matching questions test whether you truly understand how terms, people, places and concepts connect. Never guess — think logically about what each term means before matching.*

### Match Set 1: Match Column A (Forms of Power-Sharing) with Column B (Examples)

Column A — Form of Power-Sharing	Column B — Example / Description
1. Horizontal Distribution	a. Central and State Governments sharing power through Union List and State List
2. Vertical Distribution (Federalism)	b. Dutch and French ministers equally represented in Belgium's Central Cabinet
3. Power-sharing among Social Groups	c. Legislature, Executive and Judiciary functioning as separate but interdependent organs
4. Power-sharing among Political Parties	d. Reservation for Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the Indian Parliament
5. Community Government (Belgium)	e. Coalition government formed by multiple parties sharing ministries
6. Majoritarianism (Sri Lanka)	f. Sinhala Only Act of 1956 imposing one language on a diverse nation

Answers: 1 → c | 2 → a | 3 → d | 4 → e | 5 → b | 6 → f

### Match Set 2: Match Column A (Key Terms) with Column B (Definitions)

Column A — Key Term	Column B — Definition
1. Majoritarianism	a. An organised group that influences government without contesting elections
2. Checks and Balances	b. A government formed by two or more parties sharing power
3. Pressure Group	c. The belief that the majority community should rule as it pleases
4. Coalition Government	d. Distribution of power across Central, State and Local levels
5. Federalism	e. Each organ of government monitoring and restraining the others
6. Accommodation	f. Recognising and respecting different communities' interests in a power-sharing arrangement

7. Ethnic Group

g. A group bound together by shared culture, language, religion or history

Answers: 1 → c | 2 → e | 3 → a | 4 → b | 5 → d | 6 → f | 7 → g

## SECTION G — UPSC / Civil Services Related Questions

■■■ *Teacher's Note: These questions are framed at the level of UPSC Mains and State PSC examinations (UPPSC). They require analytical thinking, not just factual recall. The answers model how a thoughtful, well-read student should approach complex questions — building an argument, using evidence, and concluding clearly.*

**Q1. The Belgian model of power-sharing is often cited as a successful example of 'consociational democracy'. Explain the key features of this model and examine why it succeeded where many other multi-ethnic states have failed.**

*[UPSC Mains — GS Paper 2, Polity and Governance]*

Consociational democracy — a term coined by political scientist Arend Lijphart — refers to a form of democratic governance specifically designed for deeply divided societies. It features grand coalitions across communal lines, mutual vetoes for minority groups, proportionality in political representation and civil service appointments, and a high degree of autonomy for each segment. Belgium exemplifies all these features: equal Cabinet representation across linguistic communities, independent State Governments, and the unique Community Government. It succeeded because Belgian leaders had the political will to accept constraints on majority rule and embed minority rights in the constitution itself — a commitment that Sri Lanka, for example, never made.

**Q2. 'Majoritarianism is the antithesis of democracy.' Analyse this statement with reference to the experience of Sri Lanka.**

*[UPSC Mains — Essay / GS Paper 2]*

This statement is philosophically profound. Democracy, in its truest sense, is not simply majority rule — it is rule by the people, for the people, which necessarily includes all people, not merely those in the numerical majority. Majoritarianism, as demonstrated by Sri Lanka's treatment of the Tamil minority, reduces democracy to a tool of the majority community: Sinhala was imposed as the only official language, Tamils were systematically excluded from government employment, and their cultural identity was delegitimised. This is not democracy — it is the tyranny of the majority. True democracy requires that the rights of minorities are as sacrosanct as the preferences of majorities. The civil war that devastated Sri Lanka for three decades is the ultimate evidence that majoritarianism, however electorally justified, ultimately destroys national unity.

**Q3. Critically examine the four forms of power-sharing in modern democracies. Which form do you consider most essential for a country like India? Give reasons.**

*[UPSC Mains — GS Paper 2]*

The four forms — Horizontal (organs of government), Vertical (Federal), Social Groups, and Political Parties/Pressure Groups — each address a different dimension of the risk of power concentration. For India, with its extraordinary diversity of language (22 scheduled languages), religion (Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain and others), caste (SC, ST, OBC, General) and region (29 States, 8 Union Territories), the Vertical (Federal) form and Power-sharing among Social Groups are arguably most critical. Federalism ensures that States with distinct identities — Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Nagaland — are not overridden by the Centre. Reservations ensure that historically marginalised communities have a genuine voice in legislatures and the bureaucracy. Without these two forms, India's diversity could easily become a source of secessionism or social conflict rather than democratic strength.

**Q4. How does the concept of 'Checks and Balances' protect democracy from the tyranny of the majority? Illustrate with examples from India.**

*[UPSC Mains — GS Paper 2, Polity]*

Checks and Balances protect democracy by ensuring that no organ of government — even one with an overwhelming electoral mandate — can act without constitutional constraints. In India: (1) The Supreme Court has invoked the Basic Structure Doctrine to strike down constitutional amendments even when passed by Parliament with two-thirds majority — protecting fundamental rights from majoritarian legislatures. (2) The President can return a Bill for reconsideration (though not indefinitely). (3) Parliamentary committees scrutinise government expenditure and policy, restraining executive overreach. (4) Courts have ordered the release of political detainees held without trial. These mechanisms collectively ensure that electoral majorities cannot translate into governmental omnipotence — the very essence of constitutional democracy.

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**Q5. The devolution of power to local governments is considered the most effective form of grassroots democracy. Do you agree? Analyse in the context of power-sharing.**

*[UPSC Mains — GS Paper 2]*

Devolution of power to Panchayati Raj institutions and Urban Local Bodies represents the deepest expression of Vertical Power-Sharing. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments (1992) gave constitutional status to these bodies, mandating elections, reservation of seats for women and marginalised communities, and transfer of specific functions. In principle, this brings governance closest to citizens — a village panchayat deciding on local roads, water supply and school management is democracy at its most direct. However, effectiveness has varied widely. States that genuinely transferred funds, functions and functionaries (like Kerala) have seen vibrant local democracy; others where State Governments retained real authority have seen local bodies reduced to ceremonial bodies. For genuine power-sharing, legal devolution must be accompanied by financial and administrative devolution.

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**Q6. Examine the role of pressure groups in ensuring that power is not monopolised by elected governments in a democracy.**

*[UPSC Mains — GS Paper 2]*

Pressure groups represent organised civil society — trade unions, farmers' federations, business chambers, environmental bodies, women's rights organisations — and they exercise continuous influence over government decisions without contesting elections. Their role in power-sharing is threefold: First, they represent interests that political parties may ignore — industrial workers, displaced communities, religious minorities, or future generations concerned about environmental degradation. Second, they hold governments accountable between elections — through campaigns, litigation and public pressure. Third, they bring technical expertise and lived experience to policy debates, improving the quality of decisions. However, they can also be captured by narrow interests and may not always represent the public good. The ideal democratic system is one where pressure groups complement, rather than subvert, electoral and parliamentary accountability.

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**Q7. 'The spirit of accommodation is more important than the letter of constitutional provisions in making power-sharing successful.' Discuss with reference to Belgium and Sri Lanka.**

*[UPSC Mains — Essay / GS Paper 2]*

Constitutional provisions are necessary but not sufficient for successful power-sharing. They must be animated by a genuine political culture of accommodation — the willingness of leaders and communities to accept constraints on their own power for the sake of national unity. Belgium illustrates this: its constitutional provisions are sophisticated, but they work because Belgian political leaders — Dutch and French — genuinely accept the legitimacy of equal representation and are willing to negotiate rather than dominate. Sri Lanka shows the converse: it had a constitutional framework, but its leaders — particularly from the Sinhala community — chose to use their electoral majority to override rather than accommodate minority interests. The letter of constitutional law was upheld (elections were held, Parliament functioned), but the spirit of accommodation was absent. This distinction matters enormously for multi-ethnic democracies — constitutional engineering can create the structures, but political culture must provide the will.

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**Q8. How does the formation of coalition governments in India demonstrate power-sharing in practice? What are the advantages and limitations of coalitions?**

*[UPSC Mains — GS Paper 2]*

Coalition governments are the direct political expression of power-sharing. In India, the era of coalition politics began in earnest after 1989 and dominated national governance for two and a half decades. The United Front governments (1996-98), UPA I and II (2004-2014), and NDA (1999-2004, 2014 onward) were all either coalitions or relied on outside support. Advantages: Coalitions bring diverse regional, linguistic and ideological perspectives into governance; they force compromises that produce more balanced policies; they prevent any single ideology from becoming hegemonic. Limitations: Coalitions can be unstable — partners may withdraw support over specific issues; decision-making becomes slower; coalition partners may extract policy concessions that serve narrow interests at the public's expense. The ideal coalition is one where the sharing of power produces better governance through genuine dialogue, rather than one paralysed by competing veto players.

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**Q9. Is power-sharing in India genuinely inclusive, or does it remain predominantly an arrangement among dominant groups? Critically evaluate.**

*[UPSC Mains — GS Paper 2]*

India's power-sharing arrangements are formally inclusive but remain unequally realised in practice. Formally: the constitution distributes power across federal, legislative, executive and judicial organs; reservations for SC, ST and OBC communities ensure legislative representation; the 73rd and 74th Amendments create space for grassroots participation; freedom of association allows diverse pressure groups. However, in practice: dominant caste groups often control Panchayati Raj institutions despite reservation; SC and ST representatives face social and political marginalisation even in reserved constituencies; religious minorities — particularly Muslims — are significantly underrepresented in legislatures, the bureaucracy and the judiciary; women, despite 33% reservation in Panchayats, face severe barriers to effective participation. Genuine power-sharing in India requires not just formal constitutional provisions but active policies to make those provisions meaningful for historically excluded communities.

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**Q10. Analyse the statement: 'Power-sharing arrangements, while sometimes making governance complex and slow, are ultimately indispensable for the long-term stability of diverse democracies.'**

*[UPSC Mains — Essay]*

This statement presents a honest tension in democratic theory. It is true that power-sharing makes governance more complex: coalition governments require lengthy negotiations; federal arrangements create jurisdictional disputes; community vetoes can delay urgent legislation. Critics argue that swift, decisive government — even at the cost of some inclusivity — produces better outcomes. However, this critique fundamentally misunderstands the purpose of democracy in a diverse society. The Belgian experience demonstrates that accepting the short-term friction of power-sharing produces long-term peace and unity. The Sri Lankan experience demonstrates that the alternative — majoritarianism — produces conflicts that are exponentially more disruptive than any governmental inefficiency. Thirty years of civil war cost Sri Lanka far more in human lives, economic development and social cohesion than decades of Belgian political negotiation. The statement is therefore correct: power-sharing is indispensable not despite its complexity, but because that complexity is the price of genuine democracy in a diverse society.

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## A Final Word from Your Teacher

Dear Students, Chapter 1 of Political Science is not just about Belgium and Sri Lanka — it is about a fundamental question that every democracy must answer: How do we live together when we are different? The answer this chapter gives us is both simple and profound: by sharing power. Not as a weakness, not as a compromise, but as the very foundation of a just and peaceful society. When you read about Belgium, think about how its leaders chose the harder path — the path of equal representation, of listening to every community, of accepting constraints on majority power. And when you read about Sri Lanka, think about how the easier path — the path of majority dominance — led to tragedy. These are not just history lessons. They are lessons about how we should treat every person around us — with dignity, with fairness, and with the recognition that they deserve an equal share in whatever we build together. Study well. Think deeply. And remember — the best answer in any examination is not the longest one, but the one that shows you have truly understood. With warm regards and every good wish for your success, Om Sikarwar Teacher — CLASS ORB.COM

**Best of Luck! | classORB.com | Teacher: Om Sikarwar ■**