

POWER SHARING

Q21. Describe the elements of the Belgium model for accommodating diversities.

Solution

Belgium amended its constitution four times between 1970 and 1993 and involves the following as major elements of the Belgium model:

(i) The Constitution prescribes that the number of Dutch and French speaking ministers shall be equal in the Central Government so that no single community can make decisions unilaterally.

(ii) The State Governments are not subordinate to the Central Government.

(iii) Brussels, the capital, has a separate government where both the communities have equal representation. A third kind of government, 'Community Government, is elected by people belonging to a particular language community.

MNEMONIC: Ministers Sudhareng Brussels; where M—Ministers, S—not Subordinate, B— Separate Brussels government.

Q22. Compare the different ways in which the Belgians and the Sri Lankans have dealt with the problem of cultural diversity.

Solution

The Belgian leaders recognized the existence of regional and cultural diversities.

a. They amended their Constitution four times to work out an innovative arrangement that would enable everyone to live together in peace and harmony, i.e., there was a sharing of power between the Dutch and the French both in the Central Government, State Government, and Community Government. They followed a policy of accommodation.

b. This helped to avoid civic strife and division of the country on linguistic lines.

c. On the other hand, the Sinhalese who were in majority in Sri Lanka as compared to the Tamils followed a policy of majoritarianism and adopted a series of measures to establish Sinhala Supremacy by passing an Act of 1956. These measures alienated the Tamils leading to civic strife between the two communities.

Q23. Why is horizontal distribution of power often referred to as a system of checks and balances?

Solution

Horizontal distribution of power often referred to as a system of checks and balances because of following reasons:

- (i) It allows different organs of government placed at the same level to exercise different powers. It ensures that none of the organs can exercise unlimited power.
- (ii) Each organ checks the other as each works exclusively, but connects for consequent actions.
- (iii) It ensures that none of the organs can exercise unlimited power.
- (iv) Each organ checks the other as each works exclusively, but connects for consequent actions.

Q24. Mention any three prudential and moral reasons for power sharing respectively.

Solution

Power sharing has evident reasons of both the kinds as follows:

I. Prudential reasons:

- (i) It helps to reduce the possibility of conflict between social groups.
- (ii) It is a good way to ensure the stability of political order as social conflict often leads to violence and political instability.
- (iii) Imposing the will of the majority community over others may look like an attractive option in the short run but in the long run, it undermines the unity of the nation.

II. Moral reasons:

- (i) Power sharing is the very spirit of democracy.
- (ii) A democratic rule involves sharing power with those affected by its exercise and who have to live with its effect.
- (iii) People have a right to be consulted on how they are to be governed.