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CLASS X · SOCIAL SCIENCE (087) · POLITICAL SCIENCE · CBSE BOARD EXAMINATION 2027

POLITICAL SCIENCE · CHAPTER 1

Power Sharing

Chapter Practice Booklet · Questions only

8 note blocks + 2 tables | 5 case studies | PYQs 2023–2026 | 62 practice questions | Model Answer Booklet

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STUDENT DETAILS

NAME _____

CLASS & SECTION _____

ROLL NO. _____

BOOKLET STARTED ON _____

CHAPTER TEST SCORE _____ / 20

1

READ THIS FIRST

Chapter Notes

The whole chapter in short-note form: both case studies, the reasons and the forms of power sharing. Revise from here – you should not need the textbook again.

1 Belgium – the people

- A small country in Europe, **smaller in area than Haryana**; borders France, the Netherlands, Germany and Luxembourg. Population a little over **one crore** – about half of Haryana's.
- **59%** live in the **Flemish** region and speak **Dutch**; **40%** live in **Wallonia** and speak **French**; **1%** speak **German**.
- In the capital **Brussels**: **80% French-speaking**, **20% Dutch-speaking**.
- The **French-speaking minority** was relatively **rich and powerful**; the Dutch-speaking majority got the benefits of economic development and education much later and resented this.
- Tension between the two communities in the **1950s and 1960s**, sharpest in **Brussels** – the Dutch speakers were a majority in the country but a **minority in the capital**.

2 Sri Lanka – the people

- An island nation a few kilometres off the southern coast of **Tamil Nadu**; about **2 crore** people (about the same as Haryana).
- **Sinhala-speakers 74%**, **Tamil-speakers 18%**.
- Tamils: **Sri Lankan Tamils (13%)** – natives of the country, concentrated in the **north and east**; **Indian Tamils** – whose forefathers came from India as **plantation workers** in the colonial period.
- Most Sinhala-speakers are **Buddhists**; most Tamils are **Hindus or Muslims**; about **7%** **Christians**, both Tamil and Sinhala.

3 Majoritarianism in Sri Lanka

> **Majoritarianism:** the belief that the majority community should be able to rule a country in whichever way it wants, disregarding the wishes and needs of the minority.

- Sri Lanka became independent in **1948**. Sinhala leaders used their majority to dominate the government.
- **1956:** an Act made **Sinhala the only official language**, disregarding Tamil.
- Preferential policies favoured **Sinhala applicants** for university places and government jobs.
- A new constitution said the state shall **protect and foster Buddhism**.

Effect on Sri Lankan Tamils: growing **alienation**. They felt the major parties, led by Buddhist Sinhala leaders, ignored their language and culture; the constitution and policies denied them **equal political rights** and discriminated against them in jobs.

- They demanded recognition of **Tamil as an official language**, **regional autonomy** and **equal opportunity** in education and jobs; demands for autonomy of Tamil provinces were repeatedly denied.
- By the **1980s** groups demanded an independent **Tamil Eelam** in the north and east. Distrust turned into **civil war**: thousands killed, many families became **refugees**, many lost livelihoods; a terrible setback to social, cultural and economic life. It ended in **2009**.

4 Accommodation in Belgium – the Belgian model

Belgian leaders **recognised regional differences and cultural diversities**. Between **1970 and 1993** they amended the constitution **four times** so that everyone could live together in one country.

1. **Equal ministers:** the number of Dutch- and French-speaking ministers in the **central government** must be equal. Some special laws need the support of a majority of members **from each linguistic group** – no single community can decide alone.
2. **State governments:** many powers of the central government were given to the state governments of the two regions; they are **not subordinate** to the central government.
3. **Brussels** has a **separate government** with **equal representation** of both communities. The French speakers accepted equal representation in Brussels because the Dutch speakers accepted it in the central government.

4. **Community government:** a third kind of government, elected by people of one language community – Dutch, French or German-speaking – **wherever they live**; it has power over **cultural, educational and language-related** issues.

Result: complicated, but it avoided **civic strife** and a possible **division of the country** on linguistic lines. When the **European Union** was formed, **Brussels** was chosen as its headquarters.

5 What the two stories teach

- Both are democracies, but they dealt with power sharing differently.
- **Belgium:** the unity of the country is possible only by respecting the feelings and interests of different communities and regions – so power was shared through **mutually acceptable arrangements**.
- **Sri Lanka:** if a majority community forces its dominance and refuses to share power, it can **undermine the unity** of the country.

6 Why power sharing is desirable

Prudential reasons (prudence = careful calculation of gains and losses) – power sharing brings **better outcomes**.

- It **reduces the possibility of conflict** between social groups; conflict often leads to violence and political instability.
- It ensures the **stability of the political order**.
- Imposing the majority's will may look attractive in the short run but undermines the **unity of the nation** in the long run; the **tyranny of the majority** often ruins the majority too.

Moral reasons – the **very act** of power sharing is valuable; it is the **very spirit of democracy**.

- Democracy means sharing power with those affected by its exercise and who live with its effects.
- People have a **right to be consulted** on how they are governed.
- A **legitimate government** is one where citizens, through participation, have a **stake** in the system.

7 Old idea vs democratic idea

- **Old view – undivided power:** all power should rest with one person or group at one place; if power is dispersed, quick decisions cannot be taken and enforced.
- **Democratic view:** everyone has a voice in shaping public policies; political power should be **distributed among as many citizens as possible**; people should decide how they are ruled.

8 Forms of power sharing in modern democracies

1 · Horizontal distribution – among the **organs of government**: legislature, executive and judiciary. They are at the **same level** and use different powers, so none has unlimited power; each **checks** the others – a system of **checks and balances**. *Example:* ministers are responsible to Parliament or State Assemblies; judges are appointed by the executive but can check the executive and the laws made by legislatures.

2 · Vertical distribution – among governments at **different levels**: a general government for the whole country (Union/central) and governments at the provincial or regional level (states in India) – the **federal** division of power; further down, **local government** (municipalities and panchayats). The constitution lays down the powers of each level.

3 · Among social groups – such as religious and linguistic groups. *Examples:* **community government** in Belgium; **reserved constituencies** in India's assemblies and Parliament, which give weaker sections, women and minorities a fair share in power.

4 · Among political parties, pressure groups and movements – competition among parties ensures power does not stay in one hand; over time it is shared among parties with different ideologies and social groups. Sharing is direct when two or more parties form an **alliance** and a **coalition government**. **Interest groups** – traders, businessmen, industrialists, farmers, industrial workers – share power by sitting on government committees or by **influencing decisions**.

Belgium and Sri Lanka compared

A favourite 3-mark answer

Point	Belgium	Sri Lanka
Main groups	Dutch 59%, French 40%, German 1%	Sinhala 74%, Tamil 18%
Who was dominant	French-speaking minority (rich, powerful)	Sinhala majority (used numbers)
Approach	Accommodation – shared power	Majoritarianism – refused to share
Key steps	Equal ministers; state govts; Brussels govt; community govt	Sinhala only official language (1956); job and university preferences; Buddhism protected
Result	Unity kept; no civil strife; Brussels became EU headquarters	Alienation, demand for Tamil Eelam, civil war (ended 2009)

Forms of power sharing

Learn one example for each

Form	Shared among	Example
Horizontal	Legislature, executive, judiciary (same level)	Checks and balances; judges can check laws and executive
Vertical	Union, state and local governments	Federal division of power; panchayats and municipalities
Social groups	Religious and linguistic groups, weaker sections	Community government (Belgium); reserved constituencies (India)
Parties and pressure groups	Parties, interest groups, movements	Coalition governments; farmers' and traders' groups on committees

Key terms

1- and 2-mark answers

Ethnic group – a social group sharing a culture and believing in a common descent; need not share religion or nationality

Majoritarianism – rule by the majority community disregarding the wishes and needs of the minority

Civil war – violent conflict between groups within a country, so intense it looks like a war

Prudential – based on careful calculation of gains and losses

Moral reason – power sharing is valuable in itself – the spirit of democracy

Community government – elected by one language community wherever its members live

Horizontal division – sharing among legislature, executive and judiciary at the same level

Vertical division – sharing among Union, state and local governments

Checks and balances – each organ of government keeps the others in check

Federal government – two or more levels of government, each with its own powers

Coalition government – formed by an alliance of two or more parties

Reserved constituencies – seats reserved for weaker sections so they share power

Interest groups – traders, farmers, workers etc. who influence decisions

Tamil Eelam – independent Tamil state demanded by groups in Sri Lanka from the 1980s

Exam snapshot

What the board asks, and how to prepare

SYLLABUS 2026–27

- Case studies of Belgium and Sri Lanka
- Why power sharing is desirable – prudential and moral reasons
- Forms of power sharing

BOARD WEIGHTAGE

20 / 80

Political Science is Section C (Q20–Q28). This chapter came in **every paper checked** – usually an **assertion–reason MCQ** on Belgium or Sri Lanka, plus a 2- or 3-mark question on why power sharing is good, or a **4-mark case** on forms of power sharing (2026 32/1/1 Q28 and two other 2026 sets). Expect **3–6 marks**.

MOST ASKED IN BOARD PAPERS, 2023–2026 (12 PAPERS CHECKED)

How often	Topic / question type	Marks	Papers
★★★	Why power sharing is desirable – prudential and moral reasons	1–5	8 of 12
★★★	The Belgian model – community government, Brussels, equal ministers	1–3	7 of 12
★★☆	Sri Lanka – majoritarian measures, Tamil alienation, civil war	1	4 of 12
★★☆	Forms of power sharing; checks and balances; pressure groups	3–4	3 of 12

ANSWER-WRITING RULES FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE (CBSE 2026–27)

2 marks
Very short answer · up to 40 words · 2 clear points

3 marks
Short answer · up to 60 words · 3 points

4 marks
Case / source based · up to 100 words in all · answer from the source

5 marks
Long answer · up to 120 words · 5 points, with an intro line

Write in points, underline key words, and give one example or date wherever you can. Read every "OR" choice before you start, and attempt only one.

MISTAKES THAT COST MARKS

- Saying the French speakers were the majority in Belgium – they were the majority only in **Brussels**.
- Mixing up **prudential** (better outcomes) and **moral** (spirit of democracy) reasons.
- Calling community government a regional government – it is elected by a **language community wherever they live**.
- Writing that Sri Lankan Tamils came as plantation workers – that is **Indian Tamils**.
- Giving only names for 'forms of power sharing' – each form needs an **example**.
- Writing that Belgian state governments are under the centre – they are **not subordinate**.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

1. **Day 1:** Read the Chapter Notes twice; learn the key terms.
2. **Next day:** Parts A and B. **Then:** Parts C and D – MUST DO questions first.
3. Check every answer against the **Model Answer Booklet**: same points, same keywords, within the word limit.
4. Write every mistake on the My Mistakes page and redo it after 3 days.

A

PART A · NCERT PRACTICE

Textbook Check

Every section of the chapter and every NCERT exercise idea, asked in new words. Model answers for all of these are in the Model Answer Booklet.

Belgium and Sri Lanka

A1. Describe the ethnic composition of Belgium. Why was the tension sharpest in Brussels? [3] MUST DO

A2. Describe the ethnic and religious composition of Sri Lanka. [2]

A3. What majoritarian measures did the Sri Lankan government adopt after 1948? MUST DO [3]

A4. How did these measures affect the Sri Lankan Tamils? What did they demand? [3]

A5. Explain the four main elements of the Belgian model of power sharing. MUST DO [4]

A6. What is majoritarianism? How did it lead to civil war in Sri Lanka? [3]

A7. What lessons do the stories of Belgium and Sri Lanka teach us? MUST DO [2]

A8. What is a community government? Why was it set up in Belgium? MUST DO [2]

Why and how power is shared

A9. Give two prudential and two moral reasons for power sharing. MUST DO [4]

A10. What was the older idea of 'undivided power'? How does democracy answer it? [2]

A11. Describe the four forms of power sharing in modern democracies, with one example each. [5] MUST DO

A12. What is meant by checks and balances? How does it work in India? [3]

A13. Aman says power sharing is needed only where there are language or religious divisions. Do you agree? Give reasons. [3]

A14. Distinguish between horizontal and vertical division of power. MUST DO [3]

B

PART B · SECTION C STYLE

Objective Practice

All the MCQ types used in the board paper: statements, cartoon-based, assertion–reason and fill-in.

ASSERTION–REASON: HOW TO ANSWER

(a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
(b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.
(c) A is true, but R is false.
(d) A is false, but R is true.

Multiple choice

1 mark each

B1. In Belgium, the percentage of people who live in the Flemish region and speak Dutch is: [1]

(a) 59 **(b)** 40 **(c)** 80 **(d)** 74

B2. Which community was a majority in Brussels but a minority in Belgium as a whole? [1]

(a) Dutch-speaking (b) German-speaking (c) Flemish (d) French-speaking

B3. The Act of 1956 in Sri Lanka: [1]

(a) made Tamil an official language

(b) recognised Sinhala as the only official language

(c) created a separate Tamil state

(d) made Buddhism optional

B4. Read the statements about Sri Lanka: [1]
I. Most Sinhala-speaking people are Buddhists.
II. Forefathers of Indian Tamils came as plantation workers.
III. All Christians in Sri Lanka are Tamil-speaking.
Which are correct?

(a) II and III (b) I and III (c) I, II and III (d) I and II

B5. Between 1970 and 1993, Belgium amended its constitution: [1]

(a) twice (b) three times (c) four times (d) five times

B6. The community government in Belgium is elected by: [1]

(a) people living in Brussels only

(b) people of one language community, wherever they live

(c) the central parliament

(d) the state governments

B7. Which city is the headquarters of the European Union? [1]

(a) Brussels (b) Paris (c) Berlin (d) Geneva

B8. Power shared among the legislature, executive and judiciary is called: [1]

(a) vertical division (b) federal division

(c) horizontal division (d) community division

B9. Reserved constituencies in India are an example of power sharing among: [1]

(a) organs of government (b) levels of government

(c) social groups (d) political parties

B10. Which of the following is a **moral** reason for power sharing? [1]

(a) It reduces conflict between social groups.

(b) It keeps the political order stable.

(c) It prevents the ruin of the majority.

(d) People have a right to be consulted on how they are governed.

B11. Which statement about the Belgian model is **not** correct? [1]

(a) Dutch- and French-speaking ministers are equal in number.

(b) State governments are subordinate to the central government.

(c) Brussels has a separate government.

(d) Some laws need a majority in each linguistic group.

B12. *Cartoon described:* a big chair labelled POWER rests on four legs held by a judge, a minister, a legislator and a village sarpanch. The cartoon suggests that: [1]

(a) power is shared so that no one holds unlimited power

(b) power should rest with one leader

(c) the judiciary is the most powerful organ

(d) local government has no power

B13. Interest groups of traders and farmers share power by: [1]

(a) contesting elections directly

(b) joining the judiciary

(c) influencing decisions and sitting on government committees

(d) forming community governments

B14. The civil war in Sri Lanka ended in: [1]

(a) 1956 (b) 1983 (c) 1993 (d) 2009

B15. A coalition government is an example of power sharing among: [1]

(a) political parties (b) organs of government

(c) levels of government (d) social groups

B16. Sri Lankan Tamils are concentrated in the: [1]

(a) south and west (b) north and east (c) central hills (d) capital, Colombo

Assertion–Reason

1 mark each

B17. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): Prudential reasons for power sharing stress that it brings better outcomes.

Reason (R): Power sharing reduces the possibility of conflict between social groups.

B18. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): Belgium amended its constitution four times between 1970 and 1993.

Reason (R): Brussels was chosen as the headquarters of the European Union.

B19. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): The Sri Lankan government was sensitive to the language and culture of the Tamils.

Reason (R): The 1956 Act recognised Sinhala as the only official language.

B20. ASSERTION–REASON [1]

Assertion (A): The French-speaking community accepted equal representation in Brussels.

Reason (R): The Dutch-speaking community accepted equal representation in the central government.

C

PART C · BOARD PATTERN

Board Pattern Practice

Written-answer questions grouped by topic. ★★★ = asked in 5 or more of 12 papers · ★★ = 3–4 papers · ★ = 1–2 papers.

Why power sharing is desirable

★★★ 8 of 12 papers · 1–5 marks

C1. Explain the prudential and moral reasons for power sharing. MUST DO [5]

C2. Give three arguments against the claim that political power should not be divided. MUST DO [3]

C3. "Power sharing is the very spirit of democracy." Justify. [3]

C4. "The tyranny of the majority often ruins the majority as well." Explain with the example of Sri Lanka. [3]

The Belgian model

★★★ 7 of 12 papers · 1–3 marks

C5. "Belgian leaders recognised regional differences and cultural diversities." Explain the steps they took. MUST DO [5]

C6. Why did the French-speaking people accept equal representation in Brussels? [2]

C7. "The Belgian arrangement is complicated, yet it has worked." Comment. [3]

Sri Lanka

★★☆ 4 of 12 papers · mostly assertion–reason

C8. "Majoritarian measures increased the alienation of Sri Lankan Tamils." Examine. MUST DO [3]

C9. Compare the ways Belgium and Sri Lanka dealt with their diversity, on three points. [3]

Forms of power sharing

★★☆ 3 of 12 papers · 3–4 marks

C10. Describe the different forms of power sharing in modern democracies, with examples. MUST DO [5]

C11. How does horizontal sharing create checks and balances? Why is the judiciary kept independent? [3]

C12. How do political parties, pressure groups and movements share power? MUST DO [2]

C13. How does power sharing keep a democracy stable? Give two points. [2]

D

PART D · CASE-BASED STYLE

Case-Based Questions

Each case carries 4 marks (1 + 1 + 2), as in Q28 of the board paper.

D1. Case-Based · One Country, Four Governments [4]

A student from Liège, a French-speaking city, moves to Antwerp in the Dutch-speaking north for college. She now lives under the regional government of Flanders, but her French-language schooling is still looked after by the government elected by French speakers. In Brussels, where her aunt lives, the city government has equal numbers from both language groups. The national cabinet has as many Dutch-speaking ministers as French-speaking ones.

(i) Which government looks after her French-language schooling? [1]

(ii) What is special about the government of Brussels? [1]

(iii) How do these arrangements stop one community dominating the other? Two ways. [2]

D2. Case-Based · The Language Law [4]

Eight years after independence, the parliament of an island nation made the majority's language the only official language. Admission to universities and jobs began to favour the majority, and the constitution promised to protect the majority's religion. The minority in the north and east felt shut out, and within three decades the country was at war with itself.

(i) Name the country and the year of the law. [1]

(ii) Give two demands of the minority community. [1]

(iii) Explain how majoritarianism weakened the unity of the country. [2]

D3. Case-Based · Who Holds the Power in Nandpur? [4]

In the imaginary state of Nandpur, the assembly passes a land law and the High Court strikes down one clause. The state government shares village work with elected panchayats. Three parties run the government together, and a farmers' union sits on the committee drafting a crop-insurance scheme.

(i) Which example shows horizontal sharing of power? [1]

(ii) Which example shows vertical sharing of power? [1]

(iii) Identify two more forms of power sharing in the passage. [2]

D4. Case-Based · Many Voices [4]

No party won a majority in the last general election, so five parties signed a common programme and formed the government. Outside parliament, an association of small traders campaigned against a new tax, met ministers and got the rate reduced.

(i) What kind of government is described? [1]

(ii) Which form of power sharing does the traders' association show? [1]

(iii) How does competition among parties help share power? Two points. [2]

D5. Case-Based · The See-Saw [4]

Cartoon described: one giant labelled MAJORITY sits on one end of a see-saw. A small figure labelled MINORITY is stuck high in the air at the other end, legs kicking.

(i) Which idea does the cartoon criticise? [1]

(ii) Which country in the chapter followed this idea? [1]

(iii) Suggest two ways to balance the see-saw in a democracy. [2]

PART E · REAL BOARD QUESTIONS

E Board PYQ Index

Real questions from recent Social Science board papers, by topic. Open the official paper and attempt the listed questions.

Frequency	Topic	Marks	Where asked (year: paper code, question number)	Practise here
★★★	**Why power sharing is desirable**	1–5	**2026:** 32/5/2 Q28(iii) (case) · **2025:** 32/1/2 Q25; 32/1/3 Q27; 32/2/3 Q27 · **2024:** 32/1/1 Q23; 32/5/1 Q8; official set† Q3 · **2023:** 32/4/1 Q15; Outside Delhi Set 1 Q15; Outside Delhi Set 2 Q29	A9–A10, A13, B10, B17, C1–C4, C13
★★★	**The Belgian model**	1–3	**2026:** 32/1/1 Q20 (A–R); 32/1/3 Q21 (A–R); 32/5/2 Q23; 32/5/3 Q23 · **2025:** 32/1/1 Q12 (community government); 32/1/3 Q4; 32/2/3 Q3 · **2024:** 32/1/1 Q11; Outside Delhi Sets 1–2 · **2023:** Outside Delhi Set 3 Q29	A1, A5, A8, B1–B2, B5–B7, B11, B18, B20, C5–C7, D1
★★☆	**Sri Lanka and majoritarianism**	1	**2026:** 32/1/1 Q20 (A–R); 32/1/3 Q21; 32/4/2 Q23 (A–R) · **2025:** 32/3/1 Q6 · **2023:** 32/4/1 Q16 (A–R)	A2–A4, A6–A7, B3–B4, B14, B16, B19, C8–C9, D2, D5
★★☆	**Forms of power sharing**	3–4	**2026:** 32/1/1 Q28 (case – parties, coalitions, interest groups); 32/4/2 Q28 (case – checks and balances); 32/5/2 Q28 (case – forms, pressure groups) · **2023:** Outside Delhi Set 1 Q28	A11–A12, A14, B8–B9, B12–B13, B15, C10–C12, D3–D4

Papers checked (12): 2026 – 32/1/1, 32/1/3, 32/4/2, 32/5/2, 32/5/3 · 2025 – 32/1/1, 32/1/2, 32/1/3, 32/2/3, 32/3/1 · 2024 – 32/1/1, 32/5/1, official set†, Outside Delhi Sets 1–2 · 2023 – 32/4/1–3, Outside Delhi Sets 1–3. Sets of one code family share most questions, so they count as one paper. † Code not printed on the copy we used. **Sample Paper 2026–27:** Q20 (A–R on pressure groups and parties), Q21 (prudential reason), Q24 (Belgium's accommodation).

F

PART F · YOUR RECORD

My Mistakes

Write down each mistake from this chapter, including the Sunday Chapter Test.

Every wrong answer is a free lesson. Write it here, find the point you missed, and redo the question after three days.

Date	Part & Q No.	What went wrong	Correct point or fact	Redone ✓