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LESSON SLIDES

Power Sharing

CBSE Class 10 Social Science · Democratic Politics, Chapter 1

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Power Sharing

SPEAKER NOTES

Open with a classroom situation: if the class monitor alone decided everything, from seating to sports teams, how would others feel? Let students answer, then explain that countries face the same question on a much larger scale. Today we look at two countries that answered it very differently.

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By the end of this lesson you can

- 🎯 Describe the people of Belgium and Sri Lanka
- 🎯 Compare the two countries' approaches
- 🎯 Give prudential and moral reasons for sharing power
- 🎯 Name four forms of power sharing, with Indian examples

By the end of this lesson you can

SPEAKER NOTES

Tell students that the two case studies are the core of the chapter and are often asked about in exams. Ask them to note one key difference between the countries as they go.

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What is power sharing?

- Power is divided among institutions, levels and groups
- No single person, organ or group holds all power
- Different groups get a voice in decisions that affect them
- It is a key feature of democratic government

What is power sharing?

SPEAKER NOTES

Link to what students learnt in Class 9: in a democracy, power is shared among the legislature, executive and judiciary. Ask: why might it be risky if one group held all the power, even if it was the majority?

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Belgium: a small country with three languages

59%

of Belgians live in the Flemish region and speak Dutch

- About 40% live in Wallonia and speak French
- About 1% speak German
- Brussels: about 80% French-speaking, 20% Dutch-speaking

Belgium: a small country with three languages

SPEAKER NOTES

These are the figures used in the NCERT textbook. The key point is that the Dutch-speakers were a majority in the country but a minority in the capital, Brussels. Ask students why this made the situation tricky for both communities.

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Sri Lanka: an island of diverse communities

- About 74% Sinhala-speakers and 18% Tamil-speakers
- Sri Lankan Tamils (13%) live mainly in the north and east
- Indian Tamils descend from colonial-era plantation workers
- Most Sinhala-speakers are Buddhist; most Tamils Hindu or Muslim
- About 7% are Christian, both Tamil and Sinhala

Sri Lanka: an island of diverse communities

SPEAKER NOTES

Point out Sri Lanka on a map, just off the coast of Tamil Nadu. Compare the size of the majority here, about three quarters, with Belgium's 59%. Ask: in which country could a majority more easily ignore a minority?

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Key dates in the two case studies



Key dates in the two case studies

SPEAKER NOTES

Belgium amended its constitution four times between 1970 and 1993. Keep the dates simple and let students see the two stories side by side. Ask what happened in Sri Lanka during the years Belgium was working out its arrangement.

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Sri Lanka: rule by the majority

- 1956 Act made Sinhala the only official language
- Sinhala applicants favoured for university places and government jobs
- Constitution said the state shall protect and foster Buddhism
- Many Sri Lankan Tamils felt excluded and alienated
- Demands for autonomy grew, then conflict became civil war

Sri Lanka: rule by the majority

SPEAKER NOTES

The textbook calls these measures majoritarianism: the belief that the majority community should rule in whatever way it wants, disregarding minority wishes. Stay with the facts in the textbook and avoid blaming any community as a whole. Ask: how might a Tamil-speaking student have felt about the language law?

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Belgium: accommodating every community

- Equal numbers of Dutch- and French-speaking central ministers
- Some laws need majority support in each language group
- Regional governments are not subordinate to the centre
- Brussels has a separate government with equal representation
- A community government handles language, culture and education

Belgium: accommodating every community

SPEAKER NOTES

The community government is elected by people of one language community, Dutch, French or German-speaking, wherever they live. Explain that each side accepted give-and-take: the French-speakers accepted equal representation in Brussels because the Dutch-speakers accepted it at the centre. Ask students whether they think this arrangement is fair.

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Two paths, two outcomes

Belgium

- Recognised regional and cultural differences
- Shared power among communities
- Stayed united as one country
- Brussels became headquarters of the EU

Sri Lanka

- Majority sought dominance over government
- Minority felt shut out of power
- Distrust grew into a long civil war
- War ended in 2009 after great losses

Two paths, two outcomes

SPEAKER NOTES

The lesson the textbook draws is that majoritarian policies can undermine a country's unity, while accommodation can strengthen it. Ask students to sum up the difference in one sentence. A common misconception is that power sharing weakens a country; Belgium shows it can hold a country together.

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Why share power?

Prudential reasons

- Reduce conflict between social groups
- Keep the political order stable
- Avoid tyranny of the majority

Moral reasons

- Power sharing is the spirit of democracy
- People have a right to be consulted
- Citizens gain a stake in the system

Why share power?

SPEAKER NOTES

Prudential means based on careful calculation of gains and losses, so these reasons focus on better outcomes. Moral reasons value power sharing for its own sake. Ask students to classify this statement: 'sharing power keeps the country peaceful' (prudential).

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Form 1: Among organs of government

- Legislature, executive and judiciary share power
- Called horizontal distribution of power
- Each organ checks the others: checks and balances
- India: ministers answer to Parliament; courts can review laws

Form 1: Among organs of government

SPEAKER NOTES

The organs sit at the same level of government, which is why this is called horizontal. Ask students to name the three organs in India: Parliament, the Union executive led by the Prime Minister, and the judiciary led by the Supreme Court.

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Form 2: Among levels of government

- A general government for the whole country
- Governments at the provincial or regional level
- India: Union, State and local governments
- The constitution lays down each level's powers
- Called vertical or federal division of power

Form 2: Among levels of government

SPEAKER NOTES

Belgium chose to share power this way; Sri Lanka refused to do so, according to the textbook. The next chapter, Federalism, covers this form in detail. Ask students to name their local government body: a panchayat or a municipality.

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Form 3: Among social groups

- Power shared among religious and linguistic groups
- Belgium's community government is one example
- India reserves seats in legislatures for SCs and STs
- Gives groups that might feel left out a fair share

Form 3: Among social groups

SPEAKER NOTES

Students met reserved constituencies in Class 9. Explain that such arrangements aim to give minority and weaker groups a voice in government. Ask why a group that is always outvoted might lose trust in the system.

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Form 4: Parties, pressure groups, movements

- Parties compete, so power does not stay in one hand
- Parties may ally and form a coalition government
- Interest groups of traders, farmers and workers influence decisions
- Movements put pressure on those in power

Form 4: Parties, pressure groups, movements

SPEAKER NOTES

Keep this neutral: the point is how competition and alliances share power, not which party is better. A coalition government is formed when two or more parties come together. Ask students for an example of a group, such as a farmers' association, that tries to influence government decisions.

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 Example

Power sharing in India, at a glance

- 1 Parliament makes laws; courts check they follow the Constitution
- 2 Union and State subjects are listed in the Constitution
- 3 Panchayats and municipalities govern at the local level
- 4 Reserved seats give SCs and STs representation
- 5 India has seen coalition governments at the Centre

Power sharing in India, at a glance

SPEAKER NOTES

Ask students to match each bullet to one of the four forms of power sharing.

Answers: horizontal, vertical, vertical, social groups, and parties. This makes a good pair activity before the quick check.

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 **Quick check**

Belgium's community government is an example of power sharing among:

A Organs of government

B Levels of government

C Social groups

D Political parties

Quick check

SPEAKER NOTES

Answer: C, social groups, because the community government is elected by people of one language community. Some students pick levels of government; remind them that the community government is defined by language, not territory.

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Key takeaways

- ✓ Belgium accommodated its communities; Sri Lanka followed majoritarian policies
- ✓ Accommodation helped Belgium stay united
- ✓ Prudential reasons: less conflict, more stability
- ✓ Moral reason: power sharing is the spirit of democracy
- ✓ Four forms: organs, levels, social groups, parties and groups

Key takeaways

SPEAKER NOTES

Ask each student to write one sentence comparing Belgium and Sri Lanka as an exit ticket. Then move to the five-question quiz. Homework: find one example of each form of power sharing in a newspaper or news website.