

1. What are the different forms of power sharing in modern democracies? Give an example of each of these.

**Ans.** In modern democracies, power sharing can take the following forms :

**(i) Organs of Government :**

- In democracy, power is shared among different organs of government i.e. legislature, executive and judiciary. This is known as *horizontal distribution* of power because it allows different organs of government placed at the same level to exercise different powers.
- Legislature makes laws, executive enforces those laws and judiciary interprets those laws.
- This results in balance of power among various organs of government.
- No organ can exercise unlimited power as each organ checks the others and maintains a balance of power.
- Example: Although, ministers and government officials exercise power, they are responsible to the Parliament or State Assembly.

**(ii) Governments at Different levels :**

- In federal form of government power is shared between the central government and the state and local government.
- This system of power sharing involving higher and lower levels of government is called *vertical division* of power.

**(iii) Social groups :**

- Power may also be shared among different social groups such as *religious* and *linguistic* groups.
- Community government in Belgium is a good example of this arrangement.
- In India there are constitutional and legal arrangements whereby socially weaker sections and women are represented in the legislatures and administration.

**(iv) Political Parties and Pressure Groups :**

- Power sharing arrangements can also be seen in the way political parties.
- Pressure groups and movements control or influence power.
- This can be seen when a *coalition* government is formed where power is shared by various political parties.

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

**Ans.** Prudential reason for power sharing is good because it helps to *reduce* the possibility of conflict between social groups. In India this has been done by reserving seats in the legislatures and government services for members belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Moral reason for power sharing is good for democracies because it is the very *spirit* of democracy. In India members from different political parties get elected to the legislatures and participate in the working of the government.

3. 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.

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

**Ans.** We agree with Quseph that every society needs some form of power sharing even if it is small or does not have social divisions every society has some social groups based on religion, caste, region etc and power sharing among them is good because it helps to reduce the possibility of conflict between those social groups. Moreover, power sharing is good since it is the very spirit of democracy. Since the laws made by the government affect all people have a right to be consulted on how they are going to be governed.

4. The Mayor of Merchtem, a town near Brussels in Belgium, has defended a ban on speaking French in town's schools. He said that the 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?

**Ans.** In my view, this measure is in accordance with the spirit of Belgium's power sharing arrangements. The constitution of Belgium provides that apart from the central and the state government there is a third kind of government - 'The Community Government'. The community government is elected by the people belonging to one language community, Dutch, French and German speaking no matter where they live. This government has the power regarding cultural, educational and language related issues. Since the above order comes under this of the constitution, it is in accordance with the spirit of power-sharing arrangement.

5. 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 realize 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. Giving 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. Thus panchayati Raj will strengthen the foundations of our democracy.”

**Ans.** Giving power to panchayats is a way to reduce corruption and increase efficiency in administration. When people participate in the planning and implementation of development schemes, they would exercise greater control over these schemes. This would eliminate the corrupt middlemen. Hence Panchayati Raj will strengthen the foundation of our democracy.

6. Different arguments are usually put forth on favour of and against power sharing. Identify those which are in favour of power sharing and select the answer using the codes given below? Power Sharing.

- A. Reduces conflict among different communities.  
 B. decreases the possibility of arbitrariness  
 C. delays decision making process  
 D. accommodates diversities  
 E. Increases instability and divisiveness  
 F. Promotes people's participation in government  
 G. Undermines the unity of a country.

(a) A B D F

(b) A C E F

(c) A B D G

(d) B C D G

**Ans.** (a) A - B - D - F

7. Consider the following statements about power sharing arrangements in Belgium and Sri Lanka.

- (A) In Belgium, the Dutch - speaking majority people tried to impose their domination on the minority French - speaking community.  
 (B) In Sri Lanka, the policies of the government sought to ensure the dominance of the Sinhala - speaking majority.  
 (C) The Tamils in Sri-Lanka demanded a federal arrangement of power

