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How to use your *Politics* book...

Before you use this book, read the information on these pages. It will help you find your way around the book more easily, and help you to understand the goals and learning strategies used in the book. The aim of this book is to help you develop the knowledge, skills and values that are important for active citizenship. To help you practice these, there are three kinds of questions:

- **Exercises** focus on increasing your *knowledge* of political ideas, institutions and actors.
- **Activities** focus on developing and practicing important *skills* such as analysing, evaluating information and discussing and debating.
- **Reflections** focus on reflecting on and evaluating your own *values* and how they relate to the politics of your country.

Structure

This book is divided into three themed units — Unit 1 focuses on political ideas, Unit 2 on political institutions and Unit 3 on political actors. Each unit has three chapters which explore the theme. For example, *Unit 1: Ideas* has chapters called "What is Politics", "Power, Authority and Legitimacy" and "Ideologies".

Exercises develop your ability to work with information. They ask you to find, and understand, information from texts and other sources to answer questions in the book.

Every subsection has a *Preview*. These sections ask questions, get you to think about the topic before you begin, and generate discussion and debate.

Activities are designed to help you practice the skills you need for civic participation. These include teamwork, problem solving, debate, and critical thinking.

Discussions encourage you to talk about important or controversial issues affecting your community.

Reflections ask you to think about where your values come from and how people's values affect politics.

UNIT 3 ACTORS **CHAPTER 8**

8.2.2 CSO STRATEGIES

Preview...
How might CSOs try to influence government, and why?

Exercise
After you read 8.2.1.B:
1. Where do outsider groups get their power from?
2. How do outsider groups try to influence government?

1. OUTSIDER GROUPS
Outsider groups generally represent groups who have less political power (even though they might have many more supporters). Some examples of outsider groups include peace campaigners, environmental activists or animal rights groups. These groups do not usually have the ability to talk to the government directly. As a result, they need to use indirect strategies to put pressure on the government.
Outsider groups try to gain public support and sympathy for their goals and their activities by carrying out information campaigns, organising demonstrations or creating **petitions**. Most of these groups try to influence the mass media into giving more attention to the issues they focus on.
Outsider groups might be outsiders because they do not have enough power to have access to the government. However, they could be outsiders because they choose to be — for ideological reasons, for example.

Activity
Put the words and phrases into the correct place in the table.

	access to policy-makers	(often) little	radical goals
	a lot	moderate goals	elite
	grassroots	no/limited access to policy-makers	

	Insider Groups	Outsider Groups
Closeness to government		
Use of the media		
Goals		
Support from...		

Discussion
1. What are some of the factors that make CSOs powerful?
2. Think of an CSO, NGO or social movement in your country. Explain three factors that affect the power of that group.

Reflection
Rank these in order of importance for CSOs. What do you notice about your list?

wealth	size	organisation and leadership	ideology
grassroots support	closeness to the government		

A. LOBBYING
A common way civil society actors influence public policy is through **lobbying**. CSOs try to influence members of the government through meetings, phone calls or writing letters. Politicians often listen to lobbyists to understand the needs and concerns of the group the lobbyists represent. Lobbyists try to persuade the government to make decisions that benefit their group or interest. For example, they might try to convince members of the legislature to vote for or against a proposed law or to get the executive to make or change policies.
Many people see lobbying as a legitimate political activity, but it also has dangers. Professional lobbyists are very expensive because they give groups the ability to increase their influence on the government. For this reason, lobbying has been criticised because it means that groups with more money and power can "buy" the support of the government.

Discussion
After you read 8.2.2.A:
Do you think lobbying is undemocratic? Why or why not?

Focus on Myanmar
The Myitsone Dam Project
The Myitsone dam project was announced in 2001. Following this, the Myanmar government communicated with representatives from the construction industry to decide who would implement the building project.
In 2006, the China Power Investment Corporation (CPI) made an agreement with the government to start work on the dam. In 2007, 12 leaders from Kachin State asked General Than Shwe and the Ministry of Electric Power to cancel the project.
The Burma Rivers Network (BRN) sent a letter to the Chinese government requesting that Chinese companies in Myanmar should have to do environmental and social impact assessments. The BRN also asked companies to release information publicly, and to consider opinions of affected communities in decision-making processes.
Government minister Zaw Min responded to this by saying that the Myitsone dam project had started after an environmental impact assessment was completed. However, the results of this assessment were not released publicly.
On 30 September 2011, President Thein Sein announced that the project would be suspended. The President of CPI responded by warning that stopping construction could lead to legal action and has been putting pressure on the Myanmar government to restart the project ever since.

Discussion
1. What examples of lobbying can you see in the Myitsone Dam example?
2. How effective was it?

Focus On Myanmar are small case studies that focus on how the ideas, institutions and actors in the text relate to Myanmar.

In addition to these activity types, there are also *Case Studies* and *Ideas in Action*, which give you more real life examples of some of the issues in this book.

Timeline and Actors List

In the book, there are exercises and activities which ask you to look at the *timeline* and/or the *actors list*. The *timeline* (page 162) is a list of important events in Myanmar history, from 1885 to 2013. The *actors list* (page 165) is a list of the most important actors in Myanmar history

Use them to increase or review your knowledge of Myanmar politics and apply the ideas in this book to these events and actors.

1. Look at the *actors list*. Put as many as you can in the correct place on the spectrum.



2. Look at the actors on the left of the spectrum. What kind of events (in the *timeline*) were these actors involved in? What do you notice about the relationship between their attitude, their ideology and the events that they were involved in?

Before and After Each Unit:

**Unit 2:
Institutions**

Unit 2: Learning Goals

Knowledge (Facts)	Skills (Actions)	Values (Reflections)
<p>In this chapter you will increase your understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> states, nations and ethnic groups ethno- and civic nationalism major policy areas separation of powers and checks and balances the three branches of government unitary and federal states constitutions majority rule and minority rights electoral systems 	<p>In this chapter you will develop your ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use theories to explain Myanmar's political history use role-plays to understand federalism create a budget based on your political priorities use pyramidal ranking to discuss priorities complete a flowchart with directed information debate federalism create decision-making processes design, present and justify a constitutional design 	<p>In this chapter you will reflect on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the role of the state the sources of national identity promoting peace and unity in diverse societies your views on tolerance and diversity the most important values that society should share your views on minority rights the challenges of creating the decision-making processes

Unit Themes

- Unit 2 helps you to develop an understanding of political institutions
- It focuses on states, nations and governments and examines how these institutions are established in constitutions
- It presents issues contentious as to whether that political ideas and actors operate in and looks at important debates related to them.

Look at the *Learning Goals*. These will help you to identify the most important knowledge, skills and values covered in the unit. These will also help you to evaluate your progress through the course.

Read the *Chapter Themes* to prepare you for the main ideas in each chapter.

When you see a word in **bold** in the text, there will be a translation of the word or idea in the *Glossary*.

Each *Review* section has a blank mind map to help you remember and revise what that you have learned throughout the chapter. Write down everything you can remember about the chapter without looking back.

Comprehension Questions help you revise the information in each chapter. Try to answer all the questions from your memory. Once you have written the answers, go back through the chapter and check them.

Unit 1 Review

Unit 1 Mind Map

Complete the mind map with important ideas you have learned in Unit 1.

Comprehension

1. What is the role of conflict in politics?
2. What is the role of cooperation in politics?
3. Which group of rights is related to equality of outcome?
4. What is "affirmative action"?
5. What is a "libertarian" and what do they believe?
6. What is the difference between top-down power and bottom-up power? Give an example of each.
7. What is the difference between visible power and hidden power? Give an example of each.
8. What is the difference between power and authority?
9. What is legitimacy?
10. What are the five sources of democratic legitimacy mentioned in the unit?
11. What is an ideology?
12. What characteristics define liberalism?
13. What characteristics define conservatism?
14. What characteristics define socialism?
15. How is a political attitude different to an ideology?

Unit 1 Glossary

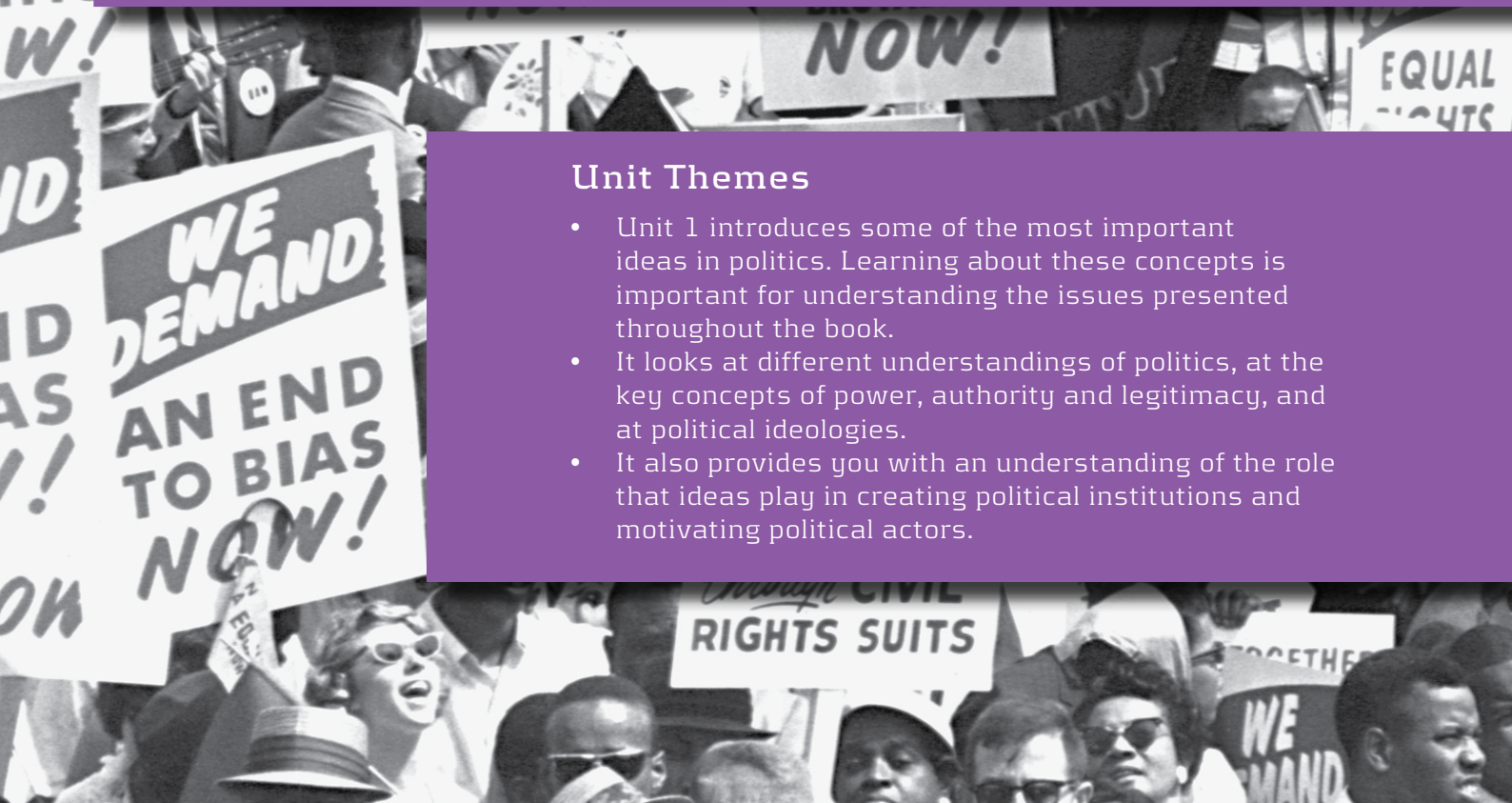
accountability (n) - တာဝန်ခံမှု	dominant (adj) - ပွန်ချိလားလား	programme (n) - အစီအစဉ်
apartheid (n) - အင်ပါအိုက်နစ် (အင်ပါအိုက်နစ်) နှင့် ဆက်စပ်သော အခြေအနေအထား	elite (n) - ဝိသိင်္ဃိ, ဗဟိုအဖွဲ့	propaganda (n) - ဝါဒဖြန့်ဖြူးမှု
autonomy (n) - လွတ်လပ်ရေး	emancipate (v) - လွတ်ငြိမ်းစေသည်	public (adj) - လူထုဆိုင်ရာ
civil disobedience (n) - နာမကျန်စွာ ဝန်ထမ်းချက်	enact (v) - ဝန်ထမ်းချသည်	public sector (n) - လူထုပိုင်ဆိုင်မှု
class (n) - လူမှုအဆင့်	enforce (v) - အင်အားဖြင့် အကောင်အထည်ဖော်သည်	public interest (n) - လူထုအကျိုးစီးပွား
communal violence (n) - လူမျိုးစုကြားရှိ အကြမ်းဖက်မှု	execute (v) - အကောင်အထည်ဖော်သည်	radicalism (n) - ရှေးတရားဝါဒ
communist (n) - ကွန်မြူနစ်ဝါဒီ	execute (v) - အကောင်အထည်ဖော်သည်	reformist (n) - ပြုပြင်ဆင်နစ်ဆင်မှု
communist (n) - ကွန်မြူနစ်ဝါဒီ	execute (v) - အကောင်အထည်ဖော်သည်	reformist (n) - ပြုပြင်ဆင်နစ်ဆင်မှု
constitutional (n) - နှစ်ဦးစွာ	execute (v) - အကောင်အထည်ဖော်သည်	reformist (n) - ပြုပြင်ဆင်နစ်ဆင်မှု
constitutional (n) - နှစ်ဦးစွာ	execute (v) - အကောင်အထည်ဖော်သည်	reformist (n) - ပြုပြင်ဆင်နစ်ဆင်မှု
constitutional (n) - နှစ်ဦးစွာ	execute (v) - အကောင်အထည်ဖော်သည်	reformist (n) - ပြုပြင်ဆင်နစ်ဆင်မှု



Unit 1: Ideas

Unit Themes

- Unit 1 introduces some of the most important ideas in politics. Learning about these concepts is important for understanding the issues presented throughout the book.
- It looks at different understandings of politics, at the key concepts of power, authority and legitimacy, and at political ideologies.
- It also provides you with an understanding of the role that ideas play in creating political institutions and motivating political actors.





Unit 1: Learning Goals

Knowledge

[Exercises]

In this chapter you will increase your understanding of:

- the role of conflict, cooperation and justice in politics
- the role of rights, equality and liberty in politics
- power and authority
- legitimacy
- democracy and authoritarianism
- liberal, conservative and socialist ideologies
- economic systems
- political attitudes

Skills

[Activities]

In this chapter you will develop your ability to:

- use Venn diagrams to analyse politics
- use power pyramids to analyse politics
- use statistics to analyse politics
- evaluate political actors using a democratic–authoritarian spectrum
- interpret the meaning of political cartoons and quotes
- develop a group ideology using a flow chart

Values

[Reflections]

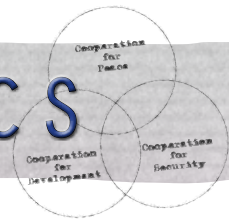
In this chapter you will reflect on:

- your views on justice
- your views on rights
- your views on equality
- the biggest problems facing society
- the ideal society and the actions needed to achieve it
- your ideological beliefs and the values that support them
- your attitude to social change





CHAPTER 1: POLITICS



Preview...

1. What does the word "politics" mean to you?
2. Look at the pictures. Which ones best represent "politics" to you? Why?
3. Does politics bring out the best or the worst behaviour in people?



(c) FreeFoto.com

1.1 WHAT IS POLITICS?

There are many different ideas about what politics is. At the most basic level, politics is about how people make decisions in a community. According to the political scientist Harold Lasswell, politics is about "who gets what, when and how". However, people disagree about the ways that people make these decisions and their reasons for making them.

Preview...

1. What is the role of conflict in politics?
2. Is conflict always a bad thing?

1.1.1 POLITICS AS CONFLICT

This understanding of politics says that there will always be conflict when people have to make decisions about "who gets what, when and how". This conflict does not always create problems; it can sometimes be useful and positive. For example, conflict can lead to positive social change, and competition often causes people to work harder to achieve their goals.

In larger communities it is not possible for everyone to take part in every decision. Instead, communities make rules that apply to every member of the community. Political conflict in larger communities is often related to making, changing or breaking these rules.

Some of the most important areas of conflict in a community or society include:

- **CONFLICT OVER RESOURCES:** Because of diverse needs and limited resources, different groups often compete over who gets a bigger share. These resources might be physical, like money, land or goods, or non-physical, such as respect, freedom or safety.

- **CONFLICT OVER OPPORTUNITIES:** People might be in conflict about access to education, employment or the ability to make decisions. One cause of political conflict is when some groups are not allowed to have the same political, social and economic opportunities as other groups.
- **CONFLICT OVER IDEAS:** Disagreements over people's ideas of what is right or wrong can lead to conflict in a society. Different political views, religious beliefs or values can also be a source of conflict in a society.



Focus on Myanmar

Examples of *Politics as Conflict* in Myanmar

1. Conflict over Resources

Over 7,800 acres of farmland have been **confiscated** to establish a copper mine in Letpadaung. This land will be owned by the Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings (UMEHL) and the Chinese-owned Wenbao Copper Company. Villagers protested about it, but the protests were stopped by the police.

2. Conflict over Opportunities

The National League for Democracy (NLD), led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, won the 1990 election with about 60% of the vote. However, State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) cancelled the election results and did not allow the elected Members of Parliament (MPs) to join the government. Therefore, the NLD was denied the opportunity to represent their supporters and make decisions for the community.

3. Conflict over Ideas

In 1961, U Nu's State Religion Act changed the **constitution** and made Buddhism the state religion. This upset many Christians and Muslims. The Kachin Independence Organisation, who are mostly Christian, started their rebellion in 1961.



▲ U Nu in 1961.

1. What were the results of these conflicts?
2. Were these conflicts positive or negative? Why?

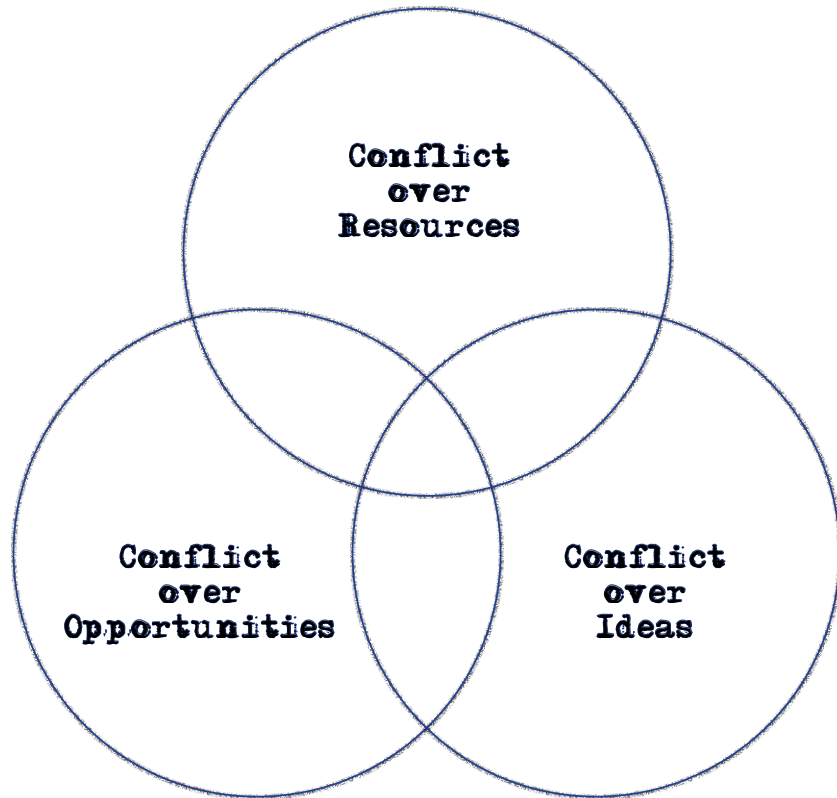
Exercise

1. Give another example of a positive conflict in your country. How was it useful and positive?
2. Give another example of a negative conflict in your country. What problems did it create?

Discussion

Activity

1. Look at the *timeline*. Put six conflicts in the right place in the Venn diagram.
2. Think of other conflicts in your country and put them in the right place in the Venn diagram.
3. What do you notice about the diagram?



Preview...

1. Why do people cooperate?
2. What is the role of cooperation in politics?

1.1.2 POLITICS AS COOPERATION

The second understanding of politics sees cooperation as the most basic feature of politics. People understand that to change the rules of a community or make sure that they are enforced, they have to work together.

However, different opinions, competing needs and opposing interests can cause disagreement. If people cannot reach a compromise, then cooperation can be unsuccessful. For these reasons, cooperation is one of the most necessary political activities, but it is also one of the most challenging.

Three important reasons for cooperation in a community are:

- **PEACE AND STABILITY:** For a community to be peaceful, individuals and groups must be able to resolve conflict. If conflict leads to violence, then the community is in danger. Cooperation for peace is a way of avoiding violent conflict. When communities are free from violent conflict, society becomes more predictable and **stable**.

- **DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY:** Cooperation is necessary because people working together can solve problems and accomplish goals that they could not achieve alone. Examples include national **infrastructure** (roads and waterways) and a stable currency. Cooperation can also lead to more wealth in a community, and can help to reduce poverty.
- **SECURITY AND DEFENCE:** Individuals and groups would not be as safe without organised **public** security. Defence against aggression from outside the community (i.e. a military attack) is one example. Another example is defence against aggression or **exploitation** by criminals. This can be provided by a police force.

Discussion

1. Give an example of successful cooperation in your community. Why was it successful?
2. Give an example of unsuccessful cooperation in your community. Why was it unsuccessful?
3. In these examples, what made this cooperation necessary?
4. In these examples, what made this cooperation challenging?



Focus on Myanmar

Politics as Cooperation in Myanmar

The Panglong Agreement was signed in February 1947. Leaders of the Shan, Kachin and Chin ethnic groups met with Aung San's temporary Burmese government to discuss a Burma independent of Britain. They agreed on:

- a united approach to independence from Britain
- regional **autonomy** for these "Frontier Areas" within a Union of Burma
- democratic rights for peoples in Frontier Areas
- financial support and/or autonomy as required

The Panglong Agreement was an important step in Burma gaining independence in 1948.

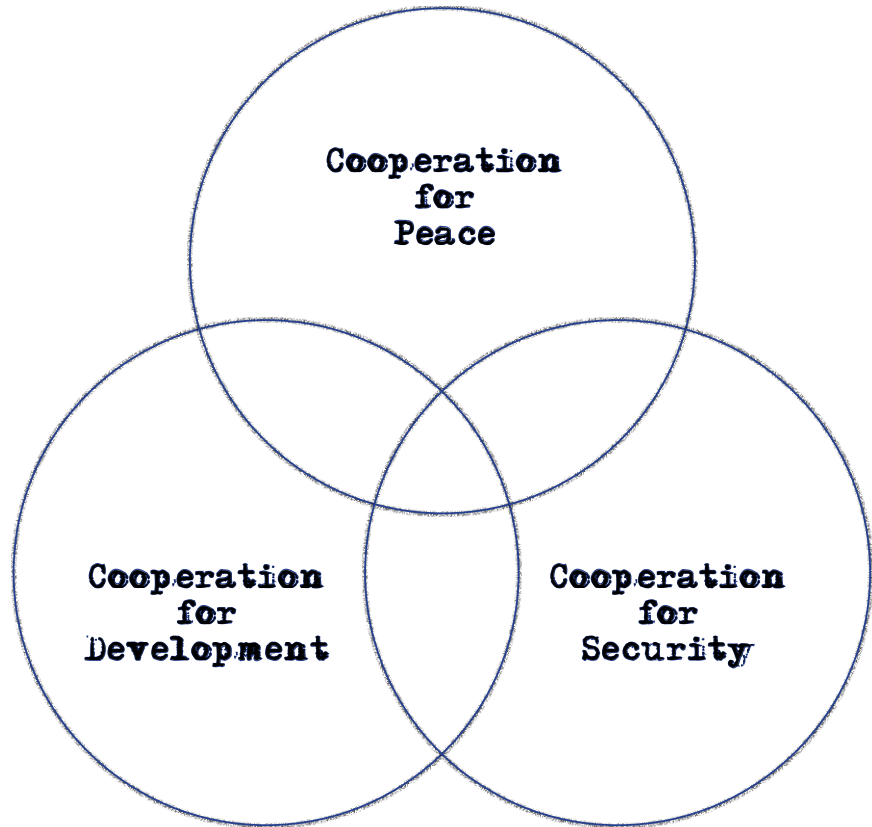


Which of the reasons for cooperation mentioned above can be seen in the Panglong Agreement?

Exercise

Activity

1. Look at the timeline. Find six events that involved cooperation and put them in the correct place in the Venn diagram.
2. Think of some examples of cooperation in your country and put them in the correct place in the Venn diagram.
3. What do you notice about the diagram?



Preview...

1. What does justice mean to you?
2. Do you live in a just community?

1.1.3 POLITICS AS THE SEARCH FOR JUSTICE

Instead of seeing politics as either unavoidable competition or necessary cooperation, some people believe that politics is about making a *just* community. This understanding sees politics as being related to *justice* – treating everyone as they deserve.

According to this view, communities make rules to make sure that people are treated fairly and justly. Some of the most important areas of politics that are related to justice include:

- What people get (how resources and opportunities are distributed).
- What people are allowed to do and what they are expected to do (rights and responsibilities).
- What is forbidden and what should happen to people if they disturb or damage the community (rules and laws).

However, justice is a complicated and controversial idea, and people have different ideas about what justice is. Their views may be influenced by their culture, religion, social status, gender, education and other factors.

Some important questions when thinking about justice include:

- Should everyone be treated exactly the same?
- Are unjust actions acceptable if they lead to a just situation?
- Is it acceptable to harm a small number of people in order to improve the lives of a much greater number?

1. Choose one of these questions and think of a real life example to illustrate that issue.
2. In groups, decide how you would answer these three questions.
3. Share your ideas with other groups and try to reach **consensus** as a class.
4. What challenges did you experience during this activity?

Reflection

1. How do the questions above relate to politics in your community?
2. What problems might a community have if they cannot decide on a shared idea of justice? Think of a real life example to illustrate that issue.
3. Which of these three understandings of politics (conflict, cooperation or the search for justice) most accurately describes how politics works in your community? Why?

Discussion



◀ "Justice", a mural at the Palacia de Justicia in Cusco, Peru.

1.2 IMPORTANT IDEAS IN POLITICS

In politics, there are some concepts that different people will value more, less, or differently. Three of the most important ones are *rights*, *liberty* and *equality*.

Preview...

1. Why are rights important in politics?
2. Which rights are the most important in politics?

1.2.1 RIGHTS

Rights are similar to rules. They give people:

- permission to do/have something or;
- protection from something or someone or;
- an entitlement to do/have something.

This section looks at two kinds of rights: *civil and political rights* and *social, economic and cultural rights*.

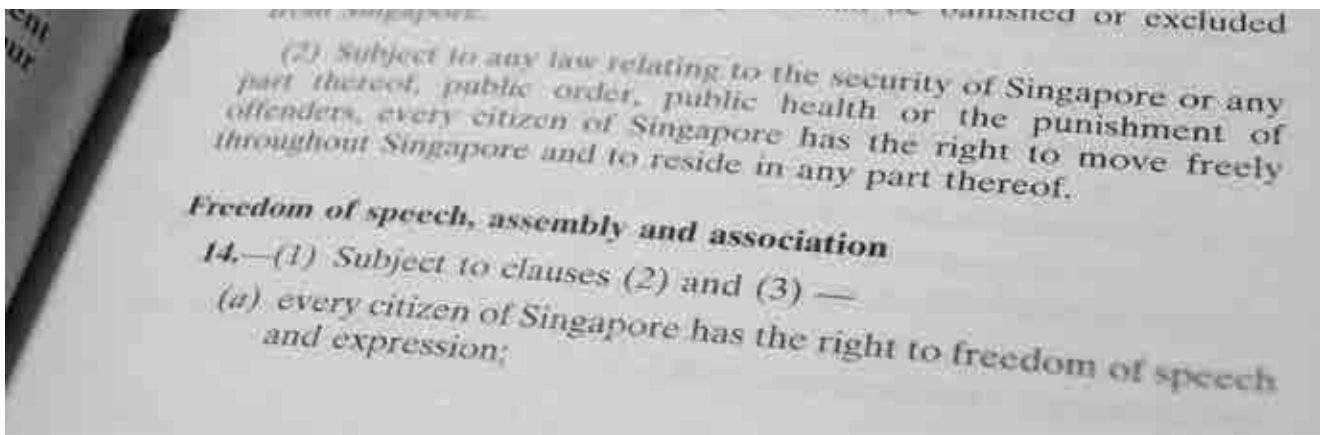
A. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS (FIRST GENERATION RIGHTS)

Civil and political rights are based on the ideas of individual freedom and **natural rights**. They claim that there are things that rulers should not be allowed to do, and that people should take part in making the political decisions that affect them.

Civil and political rights guarantee that each person has the same rights to take part in the politics of their community. This means that they have the right to elect – and to be elected to – political office. They also guarantee that people are free from political discrimination. Civil and political rights include *the right to participate in government*, *the right to form or join political organisations* and *freedom of speech*.

Most civil and political rights describe what other people (often the government) are not allowed to do to an individual (threaten, torture, unfairly discriminate against, etc.). They do not usually require any resources for the rights to be fulfilled. They only require that others do not interfere with our individual rights and freedoms.

▼ Most countries, including Singapore, try to guarantee people rights such as *freedom of speech*.



B. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RIGHTS (SECOND GENERATION RIGHTS)

These rights are related to how people live, work and gain the basic necessities of life. People started talking about them during the rise of industrialisation and the working **class** in the 19th century. These people claimed that human dignity required more than just civil and political rights. They claimed that people had rights to basic social and economic conditions such as adequate housing, education and employment.

Social, economic and cultural rights try to guarantee that all people have access to the goods, services, and opportunities they need. The goal of these rights is to achieve greater social and economic equality. They include the right to education, health care, an adequate standard of living and housing, work, and support if you are unemployed, old or disabled.

Unlike civil and political rights, most social, economic and cultural rights require other people to do something for them to be fulfilled. Examples of this include the right to education and the right to health care. Governments have a responsibility to provide the resources (e.g. schools and hospitals) and services (e.g. teaching and medical treatment) that are necessary for them to be fulfilled.

Reflection

After you read 1.2.1:

Which of these two kinds of rights do you consider to be more important? Why?



▲ Civil rights protesters marching in Washington in the USA in 1963.



Focus on Myanmar

Rights in Myanmar

There is a chapter in the Myanmar Constitution (see chapter 6 for more information about constitutions) which describes the rights of citizens. These rights include:

1. non-discrimination (based on race, birth, religion, status, official culture, sex and wealth)
2. equal opportunity (in public employment, occupation, trade, business, etc.)
3. equality before the law
4. equal rights for mothers, children and pregnant women
5. non-discrimination in the civil service (except for "positions that are suitable for men only")
6. right to life and personal freedom ("unless the person has broken other laws")
7. freedom of expression, assembly and association ("unless this goes against other laws that protect Union security... community peace, or public order and morality")
8. protection of property
9. privacy and security of home, property, correspondence and other communication
10. prohibition on enslaving and trafficking in persons
11. prohibition on forced labour (except hard labour for convicts and **public-interest** duties)
12. **freedom of conscience** and religion (**subject to** public order, morality, and health; the "abuse of religion for political purposes" is forbidden)
13. the right to education and to receive free compulsory basic education
14. the right to health care ("in accord with health **policy** laid down by the Union")
15. the right to elect and be elected to Hluttaws (subject to the Constitution and relevant laws)
16. the right to freely conduct business; the right to private invention and **patent**
17. the right of an accused to a defence
18. prohibition on any person being held in custody for more than 24 hours without permission of a court (except "precautionary measures taken for the security of the Union or prevalence of **law and order...**")
19. the right to seek protection of the Union in relations with foreign countries
20. the right to a fair trial (except in time of foreign invasion, **insurrection** or emergency)
21. equality of salary and rights at work for women and men

Exercise

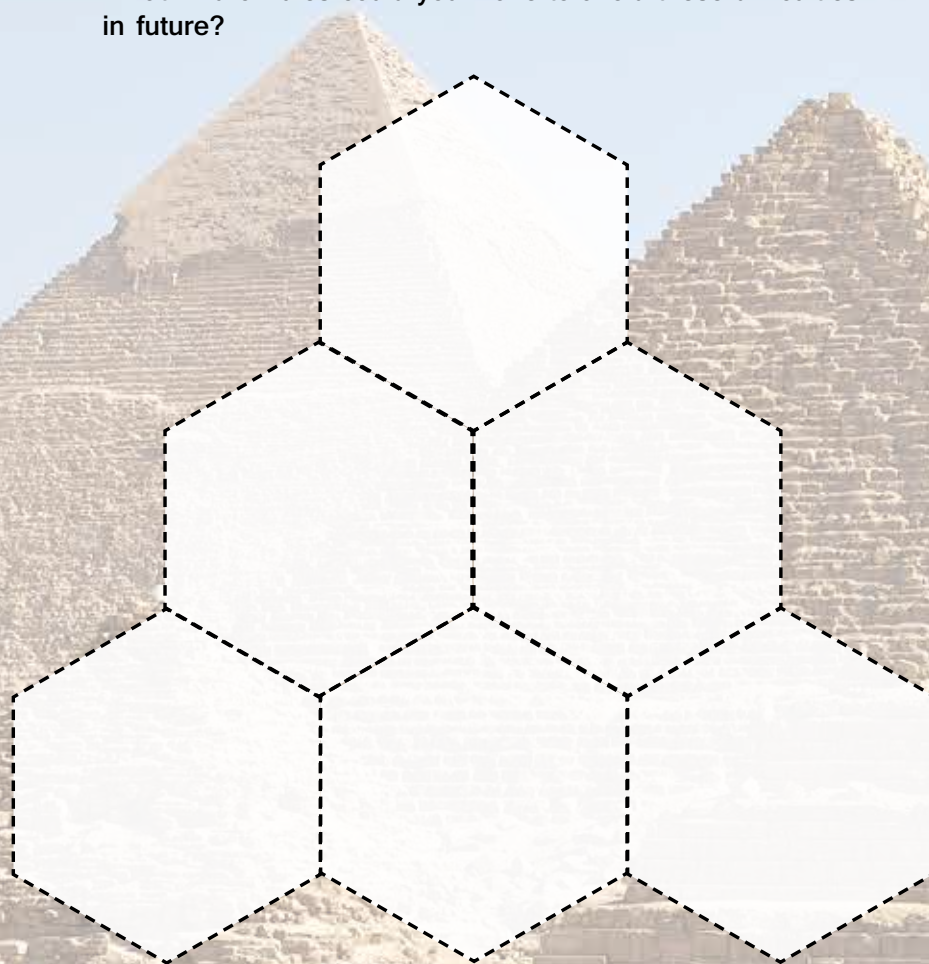
1. Put the rights into the correct column in the table.
2. Which kind of rights is more common? What does this tell you about the constitution?

civil/political	social/economic/cultural

Rights Pyramid

Reflection

1. In pairs, make a "rights pyramid" that ranks the rights on page 14 into the most important six (in order of importance).
2. Join with another pair. As a group, make a rights pyramid you all agree on.
3. Join with another group and make a rights pyramid. Continue joining groups and making pyramids until there is only one for the whole group. Make a rights pyramid that the whole class agrees on.
4. What does your class pyramid tell you about the **values** of the class?
5. What difficulties did you experience in this exercise? How were they related to conflict and cooperation?
6. How did you overcome them?
7. What kind of rules could you make to avoid these difficulties in future?



Preview...

1. What does "equality" mean to you?
2. Are people in your community "equal"?



Discussion

After you read 1.2.2:
Think of some of the reasons for inequality in your community (gender, wealth, etc.). Is equality of opportunity enough to make people politically equal? Why?

Exercise

1. What kind of equality are most civil and political rights trying to achieve?
2. What kind of equality are most social, economic and cultural rights trying to achieve?

1.2.2 EQUALITY

Equality is about being in some way the same. Political equality usually refers to people having the same value, rights or freedoms. This is seen in the democratic idea that every person gets one vote and only one vote. However, people disagree about what exactly equality is, and what kind of equality is most valuable. One important difference is between those who believe in *equality of opportunity* and those who want *equality of outcome*.

A. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Equality of opportunity requires that each individual is treated the same according to the laws and rules of the community. It means nobody is unfairly discriminated against, nor receives special treatment without good reason.

In politics, equality of opportunity means that everyone has the same political opportunities. Everyone has the same opportunity to say what they think, everyone has the same opportunity to vote, and everyone has the same opportunity to **run for office**.

However, saying that a very rich, well-educated person and a very poor, uneducated person are politically equal may not be true. It might be true when we talk about voting, but not always true when we talk about running for office. This is because the resources and opportunities that the rich person has are much greater than the poor person's. For example, the rich person is more likely to be elected because of their resources (money for posters and speeches etc.) and opportunities (powerful friends, good education etc.).

B. EQUALITY OF OUTCOME

Equality of outcome means that people have similar access to important resources, such as income, education, and housing.

Supporters of equality of outcome disagree that if laws apply to people in the same way, then they are politically equal. They claim that civil and political rights are not enough to achieve political equality. For example, a country might allow all adult citizens to vote. However, if some citizens cannot read the voting form, the people will not all have equal opportunity to participate.

In politics, equality of outcome means that everyone has the same opportunities *and* has access to the basic resources needed to take part in politics. Supporters of equality of outcome say that the government has a responsibility to give people the resources and opportunities (money, houses, education, jobs etc.) that they need to participate in politics.

Equality of outcome is controversial because it requires communities (usually governments) to **redistribute** resources. Achieving equality of outcome means that more resources are given to poorer people, which usually means taking those resources from richer people.

Discussion

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of equality of outcome?
2. Do you think it is a good idea that governments try to achieve equality of outcome? Why or why not?

Ideas in Action

Discrimination and Affirmative Action

Discrimination means that some groups of people are treated differently than other people in a similar situation. People may be discriminated against because of their age, disability, ethnicity, political beliefs, race, religion, sex or gender, **sexual orientation**, language, culture or for many other reasons. Unfair discrimination means that those groups are treated worse than others.

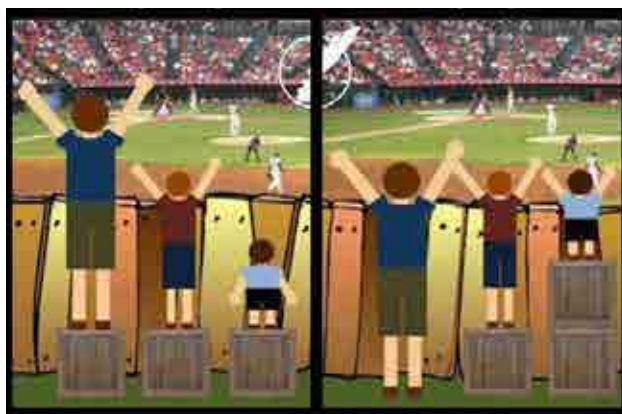
In countries where groups of people have been unfairly discriminated against in the past, governments have tried to promote equality by using "affirmative action". Affirmative action is based on positive discrimination. This means making rules or policies that favour those groups that have been (or still are) discriminated against. Affirmative action takes place most often in employment or education, but can also be seen in politics.

Supporters of affirmative action programmes say that they are necessary to overcome the effects of past discrimination. They believe that strong action is necessary to achieve equality. They say that groups that have been unfairly treated for a long time need special help to get the same rights and opportunities as **dominant** groups.

People who oppose affirmative action say that it is also a form of unfair discrimination, and that it interferes with people's liberty. They argue that sex, colour, language or religion should not be used as a basis for choosing who gets opportunities in society. They say that if everybody gets equal opportunity, positive discrimination is not needed.

Picture 1

Picture 2



www.Funny2014.com

Exercise

Look at the cartoon. How does this relate to the ideas discussed in 1.2.2?

If every business was forced to have an equal number of men and women, and at least ten percent of its staff from a minority ethnic background, how would you feel about this?

Reflection

Preview...

What does "liberty" mean to you?



▲ A lit torch is often used as the symbol of liberty.



▲ Tunisian women protesting against the state's involvement in their lives.

Exercise

Look at the chart and answer the following questions.

1. Is equality or liberty more popular in the US?
2. Is equality or liberty more popular in Spain?
3. How do you think people would respond to these questions in your country?

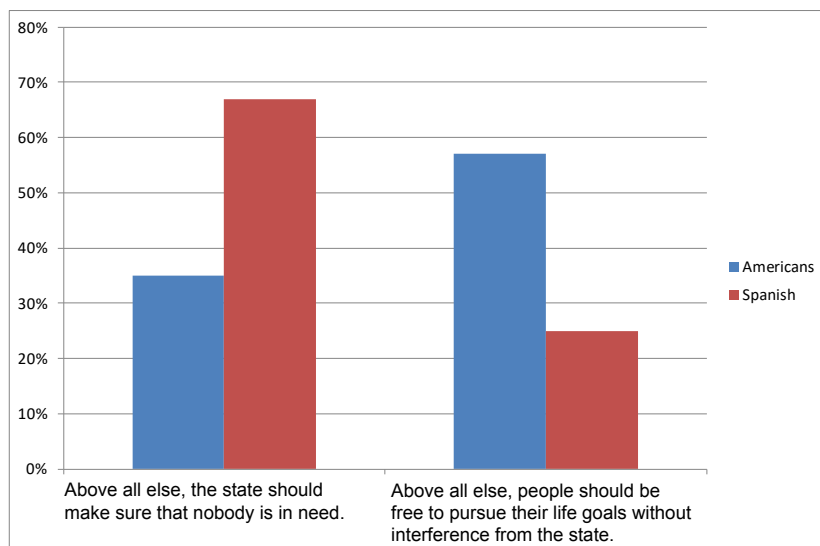
1.2.3 LIBERTY

Liberty means that people can do what they want without others stopping them. In politics, it involves concepts such as free speech, free assembly, freedom of religion, and other civil liberties.

For supporters of equality of opportunity, the main responsibility of a government is to protect people's personal liberty. They claim that as long as people have civil and political rights, then the government has fulfilled its role. They argue that governments should not force people to pay taxes, send their children to government schools, or do military service. They believe that these things interfere with people's rights and liberty.

The most extreme supporters of political liberty are called libertarians. Libertarians believe that all individuals should have total control over their own lives. They support the right for everyone to be totally free as long as it doesn't interfere with anyone else's personal liberty. They claim that government control is unnecessary and dangerous. They believe that individuals should be free to make choices for themselves and to accept personal responsibility for the results of those choices.

Supporters of equality of outcome disagree with this view of liberty. They say that without a job, money or an education, people will be very limited in what they can do, and so they are not free. They claim that people cannot be equally free in societies where there is a big difference between the lives of rich and poor people. They see it as the role of government to support **marginalised** groups so that they are able to have the same freedoms and choices that others have. Often, this means actively redistributing resources and opportunities from some individuals and groups to others.



Source : <http://www.pewglobal.org/2011/11/17/the-american-western-european-values-gap/?src=prc-number>

1. Are people equally "free" in your community? Why?
2. Is there a conflict between liberty and equality?
3. Which one do you think is more important?

Discussion



Focus on Myanmar

Historical Myanmar Texts Related to *Justice, Equality and Liberty*

Preamble

WE, THE PEOPLE OF BURMA including the border areas and the Karenni States, Determined to establish in strength and unity a **SOVEREIGN INDEPENDENT STATE**, To maintain social order on the basis of the eternal principles of **JUSTICE, LIBERTY AND EQUALITY** and To guarantee and secure to all citizens **JUSTICE** social, economic and political; **LIBERTY** of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action; **EQUALITY** of status, of opportunity and before the law, **IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY** this Tenth day of Thadingyut waxing, 1309 B.E. (Twenty-fourth day of September, 1947 A.D.), **DO HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.**

The Constitution of the Union of Burma (1947)

THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL OF THE UNION OF BURMA believes that man will not be free from social evils as long as there are destructive economic systems in the world. In these systems, man exploits man. The Council believes that only a socialist economy based on justice can free all people from all worries over food, clothing and shelter... Only then can we reach a stage of social development where all people are happy and healthy in mind and body.

- **The Burmese Way to Socialism, The Revolutionary Council (1962)**

Answer the questions about the texts.

Exercise

1. What kind of equality is discussed in each text? How are the two texts different in the way they describe equality?
2. How are the two texts different in the way they describe liberty? What kind of rights do they refer to?
3. Which text do you agree with more? Why?

1.3 CHAPTER 1 CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY



Exercise

1. Why was “reservation” introduced in India? What problem is it meant to address?
2. Do you think it is just that the Indian government provides these opportunities to members of lower castes?

India

For thousands of years, India’s society has been divided into categories based on birth, region, occupation and social duties. India’s “caste” system divides the society into four broad castes, or varnas; Brahmans (priests), Kshatriyas (warriors and rulers), Vaishyas (traders and merchants), and Sudras (peasants and labourers). At the bottom of the **hierarchy** are the so-called untouchables (Dalits).

India's independence leader, Mohandas K. Gandhi, saw this situation as very unjust. He worked to defend the rights of lower caste citizens. As a result, India’s 1950 Constitution banned the status known as untouchable. It also includes affirmative action **programmes** that are designed to improve the status of the lower castes. These programmes are called “reservations”.

Since it started, the reservation system has received a mixed response from Indians. Caste discrimination still exists in Indian society and these laws have been controversial.

However, the reservation system has been praised for reducing the gap between the upper and lower castes. It has achieved this by providing increased opportunities in jobs, education and government by reserving places exclusively for lower caste Indians.

CASE STUDY



Exercise

- Do you consider the policies of the Sri Lankan government just or unjust? Why?

Sri Lanka

When Sri Lanka achieved its independence in 1948, about 70% of the population was Sinhalese (92% of whom were Buddhists and almost all speak Sinhalese). 23% of the population was Tamil (about 86% of whom were Hindus and most spoke Tamil). There had been no riots or any other form of **communal violence** between Sinhalese and Tamils for hundreds of years before independence.

At that time, positions of power, wealth and status were largely held by an educated, English-speaking (often Christian) **elite**, who were both Sinhalese and Tamil.

In 1956, Solomon Bandaranaike was elected as prime minister. He claimed that the power of the English speaking elite was unjust. To change this situation, he made laws to increase the importance of the Sinhala language. This involved giving more educational and employment opportunities to the Sinhalese population.

However, this had negative effects on the Tamil community. In 1955, 26% of government workers were Tamils. By 1979 this number had been reduced to a half of that. These limited opportunities for education and employment for many Tamils led to protests, communal violence and finally to civil war.

Perceptions of Discrimination in Sri Lanka, 2005

Percentage who strongly disagree with the statement:	Sinhala	Tamil
"Everyone enjoys equal rights."	9%	32%
"People are free to speak their mind without fear."	6%	25%

Source : SDSA 2005, CSDS, Delhi, Sri Lanka dataset; questions A-10, C-2ob.

Exercise

Look at the table. What does this table show you about the level of equality between these two communities?

South Africa

Until 1994, the **Apartheid** government made laws that discriminated against all non-white communities. These laws limited black South Africans' employment opportunities and made it very difficult for them to own property and land.

Following the end of Apartheid, the new African National Congress-led government passed laws in favour of affirmative action. These laws forced employers to employ people from marginalised groups (black, Indian, and **coloured** South Africans). The aim of these laws is to achieve equality in the workplace by giving opportunities to people from communities that had faced discrimination.

Under the apartheid system, black South Africans were only allowed to own land in 13 percent of the country. This land was given to black communities by the government. Between 1960 and 1980, the government forced 3.5 million blacks to move into these crowded, dirty and dangerous areas. The land was then given to white South Africans.

After Apartheid, black South Africans wanted their stolen lands back, and the new white owners wanted to keep it. The ANC made laws and policies to try to resolve this conflict. They promised to give back stolen land to the original owner. They also promised to give land to those who have none. At the same time, they made laws to protect the rights of the white land owners. The bill of rights in the constitution protects private ownership of land and promises "just and fair payment" to anyone whose land is returned to the original owner.

CASE STUDY



Exercise

Answer the questions.

1. What kind of conflict is there between the ANC's policy of redistributing land and its laws about respecting property rights?
2. Do you think this kind of policy is just?
3. Do you think this kind of policy increases or decreases equality?

1. Which of these case studies is an example of discrimination or affirmative action? Why?
2. Which of the ideas discussed in this chapter can you see in these case studies?
3. Compare the ideas, events and actors in the case studies and the political situation in your country. What is similar?

Discussion

CHAPTER 2: POWER, AUTHORITY & LEGITIMACY

Preview...

When you hear the word "power", what do you think of? Why?

Preview...

1. What is "top-down power"?
2. What is "bottom-up power"?
3. How are they different?



▲ Some people see politics as a struggle for power between those who have power and those who want it.

2.1 POWER AND AUTHORITY

2.1.1 POWER

We can say that power is the ability to get what you want. This can either mean getting something (like land or property), doing something (like making decisions about where you live or what kind of work you do), or making someone else do what you want them to (like work for you, or do what you say).

Since having power means being able to get what you want, this can include making other people do what you want, even if it is bad for them. This means that groups with more power are able to oppress and exploit groups with less power.

2.1.2 TOP-DOWN VS. BOTTOM-UP POWER

The way that power is distributed in a community changes all the time. Powerful groups can lose power and less powerful groups can increase their power. Because of this, we talk about two different kinds of power:

"Top-down" power (power over) is what most people think of when they hear the word "power". They think of negative ideas such as force, **coercion**, discrimination, corruption, and abuse. "Top-down" power usually means two things:

1. **TO HAVE POWER, PEOPLE MUST TAKE POWER FROM SOMEONE ELSE.**
2. **PEOPLE USE THIS KIND OF POWER TO STOP OTHER PEOPLE FROM INCREASING THEIR POWER.**

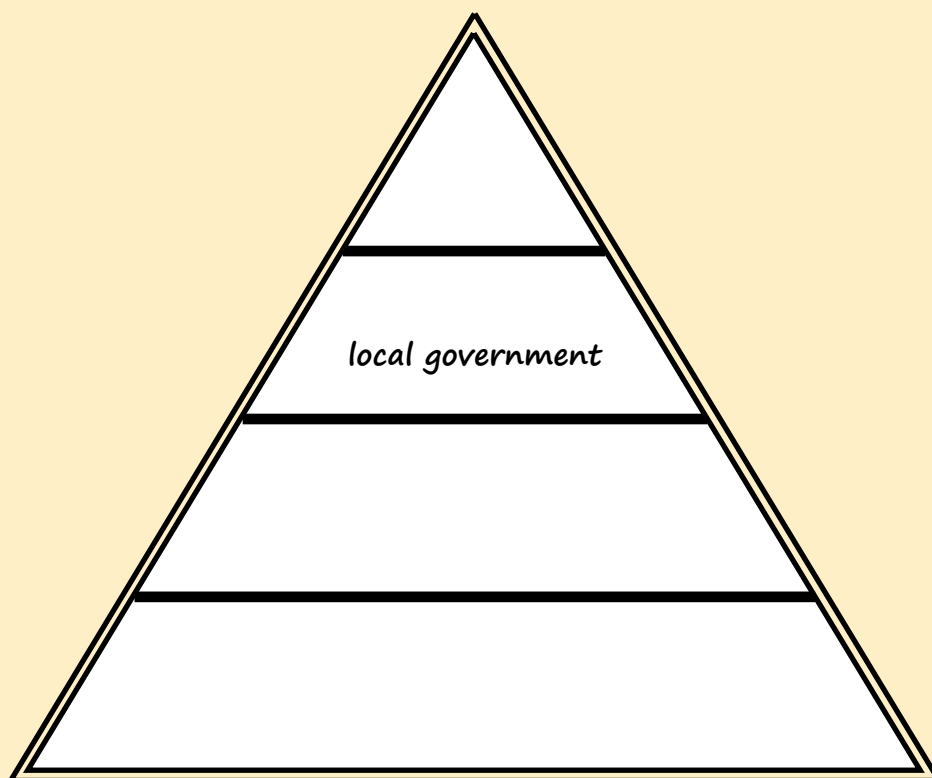
An example of "top-down" power is when a factory owner has power over the workers because she or he can fire them if they criticise the working conditions. The owner sees his or her critics as "stealing" power by creating opposition. For this reason, the owner stops his critics from increasing their power by making them unemployed.

"Bottom-up" power (power to) is created when people unite to defend their interests. These people might have limited power as individuals, but can increase their power by working together. Bottom-up power usually describes the power of "the people" when they are in conflict with the top-down power of government or business.

Bottom-up power is not limited, it is something that can be "grown". Education is a good example of bottom-up power. If one person teaches a village how to defend their rights, then he or she does not lose any power by educating (empowering) others.

An example of "bottom-up" power is when the workers in the factory educate themselves about their rights and the ways they can change their situation (for example by stopping work and demanding more pay).

One way of visualising top-down and bottom-up power is through a "power pyramid". The diagram below represents how power is distributed in society (groups with the most power are at the top, and those with the least power are at the bottom). Whenever a group uses its power against a group that is lower down the pyramid, this is an example of top-down power. Whenever a group uses its power against a group that is higher up the pyramid, this is an example of bottom-up power.



Exercise

After you read 2.1.2:

1. Think of an example of top-down power in your community.
2. Think of an example of bottom-up power in your community.

Activity

1. Put the names of groups from the list below into the "power pyramid" in the correct place.
 - factory workers
 - ~~local government~~
 - military
 - disabled people
 - small businesses owners
 - farmers
 - religious leaders
 - national government
 - police
 - **stateless** people
2. Think of more social groups and add them to the power pyramid.

Discussion



1. In what ways do people use top-down power in your community?
2. In what ways do people use bottom-up power in your community?
3. Which is a more powerful force in politics in your community, "top-down" or "bottom-up" power? Why?

Preview...

1. What is "visible power"?
2. What is "hidden power"?
3. How are they different?

2.1.3 VISIBLE VS. HIDDEN POWER

A. VISIBLE POWER

With this kind of power, a powerful person or group uses visible actions to make a less powerful person or group do what they want. Some of the most common kinds of visible power are:

- **COERCION:** making someone do what you want by force (e.g. through violence or imprisonment).
- **INTIMIDATION:** making someone do what you want by using the threat of coercion.
- **PERSUASION:** making someone do what you want by negotiating with them until they accept to do what you want.
- **CREATING INCENTIVES:** making someone do what you want by offering rewards (e.g. money, employment or other resources). If **incentives** are given to do something which is wrong or illegal, this is called bribery. Depending on the situation, creating incentives can be either visible or hidden.



▲ A dead body outside a Mexican nightclub. Powerful, violent drug gangs use intimidation and coercion to control large parts of northern Mexico.

B. HIDDEN POWER

With this kind of power, a powerful person or group uses ideas and beliefs to make a less powerful person or group do what they want. Some of the most common kinds of hidden power are:

- **FEAR:** People do what you want because they are afraid of you.
- **EXCLUSION: Excluding** people from decision-making.
- **SETTING THE AGENDA:** Choosing which decisions are allowed to be made. This could mean that a powerful person or group decides what issues are going to be discussed. If they don't include any issues that are important for marginalised groups, then no one will do anything about these issues.
- **MANIPULATION:** Controlling people's ideas so that they do what you want, without knowing it. For example, if people are convinced (by media, **propaganda** or other messages) that a social issue (crime, drug abuse, etc.) is caused by foreigners, they will not ask questions about their own government's responsibility for that social problem.

1. In what ways do people use visible power in your community?
2. In what ways do people use hidden power in your community?
3. Which is a more powerful force in politics in your community, visible or hidden power? Why?

Discussion



1. Look at the *timeline*. Add events that fit one or more of the four categories in the table.
2. Make a similar table with the uses of power that you listed in 2.1.2. Add more examples from your community.
3. What does this tell you about the way power is used?

Activity

Visible top-down	Hidden top-down	Visible bottom-up	Hidden bottom-up
2011, Myitsone Dam 1962 Military Coup		2011, Myitsone Dam	2011, Myitsone Dam

Preview...

Where does power come from?

Exercise

After you read 2.1.4:

1. Which source do you think gives a person or group the most power in your community? Why?
2. Which of the sources listed in 2.1.4 do/did these people get their power from?
 - a. U Thant
 - b. Khun Sa
 - c. Sitagu Sayadaw
 - d. U Tay Za
 - e. The Tatmadaw
 - f. Thakin Kodaw Hmaing
 - g. The President of Myanmar
 - h. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi
 - i. 88 Generation
 - j. Your teacher

2.1.4 SOURCES OF POWER

An important part of political analysis is looking at how much power an individual or group has. However, it is also important to look at where people get their power from. Some of the most important sources of power include:

1. **STRENGTH:** Weapons, followers, and physical strength can all give a person or group more power over others. This is one of the main reasons why governments, armies, criminal gangs and terrorist groups have so much power.
2. **WEALTH:** Money, land and employees are all sources of power. If a person or group can use these resources to get what they want, they are able to achieve their goals. They can also protect their interests over the goals and interests of other groups.
3. **STATUS:** This kind of power is about the roles or importance that people have in society and how much society values those roles. For example, many people see religious leaders as "guides" of the community (role). In the same way, people appreciate the work of doctors because they can save lives (importance).
4. **KNOWLEDGE:** Education and information are sources of power for groups who have access to them. Understanding how society works is the first step for people who want to change it.



Activity

Complete the table with examples of how people use power in your community. Explain which sources of power are involved and whether these are examples of top-down or bottom-up power.

Power from strength	Power from wealth	Power from status	Power from knowledge
<u>Top-down:</u> <i>attacks on demonstrators</i>	<u>Top-down:</u>	<u>Top-down:</u>	<u>Top-down:</u>
<u>Bottom-up:</u> <i>demonstrations</i>	<u>Bottom-up:</u>	<u>Bottom-up:</u>	<u>Bottom-up:</u>

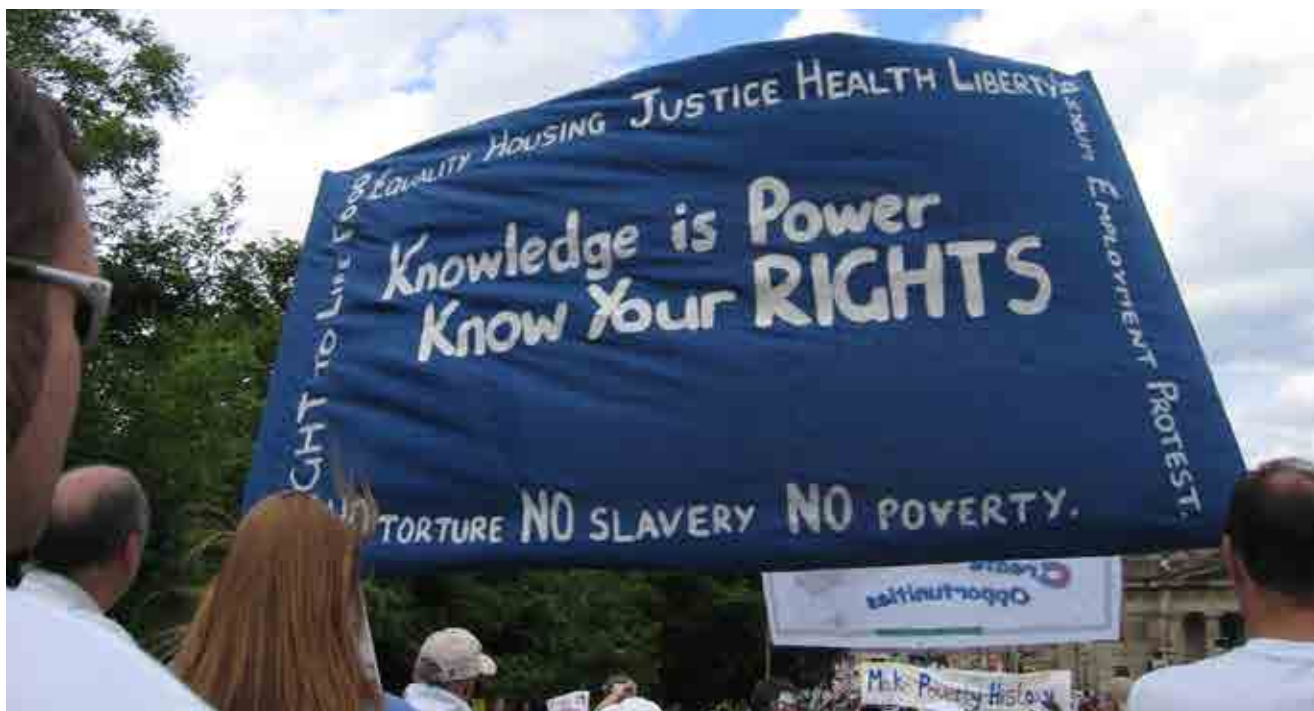
People with Power

In groups, think of a person who has power. Complete these sentences on a sheet of poster paper, then hang it around the room.

Walk around and look at other groups' posters.

1. The person I am writing about is...
2. The powers that he/she has are...
3. He/she has power because...
4. He/she might lose their power if...

Activity



2.1.5 POWER AND AUTHORITY

If power means the ability to make someone do what you want, "authority" means having the right to make someone do what you want. For example, if a criminal has a gun this gives him or her power. The criminal can make people do what he or she wants because they are afraid of being shot. But, if the criminal does not have the gun, they don't have power anymore.

On the other hand, a respected police officer might have the power to make people do what he or she wants, with or without a gun. Both the police officer and the criminal have power when they both have guns. But if you take away the guns, only the police officer has power. This is because — in a country where the **rule of law** is in effect — the people accept that it is a police officer's job to protect the community.

People obey police officers because their job or position gives them the right to tell people what to do. This is the meaning of the term "authority".

Preview...

Who has the right to have power in your community?

Discussion

After you read 2.1.5:

Look back at the posters you made for "People with Power".

1. Do these people have power alone, or power and authority?
2. If they have authority, what makes their authority "right"? Whose consent do they have?

There are two important points in the last example:

1. **Rightness:** If the rule of law is in effect, a police officer gets authority from the fact that the people believe that the police do what is best for them. They think that obeying the police is "right" because it is the role of the police to keep order in the community. A non-corrupt police officer does not benefit from telling people what to do; they only give commands for the people's benefit. People believe that someone with authority should have more power than them because it is fair, reasonable or in their interest.
2. **Consent:** An important source of authority for a leader or government is the idea of consent. **Consent** means that people have agreed that a leader or **institution** (in this case, the police force) should have authority over them. People will obey someone with authority if that authority is based on their acceptance. This gives them the right to give commands because the people have decided that that leader, institution or government is the best for them.

Preview...

What responsibilities come with authority?



2.1.6 AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

The right to give commands (authority) always comes with responsibilities. People who have authority also have the responsibility to make sure that their actions, decisions and commands are for the benefit of the people, not just for themselves. If a leader's commands do not benefit the people, then people will no longer consent.

Losing the consent of the people undermines a leader's authority, and could even lead to them losing their power. This can either happen nonviolently, (through an election, for example) or violently, such as in a revolution. In both cases, this is a very clear example of bottom-up power that leaders are often afraid of.

Exercise

Look at the *timeline*. In groups, find at least one event and answer the following questions:

1. What was being used, power alone or power and authority?
2. What (if any) responsibilities were being ignored?
3. Was the reaction violent or nonviolent?

2.2 LEGITIMACY

Preview...

2.2.1 LEGITIMACY

Why do people accept authority?

When political scientists study legitimacy, they try to explain why some governments are accepted by their people and others are not. The basic question that political scientists ask about legitimacy is "why do the people obey the government?" Legitimacy refers to the level of acceptance that people have for the authority of a leader, institution or government.

Legitimacy is important for a government because it helps it to rule a country peacefully and effectively. The political scientist Muthiah Alagappa says that four features make a government more legitimate to its people:

- A. Governments get their power in ways that are accepted by the people (e.g. elections).
- B. Governments use their power in ways that are accepted by the people (e.g. policies are in the interest of all the people, government workers are not corrupt, and laws are not unfair).
- C. Governments provide goods and services that meet the needs of the people (e.g. making sure that there is enough food, jobs and health care services).
- D. Governments have the consent of the people (people accept the government's authority and agree to obey them because of this).

Look at the four features of legitimacy in 2.2.1 (A-D) and answer the questions.

1. In what ways do leaders get their power in your country? Do people accept these as legitimate methods of getting power?
2. In what ways does the government use power in your country?
3. What kinds of goods and services must the government provide to meet the needs of the people in your country?
4. Does the government have the consent of the people?

Discussion



Activity

In groups, choose one of the countries in the table. Research and prepare a very short presentation that includes the following points:

- How legitimate is that country's government?
- What features of legitimacy are they lacking?
- What features of legitimacy are they not lacking?
- What does this tell you about the situation in that country?

Legitimacy of States, 2013

Country	1. Group Grievance	2. Legitimacy of the State	3. Public Services	4. Human Rights	Average
Iraq	10.0	8.6	7.6	8.6	8.7
North Korea	6.6	9.8	9.5	9.7	8.9
South Africa	5.7	5.3	6.3	4.2	5.4
Iran	8.8	8.9	5.0	9.4	8.0
China	8.3	8.1	6.8	9.4	8.2
Israel/West Bank	9.8	6.7	5.9	7.6	7.5
India	8.2	5.2	6.7	5.9	6.5
Cuba	4.8	6.5	4.7	7.5	5.9
Saudi Arabia	7.4	7.8	4.0	8.9	7.0
Malaysia	6.1	6.2	4.5	7.1	6.0
Sri Lanka	9.5	8.2	5.5	9.0	8.0
South Korea	3.1	2.9	1.9	2.6	2.6

1 = very good, 10 = very bad

Adapted from: *The Failed States Index 2013*.

Preview...

Why is legitimacy important for governments?

2.2.2 LEGITIMACY, EFFECTIVENESS AND STABILITY

A government has legitimate authority when its citizens accept and respect it, and believe that the laws it passes are just. Illegitimate governments usually lack this level of popular support. A government is illegitimate when its authority is not recognised or accepted by the majority of its citizens.

Without legitimacy, the government can easily lose support from its citizens. Citizens often challenge the laws and actions of illegitimate governments through riots, protests and other acts of **civil disobedience**. These challenges can be very dangerous, so legitimacy is very important in order for governments to remain effective and stable.

A. LEGITIMACY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Citizens are more likely to cooperate with the government if they believe it is legitimate. If they believe it is legitimate, they will see paying taxes, obeying the police and following the law as their civic responsibilities. Legitimate governments can rely on this cooperation because the people think that obeying the government is the "right" thing to do. This cooperation makes it much easier for the government to carry out the many complicated activities that are needed to run a country.

In contrast, illegitimate governments cannot rely on the cooperation of the people. Citizens of illegitimate governments may not pay taxes or follow laws because they think that the government is corrupt and is not taking care of the people's needs. As a result, these governments need to use a lot of coercion to enforce their laws and collect taxes. Using coercion to do everything wastes a lot of resources (e.g. large police forces). This means that much of the important work of the government (e.g. **social welfare** and development) is neglected because they do not have enough resources to carry it out.

B. LEGITIMACY AND STABILITY

When citizens see their government as legitimate, they believe that it is working for the interests of the whole country. For this reason, citizens are more likely to compromise if there is a conflict between their needs and the needs of others. They are usually more willing to sacrifice because they trust that the government is thinking about the needs of the whole country. Also, legitimate governments are more likely to have processes that resolve conflicts fairly. For these reasons, legitimate governments are usually better at dealing with social conflict. This often makes them more peaceful and more stable.

In contrast, illegitimate governments cannot rely on the people to compromise if there is a conflict. If the people think that the government is only trying to serve its own interests, they won't be willing to give anything up to find a solution. Illegitimate governments are also less likely to have clear and fair processes for resolving conflicts. Legitimate governments rely on rules to settle conflicts. Illegitimate governments do not rely on rules because people see their rules as illegitimate. The result of this is that people either ignore the government, or actively fight against it. This level of conflict can cause governments to be very unstable and create serious social problems such as organised crime or even civil war.

Exercise

After you read 2.2.2:

1. Does having legitimacy increase or decrease negative conflict? Why?
2. Does having legitimacy increase or decrease cooperation? Why?

Preview...

1. What is "democracy"?
2. What is "authoritarianism"?

2.2.3 WHAT IS A SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT?

A system of government refers to the basic rules and values that determine how politics works in a country. These rules and values are related to the following questions:

- Who should have power in society?
- How equally should power be distributed?
- How should this power be used?
- What limits should there be on the power of leaders?

The most basic difference that we can talk about in systems of government is democracy vs. authoritarianism. However, there is no such thing as a "pure" democracy and there are very few authoritarian systems that do not have some democratic features. The descriptions given here are meant to describe extremes. Most states have some democratic and some authoritarian features and are somewhere in between these two extremes.

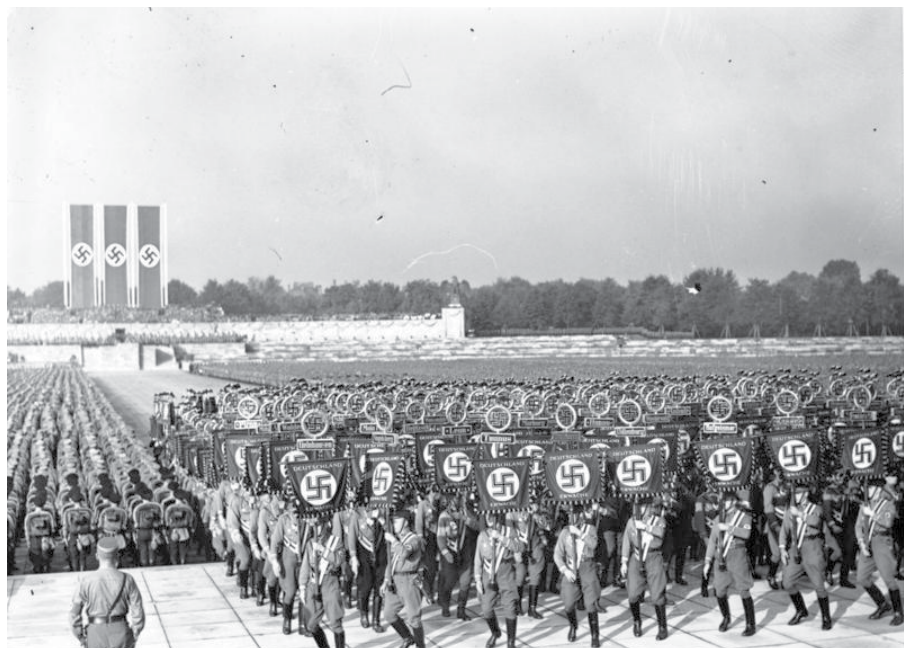
A. AUTHORITARIANISM

In an authoritarianism system of government, power is held mainly by the government. Authoritarian leaders often claim that the government is the only thing that can protect society from internal and external threats. They argue that obeying the authority of a state is necessary to maintain peace and security. For these reasons, authoritarian governments make it very difficult for the people to remove them from power.

Authoritarian leaders often claim that political rights and personal liberty must be limited to guarantee order and stability. Usually, authoritarian governments are undemocratic and have the power to govern without the consent of their citizens. State control over the media, political parties and civil society are common forms of authoritarian control over the people.



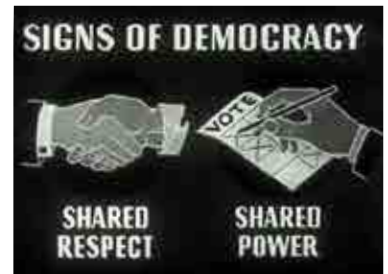
▲► The Nazis (Germany 1936-1945) were probably the most brutal authoritarian government in history. They used torture, forced labour and mass execution to control people. Their symbol, the swastika, is illegal in many countries.



B. DEMOCRACY

In a democratic system of government, the people are ruled by the people. Almost all democracies are based on the idea of "representative government". This means that members of the public are elected (for a limited time) to represent the interests of the people who elected them. In a democracy, if leaders fail to keep the support of the people, they can be removed from power through rules and processes.

In a democracy, citizens actively participate in government through elections, running for office or other activities. As a result, democracies are characterised by free competition for political power between different individuals and groups. To support this free competition, democracies value and defend personal liberties and rights, such as freedom of speech, assembly and the press.



▲ Electing leaders through voting is one of the most important features of a democracy.

1. What are the differences between the attitudes of authoritarian and democratic governments towards rights?
2. What are the differences between the attitudes of authoritarian and democratic governments towards liberty?
3. Which is more important in a democratic government, power or authority?
4. Which is more important in an authoritarian government: power or authority?

Look at the *timeline* and complete the table with any changes (in the system of government) that you can find.

Old System of Government	New System of Government	Top-down or Bottom-up?	Violent or Non-violent?

Exercise

Activity

What do you notice about the changes of government in the *timeline*?

Discussion

Look at the *actors list* and put as many as you can in the correct place on the spectrum.



Activity

Activity

Contrasting Statements

Are these statements more likely to be said in a democratic system or an authoritarian system? Match the statements to the speakers (A, democratic or B, authoritarian).

1. I AM PROUD TO LIVE IN A COUNTRY WHERE MINORITY GROUPS ARE ENCOURAGED TO EXPRESS THEIR INTERESTS, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.

2. PUBLISHING LEAFLETS TO PROTEST AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT LEADS TO INSTABILITY AND CONFLICT.

3. BANNING POLITICAL PARTIES IS NECESSARY TO KEEP ORDER IN SOCIETY.

4. I CAN'T BELIEVE THE THINGS THAT THE NEWSPAPERS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT THESE DAYS. IT SEEMS THAT YOU CAN FIND EVERY POLITICAL OPINION IN THE MEDIA.

5. TOO MUCH FREEDOM OF SPEECH CAN BE DANGEROUS FOR NATIONAL SECURITY.

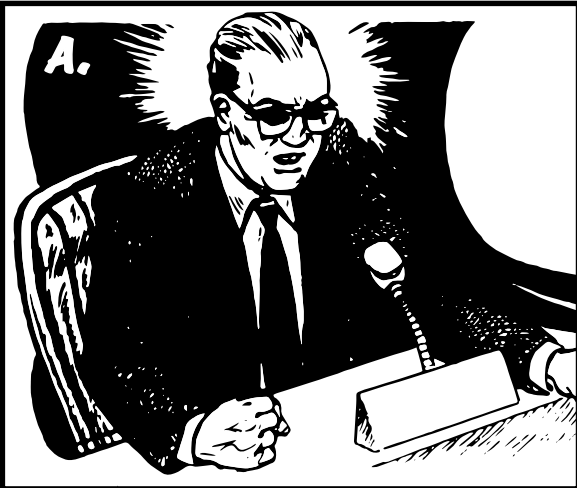
6. OUR CIVIL SOCIETY IS MADE OF STRONG ASSOCIATIONS, MOVEMENTS, AND UNIONS THAT ALL CITIZENS ARE FREE TO FORM AND JOIN.

7. ANYONE WHO ORGANISES PROTEST MARCHES AND DEMONSTRATIONS WILL GET INTO LEGAL TROUBLE.

8. THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT NEED ORDINARY PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN IMPORTANT POLITICAL DECISIONS.

9. I HAVE NO IDEA WHO MIGHT WIN THE NEXT ELECTION. IT SEEMS THAT ANYONE COULD WIN.

10. REAL POLITICAL POWER IS HELD BY ELECTED OFFICIALS, NOT THE MILITARY OR POLICE.



2.2.4 DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY

Perhaps the most important source of legitimacy in a democracy is that leaders are chosen by the people and have their consent to rule. However, governments also need to maintain the consent of the people if they want to stay in power. Below are five important ideas that maintain the consent of the people in a democracy:

- A. PARTICIPATION:** Political systems that are based on public participation are considered legitimate because they actively involve the people in running their own country. These systems allow the people to criticise politicians, suggest laws, vote in elections and defend their interests. Through these actions, citizens share the responsibility for making sure that governments are doing their job well. Participation builds legitimacy because the people are responsible for creating the kind of government that they want.
- B. ACCOUNTABILITY:** An important feature of democracies is that they make leaders **accountable** to the people. If a leader rules in a corrupt or ineffective way, then people will not vote for them again in the next election. Apart from elections, some political systems have legal procedures for removing a leader from power ("impeachment") if they break certain rules or lose their popularity. These procedures build legitimacy because the people know that the government has to work hard and be honest if it wants to stay in power.
- C. TRANSPARENCY:** **Transparency** means that information about the activities of the government is freely available to the people. Without transparency, governments can avoid being accountable because they can hide their mistakes or corruption from the people. Forcing leaders and governments to produce documents that prove that they are serving the people is an important way to increase the legitimacy of a government. Transparency makes it harder for the government to manipulate and lie to the people. This builds trust in the government and helps it to maintain the consent of the people.
- D. THE RULE OF LAW:** In a democracy, government power must stay within the limits set by the law. The principle of the rule of law means that no one is above the law. This includes the leader, all ministers, government workers and all other officials. The principle of the rule of law also means that everyone is equal under the law. Everyone is subject to the same rules and the same punishment if they break the law. It does not matter if a poor person or a wealthy person (who can afford to pay bribes) breaks the law – everyone is treated the same.

Preview...

What makes a democratic government legitimate?

E. GOOD GOVERNANCE: Good governance means that institutions work well. People can expect them to provide goods and services at the right time and in the right way. They serve the interests of the country, not just rich and powerful groups. When we say institutions, we mean primarily governmental, state institutions (government, judiciary, police, infrastructure, educational system, health care, social services system, etc.). However, good governance also usually means that non-governmental organisations and business work well.

Discussion

Discuss the questions and think of examples to illustrate the ideas.

1. How easy is it for citizens to participate in government in your country?
2. Are government workers accountable in your country?
3. How transparent is the work of the government in your country?
4. How effective is the rule of law in your country?
5. How effective are institutions in your country?
6. What has the government in your country done to improve its legitimacy?

Preview...

How do authoritarian governments justify their rule?

2.2.5 JUSTIFICATIONS FOR AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENTS

Authoritarian governments do not base their authority on participation, accountability, transparency, rule of law or good governance. Because of this, they need more top-down ways to maintain their rule. They often use a combination of "carrots" (rewards for obedience and support) and "sticks" (threats or punishments). Many people support authoritarian government because they fear instability and change.

Even though most authoritarian governments rely on top-down power to maintain their rule, they still provide reasons why authoritarianism is necessary. Different authoritarian governments justify their rule in different ways. They often rely on economic development, security, **nationalism** and/or religion to justify their rule.

Match the examples to the four types of justification (A-D).

Activity



1. Writing signs with government leaders' names all over major religious buildings
2. Publicly celebrating large infrastructure construction projects
3. Promoting national unity against a foreign enemy
4. Increasing the number of **checkpoints**.
5. Using religious texts to support oppressive laws
6. Organising ceremonies where government officials open roads, schools, plantations, or bridges
7. Putting up billboards that tell people to support the nation
8. Restricting people's freedom of movement with **curfews**
9. Organising ceremonies with government officials making donations at religious sites
10. Putting pressure on farmers to increase their crops according to national targets
11. Increasing the military budget.
12. Mentioning a historically important moment (such as independence or revolution) in speeches very often

CHAPTER 3: IDEOLOGIES

3.1 BASIC IDEOLOGIES

Preview...

1. What is an "ideology"?
2. How many ideologies do you know?



▲ The flags of the USA and the USSR (Russia and its allied states) represented the two main ideologies in the world between 1945 and 1991.

3.1.1 IDEOLOGIES

The last two chapters have looked at some of the most important ideas in politics. An ideology is a set of beliefs about these ideas and how they relate to politics in the real world. In almost every community, people with similar views on politics have grouped together to express their ideas and opinions. Ideologies help them to organise their thoughts, suggest solutions and work together to address the issues that they face. Some of the basic questions that ideologies try to answer are:

- What are the most important values in our society?
- What is justice?
- What is more important: freedom, security or equality?
- Is it more natural for people to cooperate or compete?
- Is change a good or a bad thing?

An ideology has three parts:

1. An explanation of the current political situation
2. A set of beliefs about what politics should be like
3. A plan of actions that are necessary to make the current political situation reflect those beliefs

There are many ideologies, but this chapter will focus on three that some people say are the most basic ideologies. These are *liberalism*, *conservatism* and *socialism*.

Reflection

1. Which of these three is most important to you? Why?
 - a. **freedom and tolerance**
 - b. **tradition and stability**
 - c. **solidarity and equality**
2. Get into groups with people who chose the same values as you.
3. Discuss your reasons for choosing those values. Were they the same or different?

IDEOLOGY

Our Ideology, Part 1

1. Write down the three most important values that you think a community should share.
2. Find other people who wrote similar values to you, and make at least three groups based on those values.
3. In these groups, answer the following questions:

a. What are the problems with the current situation?

- i. At the moment, the biggest political problem is...*
- ii. At the moment, the biggest social problem is...*
- iii. At the moment, the biggest economic problem is...*

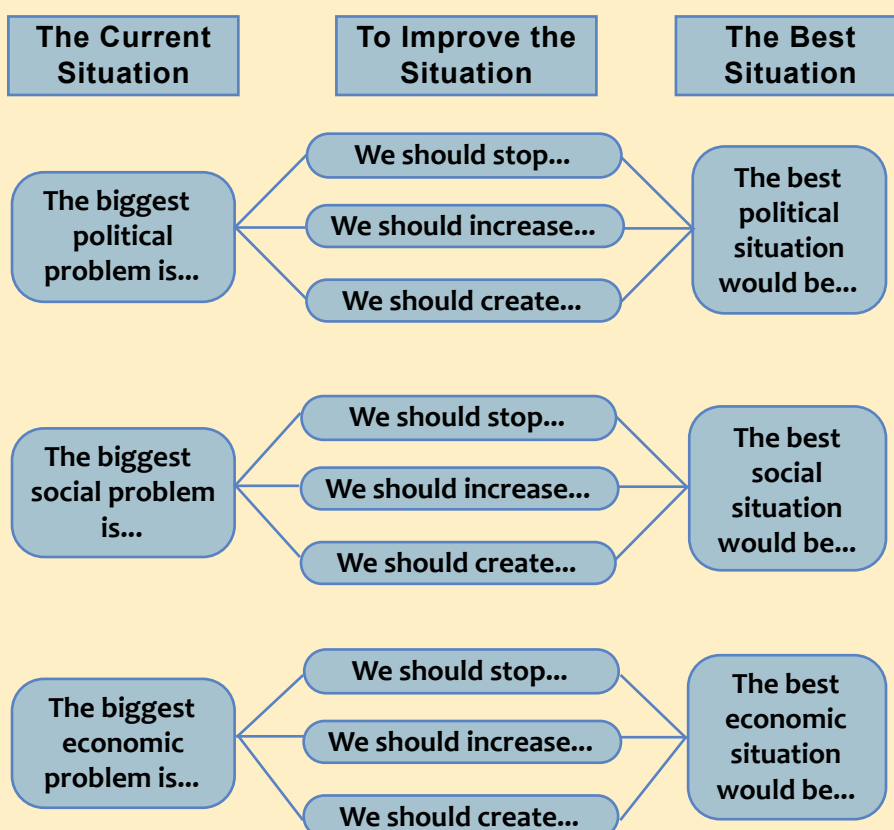
b. What is the best situation?

- i. The best political situation would be...*
- ii. The best social situation would be...*
- iii. The best economic situation would be...*

c. What do we need to do to achieve the best situation?

- i. We need to stop...*
- ii. We need to increase...*
- iii. We need to create...*

Reflection



Activity

1. Work in groups to make a poster based on the outline given.
2. Make a presentation to the class to explain your poster and answer any questions they might have.

Preview...

Would you rather live under a dictatorship or in a society with no government at all? Why?

3.1.2 LIBERALISM

Liberalism puts the liberty of the individual citizen at the centre of its ideology. Liberals believe that members of a political community should have as many political, economic and personal rights and freedoms as possible.

Liberals believe that there should be a very limited government. They believe that individuals should have the right to take part in social and economic activities without the interference of the government.

- They believe that political freedom creates a healthy and successful democracy because everyone can express their opinion and the best ideas will win in every debate.
- They believe that personal freedom will stop the government from getting too powerful and prevent **tyranny**.
- They believe that anything a government does (or is allowed to do) must be based on the agreement of the people.

Liberalism is often related to capitalism. Capitalism is an economic system where resources and opportunities are distributed by private business relationships (not the government). Liberals value property rights because private ownership is a very important part of capitalism.

Liberals often support tax policies that do not try to achieve the goal of economic equality. They say that people should pay equal taxes, regardless of how rich they are. Liberals often claim that high taxes for the rich are like a punishment for being economically successful.

A. IMPORTANT VALUES IN LIBERALISM

- **LIBERTY:** Personal freedom is the most important part of the liberal ideology. Liberals believe that freedom from political, economic and personal restrictions leads to the best kind of society. Liberals argue that government power should be limited, and divided between different institutions (military, courts, president, etc.). They say that this stops leaders from getting too powerful and abusing the people's rights.
- **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY:** Liberals think that equality of opportunity is very important because of their strong belief in personal liberty. They think that a society where everyone's political, economic and personal rights are respected will lead to a society where everyone has an equal chance to be successful.
- **TOLERANCE:** Tolerance means accepting values, beliefs and lifestyles that are different to your own. Liberals believe that people should have as much political and personal liberty as possible. However, being free to express different ideas and values could lead to conflict. This means that people need to respect and listen to different beliefs to make a healthy society.

- **ECONOMIC FREEDOM:** Liberals believe that citizens should be free to buy, sell and start businesses without interference from the government. They argue that if everyone seeks his or her economic self-interest without the interference of the government, then the whole of society will become richer and freer.



▲ The Statue of Liberty in New York is probably the world's most famous symbol of liberty.

ACCORDING TO A LIBERAL...

THE BIGGEST PROBLEM TODAY IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS TOO MUCH POWER OVER THE LIVES OF INDIVIDUALS!

A BETTER SITUATION WOULD BE IF GOVERNMENTS HAD A VERY LIMITED ROLE IN SOCIETY. THAT WAY, INDIVIDUALS COULD MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS AND SOLVE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS.



TO ACHIEVE THIS SITUATION, WE NEED TO STOP GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE, INCREASE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND CREATE MORE CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND PRIVATE BUSINESSES

Exercise

After you read 3.1.2:

1. What do you think liberals would think about the idea of "equality of outcome"?
2. What do you think liberals would think about the idea of "affirmative action"?
3. According to a liberal, what makes a government legitimate?

Discussion

1. What are some important features of liberalism in Myanmar?
2. What impact have liberal ideas had on politics in Myanmar?
3. Do you think there are some ideas and opinions that should not be tolerated? Which ones and why?

Preview...

If you could keep everything exactly as it is now forever, would you? Why?



▲ An anti-conservative, pro-liberal poster from the USA.

3.1.3 CONSERVATISM

Modern conservatism started in the late 18th century. This was a time of great political and economic change (e.g. the American and French Revolutions). This was also the time when many new ideas (such as liberalism and socialism) were becoming very popular. "Conservatism" comes from the word "to conserve", which means to keep things the same.

The early conservatives were people who thought that these new changes were very dangerous for society and wanted to keep society the way that it was. They thought that even though change cannot be stopped, it should be managed in a way that avoids social and political problems. Conservatives fear that unless they are carefully managed, these problems could lead to revolutions or civil wars.

Conservatives often think that ideologies based on extreme beliefs are dangerous for society. Conservatives have argued that ideologies that try to make everyone totally free will destroy communities and lead to chaos. They also think that ideologies that try to make everyone totally equal will lead to tyranny. Revolutionary governments that use force to achieve radical change are examples of the source of this fear.

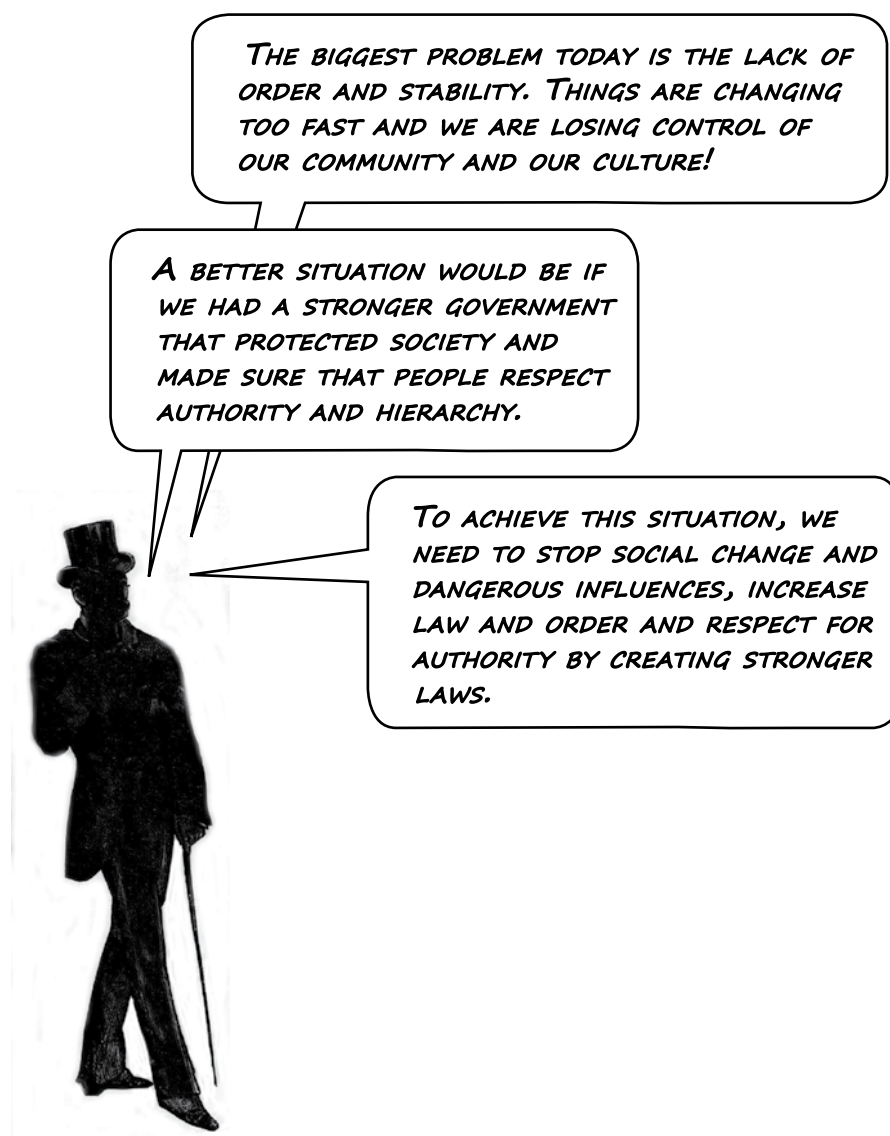
For these reasons, conservatives support systems of government that do not try to change society too much.

A. IMPORTANT VALUES IN CONSERVATISM

- **TRADITION:** Many conservatives argue that traditions and institutions should not be replaced or abandoned if they worked well in the past. They see the past as a source of wisdom and security. They claim that if a tradition has been important for many years, then it should remain an important part of society's values. They also believe that tradition gives people an identity and an understanding of their place in society.
- **LAW AND ORDER:** Many conservatives believe that people are generally weak, untrustworthy and easily tempted to crime, violence and laziness. Because of this, they support governments that protect, educate and control people to make sure they do not cause too much trouble. This is why conservatives think that creating order and stability are two of the most important responsibilities of a government. Conservatives are likely to support strict laws and a strong police force and military for the same reasons.

- **HIERARCHY:** Conservatives think that a society where different people have different roles (some higher, and some lower) is normal and healthy. They see power relationships between parents and children, teachers and students, and bosses and workers to be effective and natural. They do not see these relationships as unequal because they think that different people should have different rights and responsibilities. For example, conservatives would say that it is fair that teachers have more rights and more responsibilities, while students have less rights, but also less responsibilities. They think that "higher" positions in society are needed because they have the responsibility to care for those in lower positions.
- **AUTHORITY:** Conservatives believe that authority is necessary because without leadership, there would be no order in society. Without leaders to guide, educate and support the people, there would be no development and the people who have power in society would be ignorant and dangerous.

ACCORDING TO A CONSERVATIVE...



Exercise

After you read 3.1.3:

1. Which liberal ideas do you think conservatism was reacting to? Why did they find these ideas so dangerous?
2. What do you think conservatives would think about the idea of libertarianism?
3. According to a conservative, what makes a government legitimate?

Discussion

1. What are some important features of conservatism in Myanmar?
2. What impact have conservative ideas had on politics in Myanmar?
3. Do you agree with the conservative idea that unequal power relationships are natural?

Preview...

Do you think it is fair for the government to take from the rich to give to the poor?



▲▼ The red star (above) and the hammer and sickle (top) are often used as symbols of socialism or communism. Che Guevara (below) is one of the most famous faces of socialism.



3.1.4 SOCIALISM

In the same way that conservatism was a reaction to liberalism, socialism was a response to the problems caused by industrial capitalism. Socialists divide society into classes of people based on how many resources and opportunities they have, and the kinds of jobs that they do. Early socialists saw that large factories and the people who owned them (the capitalist class) were a danger to the working class.

A capitalist is someone who owns something (e.g. money, property or land) and uses it to make money. For example, if someone owns a building, they can make money by renting the rooms to other people. This kind of property is called "capital". The "working class" are the people in society who do not own any capital. The only way they can make money is by working for other people.

The early socialists suggested a different system. In their system, everyone would own the factories, farms and shops. They claimed that this would create a more equal society.

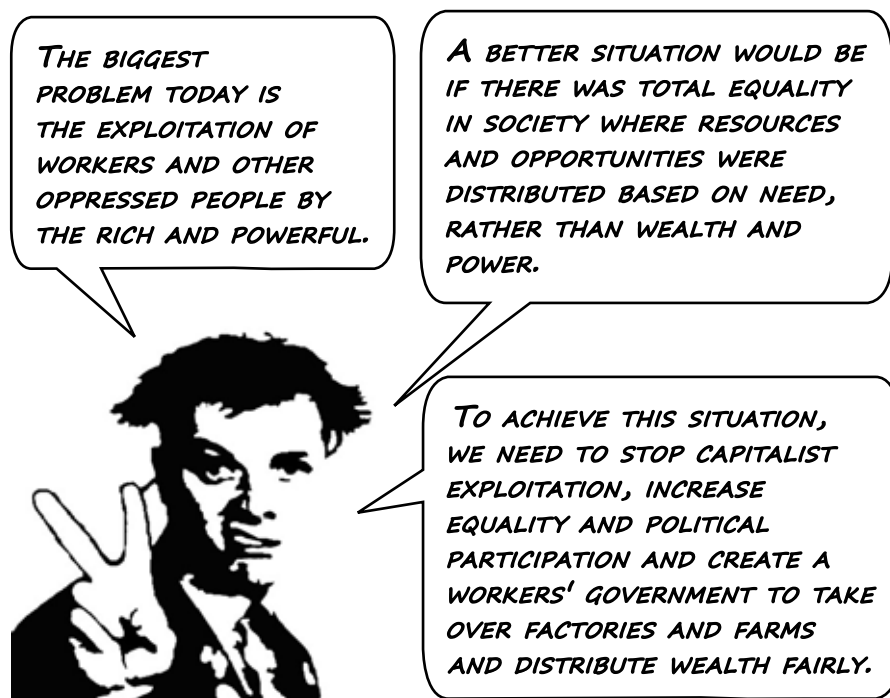
At the end of the nineteenth century, socialists divided into two different groups. Some decided that changing the whole economic system would be very difficult. They said it would be better for socialists to try to improve the wages and working conditions of workers. In this way, they could have a better place in capitalist society. They decided that the best way to do this was to try to get the government to make laws that protected workers' rights. These were called **reformist** socialists. The other group continued to demand a new economic system where all of the **means of production** (factories, farms, workshops, etc.) were owned and controlled by a government made of workers. This group was called **communists**.

A. IMPORTANT VALUES IN SOCIALISM

- **SOLIDARITY:** Many socialists think that it is natural for people to care for and make sacrifices for each other. Even though people are different (gender, race, class, etc.), oppressed and marginalised people everywhere are connected because they are all oppressed. Socialists argue that supporting others who are in need or oppressed is an important part of solidarity.
- **EQUALITY OF OUTCOME:** In the same way that liberals think that liberty is the most important value in politics, socialists believe that equality is the most important value. They want to make a society based on social equality (equality of outcome) not only equality of opportunity. This is controversial because it means that socialist governments need to take resources from wealthy individuals and businesses to give them to poorer groups. Many non-socialists claim that this is an abuse of individual rights and bad for the economy.

- **SOCIAL NEED:** Because socialists want a society based on equality, they say that resources should be given to people based on how much they need. They say that it is the responsibility of strong and healthy people to take care of the weak and sick (who cannot work to earn a living).
- **COMMON OWNERSHIP:** Unlike liberals and conservatives (who support individual ownership of property) many socialists support common ownership of property. They say that the means of production should belong to everyone so that the goods and resources that come from them can be distributed equally in society. However, socialists disagree about how much this should happen.

ACCORDING TO A SOCIALIST...



3.1.5 REFLECTING ON THE THREE BASIC IDEOLOGIES

Look back at the posters you made in 3.1.1.

1. Which of the three ideologies discussed in this chapter is most similar to your group's ideology? What makes it similar?
2. If you could change anything in your poster after reading this chapter, what would you change? Why?

Look at the *actors list*. Make a Venn diagram (like on page 8) for the three ideologies and place six actors from the list onto the diagram.

Exercise

After you read 3.1.4:

1. What is the difference between the liberal idea of economic freedom and the socialist idea of social need?
2. Which liberal ideas do you think socialism was reacting to? Why did they find these ideas so dangerous?
3. According to a socialist, what makes a government legitimate?

Discussion

1. What are some important features of socialism in Myanmar?
2. What impact have socialist ideas had on politics in Myanmar?
3. Do you think that people have a right to keep their wealth, even when people are starving?

Reflection

Activity

Preview...

After reading 3.1, why do you think it is important to think critically about ideologies?

3.2 EVALUATING IDEOLOGIES

3.2.1 EVALUATING IDEOLOGIES

As seen in the previous section, different ideologies emphasise different values, goals and ideas. However, ideologies include more than just beliefs and values. They also include plans for actions that are needed to improve society.

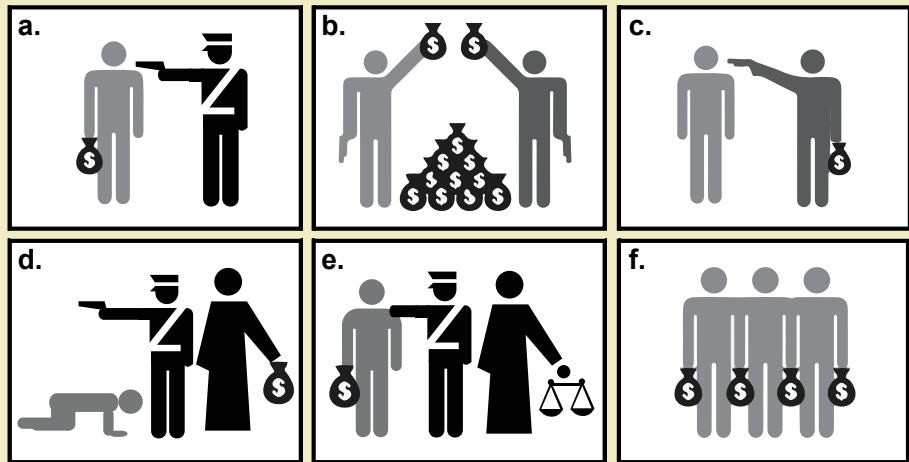
This means that a part of evaluating ideologies is looking at the political system that they are proposing. A political system refers to the social, economic and political institutions that reflect the values of an ideology. Different ideologies put greater importance on different values. The importance of values such as freedom, security or equality will determine the kind of system that supporters of an ideology are trying to create.

In a political system, these values get translated into laws, policies and institutions that have real effects on the lives of people. This is why an important part of evaluating ideologies is looking at their social and economic effects on society. This includes thinking about the effects that a political system will have on rights, equality and liberty. It is also important to think about these effects when considering our own values, beliefs and views on politics.

Activity

- Below are six different possible views on the three ideologies. Match the pictures to the captions.
- What made you choose each picture? Explain your choice to a partner.

- How a socialist sees socialism.
- How others see socialism.
- How a liberal sees liberalism.
- How others see liberalism.
- How a conservative sees conservatism.
- How others sees conservatism.



Political Quotes

Read the conversation and match the statements with the three ideologies discussed in this chapter.

a. liberalism

b. conservatism

c. socialism

1. *CREATIVITY AND FREEDOM ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN GOVERNMENT CONTROL.*

2. *BEING FREE MEANS THAT WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO STAND UP FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE LESS FREEDOM THAN US.*

4. *TO HAVE FREEDOM, WE MUST FIRST HAVE SECURITY.*

5. *IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATE TO PROTECT THE WEAK, THE POOR AND THE LESS PRIVILEGED.*

3. *SOCIETY SHOULD ALWAYS RESPECT AN INDIVIDUAL'S BELIEFS, EVEN IF THEY GO AGAINST THE TRADITIONS OF THE COMMUNITY.*

6. *TRADITION, COMMUNITY AND THE FAMILY NEED SPECIAL PROTECTION IN SOCIETY.*



1. Which of these quotes do you agree with? Why?
2. Which of these quotes do you disagree with? Why?

Reflection

Ideas in Action

"Free Market" Economic Systems

Many liberals (and all libertarians) believe that the only role of government is to provide basic services that only governments can provide well (like national security or street lights). Supporters of "free markets" are against the idea that government should redistribute wealth in order to achieve equality of outcome. They claim that economic restrictions (such as taxes and regulation) prevent people from achieving their goals and are very unhealthy for the economy and society.

Liberals say that free market systems make people work harder

Liberals believe that if the government does not try to control the economy or society, then people will do it themselves by setting up businesses or civil society organisations. They argue that these will be much more efficient because the people who run them will benefit directly from their success. Liberals say that when the government controls the economy it is unproductive because **public sector** workers get the same salary whether they work hard or not. They claim that public sector workers will be lazy and unenthusiastic because they do not get rewarded for working harder (e.g. by making profit). Liberals also argue that when governments try to control prices (e.g. **minimum wage**, **subsidised** rice prices, etc.) this causes a big fall in efficiency and production.

Liberals also claim that having a large welfare state makes people work less. They say that if the government provides all these services, then people will not have any reason to work for them. They also claim that it is unfair to tax people who do work hard to pay for these services.

What is a *welfare state*?

A welfare state is the name for all of the social benefits and services that a government provides to support the social welfare of its people. These services often include free education, free health care and financial support for the old, disabled and unemployed.

Liberals say that free market systems increase wealth in society

Liberals say that large welfare states that try to redistribute wealth in society are expensive and inefficient. They claim that when governments try to redistribute wealth, this causes the whole of society to be poorer. They say that taxes and regulation should be very low so that businesses will be able to create enough wealth that poverty will not be a problem. This economic view is sometimes called "laissez faire" ("allow to do") and is a very important part of the idea of liberal capitalism. Liberal capitalists argue that if people are free to follow their own desire to make money through business, then the whole of society will be richer.

What is *regulation*?

Regulation refers to laws and policies that limit or control an economic activity. Regulation might control prices for certain goods or services, such as food or energy. It may also control what companies are (and are not) allowed to work in an industry.

Exercise

What are the advantages and disadvantages of a liberal economic system?

Discussion

Do you think that a free market economic system would be good for your country? Why?

Ideas in Action

Socialist Economic Systems

Socialists argue that free market systems are unfair because systems based on liberal capitalism will always lead to exploitation of the poor by the rich. They say that in most countries (and especially in developing countries) employers will be able to pay whatever they want to workers because the workers need a job much more than the employer needs an employee. In this situation, the rich (employers) continue to get richer while the poor (workers) continue to be poor. Socialists claim that economic activities need to be controlled to promote social justice.

Socialists say that taxes should be used to redistribute wealth

Socialist economic systems try to stop this exploitation by redistributing resources and opportunities to the poorest members of society to achieve greater equality. This is achieved by "progressive taxation" where the proportion of tax that people must pay increases based on how much income they receive. This means that people who can afford education, health care and other services are taxed more to support people who are too poor to afford them. The government uses the money from taxes to provide **social services** to people who cannot afford them. Progressive taxation is not only found in socialist economic systems, but the amount of tax that rich people have to pay can tell us something about how "socialist" a government is.

Socialists say that economic planning meets the needs of the people, not the needs of businesses

"Economic planning" is when a government makes plans about what goods to produce, how to produce them and who to produce them for. The goal of these plans is to manage the economy based on the needs of the people and also on economic goals that aim to develop the country. Economic planning is a very complicated process. It requires thousands of government workers to carry out all of the calculations that are needed to plan and manage an economy.

Nationalisation is an important part of many planned economies. The government tries to make sure that the country's wealth goes to the people of that country, not to foreign companies or **domestic** citizens who are already very rich. Many governments also use regulation to make sure that important industries are not dominated by a few powerful companies that do not care about the needs of the people.

What is *nationalisation*?

Nationalisation is when businesses or industries are controlled by the government, not by private individuals.



▲ A Soviet poster for a "five year economic plan". These plans were common in socialist countries after World War II.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of a socialist economic system?

Exercise

Do you think that a socialist economic system would be good for your country? Why?

Discussion

Activity

Political Quotes

Read the conversation and match the statements with the three ideologies discussed in this chapter.

- a. liberalism
- b. conservatism
- c. socialism

1. CHOOSING OUR MASTERS IN ELECTIONS DOES NOT GET RID OF THE SYSTEM OF MASTERS AND SLAVES.

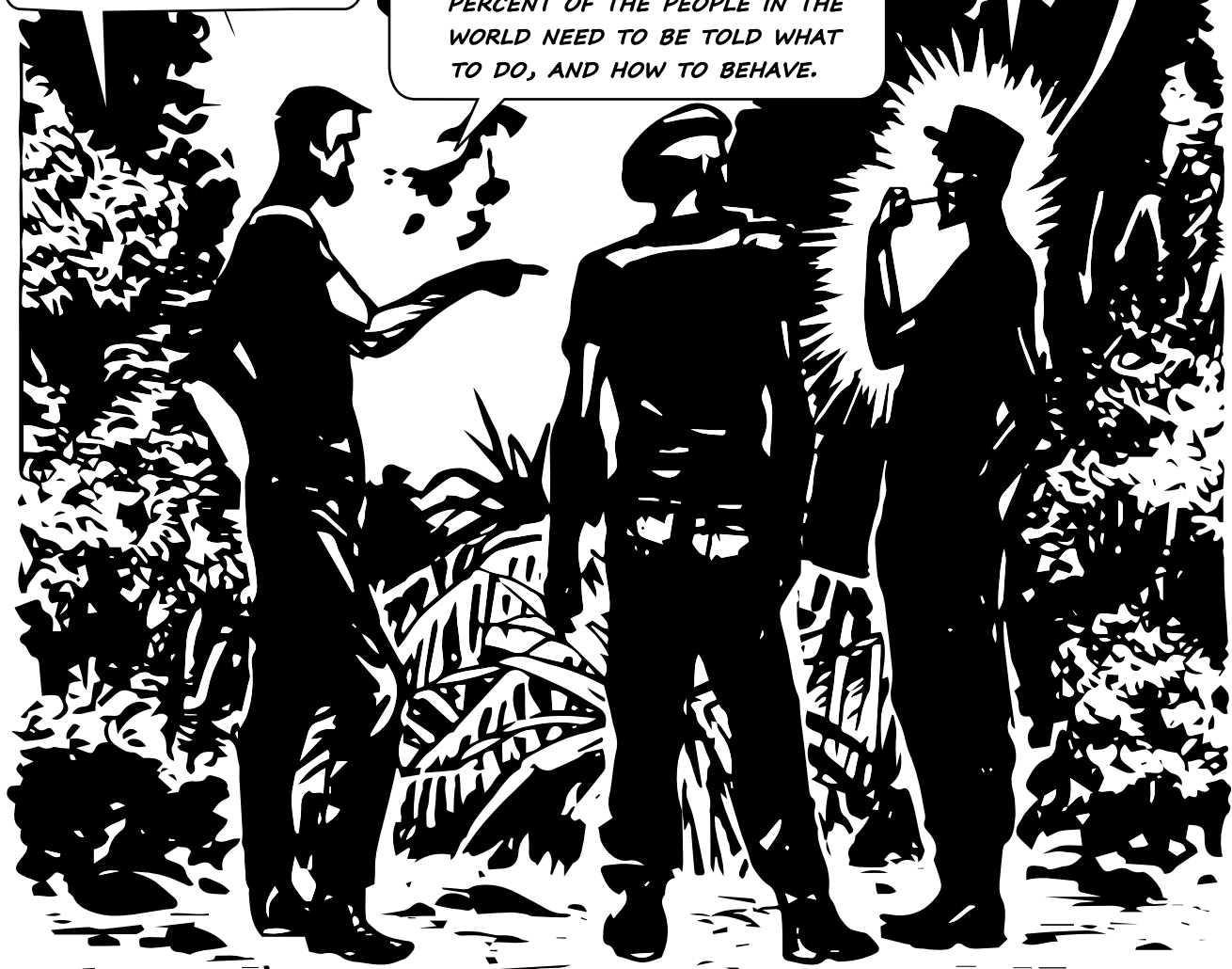
3. A GOVERNMENT THAT IS BIG ENOUGH TO GIVE YOU EVERYTHING YOU WANT IS A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO TAKE EVERYTHING YOU HAVE.

5. THE BEST ARGUMENT AGAINST DEMOCRACY IS A FIVE-MINUTE CONVERSATION WITH THE AVERAGE VOTER.

2. GIVING MONEY AND POWER TO GOVERNMENT IS LIKE GIVING ALCOHOL AND CAR KEYS TO TEENAGE BOYS.

4. PEOPLE NEED SOMEBODY TO WATCH OVER THEM. NINETY-FIVE PERCENT OF THE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD NEED TO BE TOLD WHAT TO DO, AND HOW TO BEHAVE.

6. POLITICAL FREEDOM WITHOUT ECONOMIC EQUALITY IS A LIE; AND THE WORKERS WANT NO LYING.



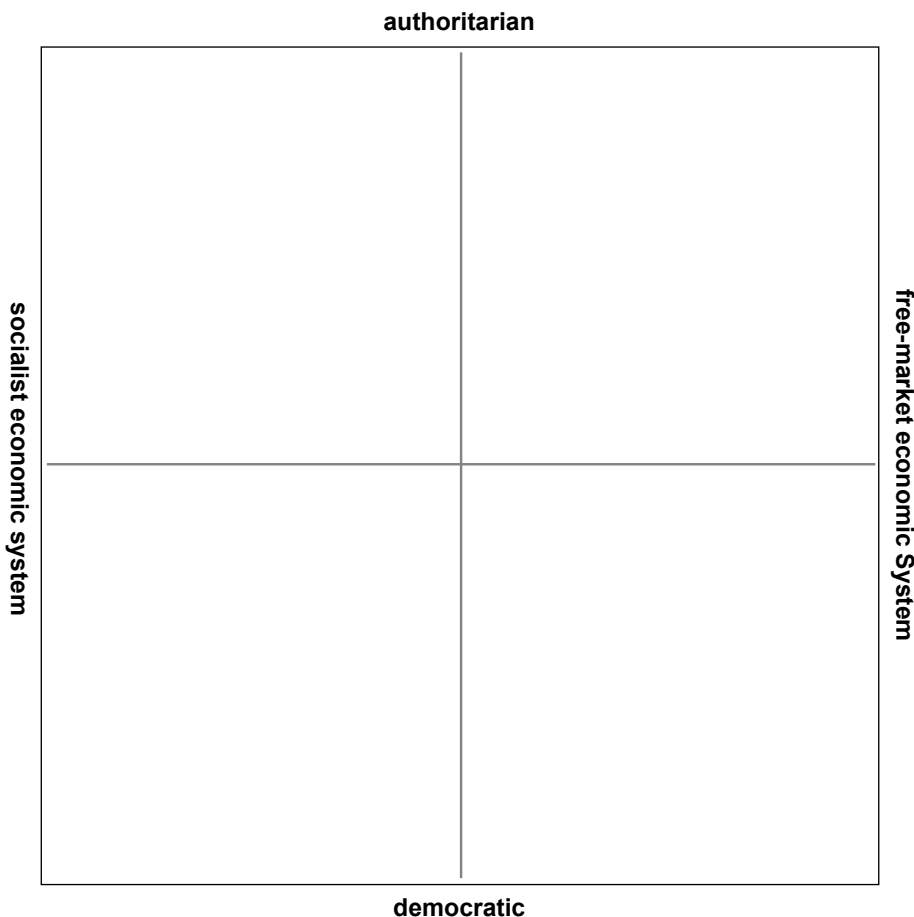
Reflection

1. Which of these quotes do you agree with? Why?
2. Which of these quotes do you disagree with? Why?

Our Ideology, Part 2

1. Work in the same groups as before (*Our Ideology, Part 1*). Make a *values pyramid*, in the same way as your *rights pyramid* on page 15.
2. Make a poster that includes the following information:

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. NAME OF IDEOLOGY | H. WHY SOCIETY IS LIKE IT IS NOW |
| B. MAIN VALUES | I. WHAT THE BEST KIND OF SOCIETY IS |
| C. OTHER VALUES | J. WHAT WE NEED TO DO TO MAKE THAT KIND OF SOCIETY |
| D. VIEWS ON LIBERTY | K. WHO NEEDS TO DO IT |
| E. VIEWS ON EQUALITY | |
| F. VIEWS ON FIRST-GENERATION RIGHT | |
| G. VIEWS ON SECOND-GENERATION RIGHTS | |



Activity

Activity

1. Look back to the poster you made for *Our Ideology Part 2*. Where would you put your ideology on the diagram?
2. Look at the *actors list*. Place six of the actors on the list on the diagram based on their ideology.
3. Add any other individuals or groups from your country you can think of.

Preview...

Does change usually bring more opportunities or risks?

3.2.2 POLITICAL ATTITUDES

Political attitudes describe views about the necessary speed and nature of political change. These attitudes are often divided into three categories: radical, moderate, and conservative. The word conservative can be used to describe either a political ideology (as in 3.1.3) or a political attitude (as in 3.2.2.).

A. RADICALS

Radicals believe in extreme change of the current political, social and economic system. Radicals believe that the current system is broken and cannot be improved or repaired but must be replaced. They say that politics cannot be improved unless a new political system is put in place.

B. MODERATES

Moderates also believe that the current system should be changed. However, unlike radicals, moderates support slow, planned change. According to moderates, change can successfully happen through the institutions of the current system; it does not require a change of the system itself. They believe that change can, and often must, happen over a long period of time.

C. CONSERVATIVES

Unlike radicals and moderates, conservatives do not always agree that major change is needed. Conservatives say that political and social institutions provide order and stability. They say that if too much change happens too quickly, the legitimacy of the system might be weakened. For these reasons, conservatives argue against change unless it is unavoidable.

Activity

The Attitudes Spectrum

1. Look at the *actors list*. Put as many as you can in the correct place on the spectrum.



2. Look at the actors on the left of the spectrum. What kind of events (in the *timeline*) were these actors involved in? What do you notice about the relationship between their attitude, their ideology and the events that they were involved in?

Activity

Look at the two *Political Quotes* activities in this section. Which conversation is between people with radical attitudes and which is between people with moderate attitudes?

Complete the questionnaire. What do you think the answers you gave tells you about your personal attitude to change?

Reflection

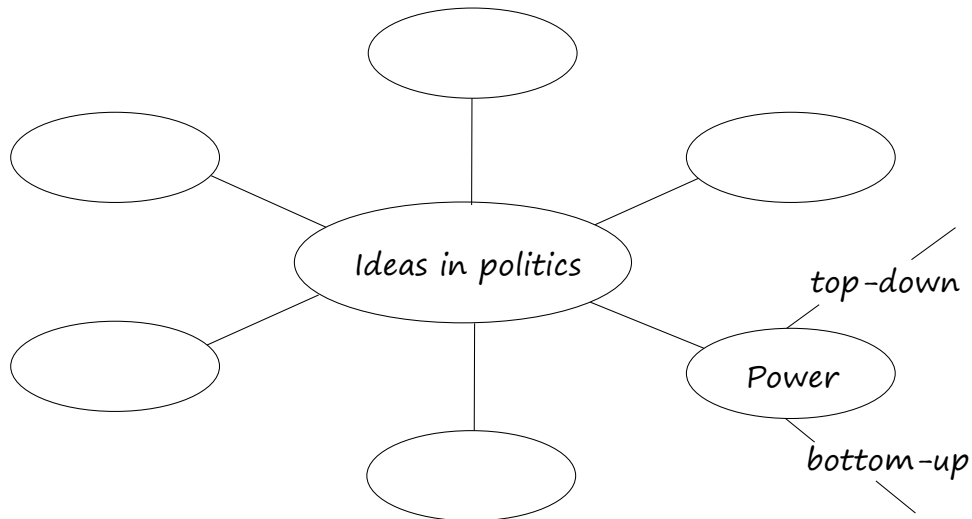
My Attitude to Change

	Yes/No
1. A woman should be able to get a divorce without the permission of her husband.	_____
2. Information on birth control should be available to all girls of fourteen or over.	_____
3. Drugs should be legalised.	_____
4. In a democracy, the people should be allowed to call an election whenever they want.	_____
5. Criminals need psychological care rather than punishment.	_____
6. The death sentence should be banned.	_____
7. All big companies should be nationalised.	_____
8. Marriages between people of the same sex should be legal.	_____
9. Religious leaders should be sent to prison if they encourage religious hatred with their speeches.	_____
10. Civil society organisations should be banned. It is the duty of the government to help the underprivileged.	_____
11. The average individual does not need to be managed or controlled.	_____
12. Students should take part in managing their school.	_____
13. Schools and universities should not use grades or certificates.	_____
14. Everyone should be guaranteed a minimum income, regardless of sex, age and profession, and even if they decide to do nothing.	_____
15. Children should be brought up in several faiths; they can make their choice about what religion (if any) to follow when they are adults.	_____
16. Governments should not decide how to use natural resources. Only local communities have that right.	_____
17. Private cars should not be allowed in city centres.	_____
18. Private property should be banned.	_____
19. Everyone, including women, should have to do one year of military service when they are 18 years old.	_____
20. All polluting products should be banned, even if this causes economic problems.	_____

Unit 1 Review

Unit 1 Mind Map

Complete the mind map with important ideas you have learned in Unit 1.



Comprehension

1. What is the role of conflict in politics?
2. What is the role of cooperation in politics?
3. Which group of rights is related to equality of outcome?
4. What is "affirmative action"?
5. What is a "libertarian" and what do they believe?
6. What is the difference between top-down power and bottom-up power? Give an example of each.
7. What is the difference between visible power and hidden power? Give an example of each.
8. What is the difference between power and authority?
9. What is legitimacy?
10. What are the five sources of democratic legitimacy mentioned in the unit?
11. What is an ideology?
12. What characteristics define liberalism?
13. What characteristics define conservatism?
14. What characteristics define socialism?
15. How is a political attitude different to an ideology?

Unit 1 Glossary

accountability (n) – တာဝန်ရှိမှု	enact (v) – ဥပဒေအဖြစ်အတည်ပြုသည်	public (adj) – အများပြည်သူနှင့်ဆိုင်သော
apartheid (n) – အုပ်စုတိုက်ခတ်မှု (အုပ်စုတိုက်ခတ်ဆိုင်ရာ တောင်အာဖရိကရှိ လူမည်း၊ လူဖြူနှင့် အာရှသားတို့ကို ခွဲခြားထားပြီး၊ လူနည်းစုဖြစ်သည့် လူဖြူတို့ကို အာဏာပေးအပ်ထားသည့် အစိုးရစနစ်တစ်ခုဖြစ်သည်)	exclude (v) – ဖယ်ထားသည်	public sector (n) – ပြည်သူ့ရေးရာကဏ္ဍ
autonomy (n) – ကိုယ်ပိုင်အုပ်ချုပ်ခွင့်	exploit (v) – ခေါင်းပုံဖြတ်သည်	public-interest (n) – လူထုစိတ်ဝင်စားမှု
checkpoint (n) – စစ်ကြောရေးခိုက်	freedom of conscience (n) – လွတ်လပ်စွာယူဆကျင့်ကြံမှု	redistribute (v) – ခွဲဝေချထားပေးသည်။
civil disobedience (n) – အာဏာဖိဆန်မှု	grievance (n) – နစ်နာမှု	reformist (n) – ပြုပြင်ရေးဆိုရှယ်လစ်များ (run for) office (v) – အစိုးရထူးနေရာအတွက် ယှဉ်ပြိုင်ခြင်း
class (n) – လူတန်းစား	hierarchy (n) – ထက်အောက်ဖွဲ့စည်းပုံ၊ ရာထူးဂုဏ်အဆင့်ဆင့်။	rule of law (n) – တရားဥပဒေစိုးမိုးမှု
coerce (v) – အတင်းအကြပ်လုပ်ခိုင်းသည်	incentive (n) – မက်လုံး	sexual orientation (n) – လိင်စိတ်တိမ်းညွတ်မှု
coloured (adj) – အသားအရောင်ရှိသော	infrastructure (n) – အခြေခံဖွဲ့စည်း တည်ဆောက်ပုံနှင့်ဝန်ဆောင်မှု	social services (n) – လူမှုဝန်ဆောင်မှုများ
communal violence (n) – အုပ်စုဖွဲ့အကြမ်းဖက်မှု	institution (n) – အင်စတီကျူးရှင်း(ခ)အဖွဲ့အစည်းများ	social welfare (n) – လူမှုဖူလုံရေး
communism (n) – ကွန်မြူနစ်ဝါဒ	insurrection(n) – ဆူပူသောင်းကျန်းမှုများ (လက်နက်ကိုင်)	solidarity (n) – စည်းလုံးမှု
confiscate (v) – နိုင်ငံတော် တရားအဖြစ် သိမ်းယူသည်	law and order (n) – ဥပဒေနှင့် အမိန့်အာဏာ	sovereign (adj) – အချုပ်အခြာအာဏာပိုင်စိုးသော
consensus(n) – သဘောတူညီမှုရယူခြင်း	marginalised (adj) – ဘေးဖယ်ပထုတ်ထားခံရသော	stable (adj) – ခိုင်မာသော၊
consent(n) – သဘောတူခွင့်ပြုမှု	means of production (n) – ကုန်ထုတ်လုပ်မှုဆိုင်ရာနည်းလမ်းများ	stateless (adj) – နိုင်ငံမဲ့သော
constituent assembly (n) – တိုင်းပြည်လွှတ်တော်	minimum wage (n) – အနိမ့်ဆုံးလုပ်ခလစာ	subject to (v) – မူတည်သည်
constitution (n) – ဖွဲ့စည်းပုံအခြေခံဥပဒေ	nationalism (n) – အမျိုးသားရေး	subsidise (v) – လျော့ချပေးသည် (အစိုးရ)။
curfew (n) – ညမထွက်ရအမိန့်	natural rights (n) - လူသားတစ်ဦးရရှိအပ်သည့်အခြေခံအခွင့်အရေးများ	transparency (n) – မြင်သာမှု
domestic (adj) – တိုင်းပြည်အတွင်းရှိသော၊ ပြည်တွင်းနှင့်သက်ဆိုင်သော	patent (n) – မူပိုင်ခွင့်	tyranny (n) – နိုင်လိုမင်းထက်ပြုကျင့်မှု
dominant (adj) – လွှမ်းမိုးထားသော	policy (n) – မူဝါဒ	values (n) – တန်ဖိုးထားမှုများ
elite (n) – ထိပ်သီး လူတန်းစား	programme (n) – အစီအစဉ်	
	propaganda (n) – ဝါဒဖြန့်မှု	



Unit 2: Institutions

Unit Themes

- Unit 2 helps you to develop an understanding of political institutions.
- It focuses on states, nations and governments and examines how these institutions are established in constitutions.
- It presents these institutions as the context that political ideas and actors operate in and looks at important debates related to them.



Unit 2: Learning Goals

Knowledge

[Exercises]

In this chapter you will increase your understanding of:

- states, nations and ethnic groups
- ethno- and civic nationalism
- public policy and laws
- separation of powers and checks and balances
- the three branches of government
- unitary and federal states
- constitutions
- majority rule and minority rights
- electoral systems.

Skills

[Activities]

In this chapter you will develop your ability to:

- use timelines to analyse Myanmar's political history
- use role-plays to understand nationalism
- create a budget based on your political priorities
- use pyramid ranking to discuss priorities
- complete a flowchart with diverse information
- debate federalism
- create decision-making processes
- design, present and justify a constitutional design.

Values

[Reflections]

In this chapter you will reflect on:

- the role of the state
- the sources of national identity
- promoting peace and unity in diverse societies
- your views on tolerance and diversity
- the most important values that society should share
- your views on minority rights
- the challenges of creating fair decision-making processes.

CHAPTER 4: STATES AND NATIONS

Preview...

What is a state?



▲ An outline map of the state called the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

4.1 STATES

4.1.1 STATES

Every state has three parts:

1. People (the community of legal citizens of the state)
2. The **territory** of the state (the area that the people of the state live in)
3. Institutions (organisations that serve the people such as hospitals, governments and militaries)

States offer citizens a "social contract" where they agree to give up some of their freedom (i.e. following the state's laws, paying taxes to the state, etc.) in exchange for protection. This can be seen in the system of rights and responsibilities between states and citizens. An important part of this social contract is that if the government fails to provide protection or meet the people's needs, then the people have a right to remove that government from power.

A. STATES VS. THE STATE

In some countries, the word "state" refers to one region that is part of a bigger political community (like a country). For example, Myanmar has seven states that are all part of the Union of Myanmar. When political scientists talk about "the state" they are referring to that bigger political community (the country or union).

B. STATES VS. GOVERNMENTS

The word "government" refers to the people and institutions that lead and manage the state. Governments are responsible for making and enforcing laws and policies to manage other state institutions.

In a democracy, political parties compete to become the party that controls the government. However, institutions such as the police, taxation and the education system exist independently of specific governments. When a new party comes to power, it temporarily takes over managing these institutions. These institutions exist permanently as part of the state, regardless of which party controls the government.

C. FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE

1. The state makes and enforces laws.
2. The state makes and implements policies to meet the needs of its citizens.
3. The state distributes resources and opportunities to its citizens.
4. The state is responsible for resolving conflict in society.
5. The state is responsible for political, economic and military relations with other states.
6. The state is responsible for maintaining stability and security.



◀ The police and the military are the institutions that are responsible for maintaining the security of the state.

- a. The police close down any restaurant that sells alcohol after 2 am.
- b. A trade agreement is reached with a neighbouring country.
- c. The government makes a policy that everyone over the age of 70 has the right to free healthcare.
- d. The police stop a violent and racist group from marching through the capital city.
- e. A court settles an argument between two neighbours.
- f. The wealth gained from natural resources is **invested** in schools and hospitals.

What is the most important responsibility of the state? In groups, rank these in order of importance. Join another group and decide on one list you all agree on. Keep joining other groups until you reach consensus on one list for the class.

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| - social welfare | - law and order |
| - national security | - human rights |
| - social justice | - development |

Activity

Match the sentences with the six functions of the state listed above.

Reflection

Preview...

What makes the state different from other political communities?



▲ The State seal of Myanmar.

Discussion

After you read 4.1.2:

1. Which groups in your country have control over territories and people? Do they have sovereignty? Why or why not?
2. Do you agree with Weber's definition of the state? Why or why not?
3. Which groups in your country use violence?
4. Which of these groups use violence legitimately? Which do not?
5. What is the most important role of the state? Why?

4.1.2 IMPORTANT FEATURES OF STATES

A. A STATE HAS SOVEREIGNTY

Sovereignty is the right to **self-determination** without interference from other political communities. Sovereignty is closely related to the idea of legitimacy. Having sovereignty means that an individual or group is the only authority that is recognised (and obeyed) within a territory.

Legitimate states have sovereignty because they are the highest level of authority in a territory. For example, only states are allowed to make laws, distribute resources and settle serious conflicts in that territory. Sovereign states are the only actors that have the right to control their territory and the people in it. When a state has sovereignty, it means that no other group inside (e.g. criminal gangs) or outside that territory (e.g. other states) are allowed to control any part of that territory.

B. STATES HAVE THE MONOPOLY OF LEGITIMATE VIOLENCE IN A TERRITORY

A popular definition of the state comes from the German sociologist Max Weber. He said that "a state is a community that (successfully) claims the **monopoly** of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory." This means that the state is recognised (by the people) as the only group who can use violence to control the people in a territory. Legitimate state coercion is based on the social contract. It is legitimate because the state has the responsibility to use that coercion for the interests of the people.

However, if the state loses its legitimacy or breaks the social contract, it can no longer successfully claim to have a monopoly of the legitimate use of force any more.

C. STATES ARE A SET OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

States are responsible for much more than using force to protect and punish people. States are made up of a group of institutions that are responsible for carrying out the policies of governments. States include the transport, social, and industrial infrastructure of a country. It takes thousands of people to build, organise and maintain that infrastructure. Governments develop ministries and departments that are responsible for making sure that the state successfully provides these services.

Feature of a State	Related Institutions
Sovereignty (making decisions)	
The monopoly of legitimate violence (using force)	
A set of political institutions (providing services)	

4.1.3 ANARCHISM: DO WE NEED A STATE?

Anarchism is an ideology that is against having a state. Most anarchists have a positive view of human nature. They think it is normal for people to cooperate and help each other. They say that government power and capitalism are the cause most of the political and social problems in the world. Like early socialists, many anarchists think that the means of production should be owned by everyone, and that all decisions should be made directly by the people.

Rather than states, anarchists suggest that smaller groups should freely decide on how to organise themselves. They think smaller groups are more democratic because everyone can take part equally in all decision-making. This kind of political system is called "direct democracy".

"Every state power, every government, will always be outside and over the people. It will always dominate and exploit them because the goals and needs of the state are not the same as the goals and needs of the people."

- Mikail Bakunin (Anarchist philosopher)



In groups, make a Venn diagram with one circle for the needs of the people and one circle for the needs of the state. Repeat the activity with the goals of the people/state.

Exercise

Complete the table by putting the list of institutions below in the correct category, according to the information in 4.1.2.

- government
- police
- hospitals
- military
- libraries
- courts
- schools and universities

Preview...

What is anarchism?

Discussion

After you read 4.1.3:

1. What would society be like without a state?
2. After reading this section, do you agree with the anarchist view? Why?
3. Do you agree with Bakunin's quote? Why?

Activity

Preview...

What is a nation?



▲ Nations that are made of many different ethnic groups, such as South Africa, are sometimes called "rainbow nations".

4.2 NATIONS AND NATIONALISM

4.2.1 NATIONS

A "nation" usually refers to a community that shares the same culture, language and history. In this way, a nation is similar to an ethnic group. However, a nation usually refers to a community that works and lives together. In contrast, an ethnic group might be spread across the whole world. Another difference is that nations share political goals and interests. The most important of these goals is the desire for sovereignty.

Ethnic groups can exist as a nonpolitical community. For example, a Hmong family that migrated to New York and a Hmong community organisation in Thailand can be part of the same ethnic group without sharing any common political goals and interests. If a law is passed in America that goes against the interests of immigrants, the family will be affected but not the community organisation. On the other hand, the community organisation might have the goal of getting its language recognised as an official language in Thailand, but this is unlikely to be a goal of the family in New York.

In addition, a nation can include several ethnic groups. For example, hundreds of different ethnic groups live in India. All of these groups might consider themselves to be part of the Indian nation. Despite their diversity, these groups are all affected by the success (or problems) of the nation they belong to. Therefore, many Indians might want their nation to be wealthy, successful and powerful. These are goals that they all might share as a nation because they could lead to development, higher living standards and more security for all citizens.

Exercise

After you read 4.2.1:

Complete the table with the following phrases:

- "Always"
- "Not always"

	Ethnic Group	Nation
Shared culture, language, and history?		
Shared political goals and interests?		

Discussion

1. Think about the ethnic group(s) that you belong to. Which goals and political interests do those groups share?
2. Think of some of the different ethnic groups in your country. Are they just ethnic groups or are they nations as well? Why?

4.2.2 ETHNIC VS. CIVIC IDENTITY

The way that citizens see themselves as a member of a nation is called their national identity. National identity usually has two parts: an "ethnic identity" and a "civic identity". Ethnic identity is related to the feeling of belonging to an ethnic group. Civic identity is related to being a citizen of a state. Since different citizens have different balances of ethnic and civic identity, some communities value their ethnic identity more, while others value their civic identity more.

A. ETHNIC IDENTITY

Ethnic identity is based on the ethnic community that someone is born into. Individuals grow up being influenced by the traditions, culture and religion of that community. This can create a very strong emotional connection and often leads to feelings of solidarity and loyalty within the group. However, ethnic identity can also lead to a feeling of "us" and "them" between different ethnic groups. This can make ethnic conflicts very hard to resolve, especially if they involve the demand for self-determination.

B. CIVIC IDENTITY

Civic identity refers to the identity someone has as a result of being a citizen of a state. Civic identity is not usually based on the culture or values of any specific ethnic group. It is based on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the shared civic values that the state is based on. Civic values include attitudes and beliefs that support just, inclusive and peaceful societies. Because states are often diverse, these shared values can be a strong unifying force. Examples of these kinds of values include tolerance, respect and equality.

	Ethnic Identity	Civic Identity
Based on?		
Values come from?		

Preview...

What is more important to you, your ethnicity or your citizenship?



▲ Mon children. Language and dress are some of the ways that ethnic groups define themselves in diverse communities.

Exercise

After you read 4.2.2:

Complete the table with the following phrases:

- traditions, culture, religion
- citizenship
- civic values
- the community you are born into

Reflection

1. What are some characteristics of your ethnic identity?
2. What are some characteristics of your civic identity?
3. Are they the same, or are they different?
4. Where would you put yourself on the following spectrum?



Preview...

What is "nationalism"?



▲ A Kayin National Day celebration.



▲ A poster for the British National Party, a nationalist political party.

4.2.3 NATIONALISM

Nationalism refers to feelings, ideas and actions that express pride and loyalty to a community. Nationalism has played a very important role in recent history and politics. The modern form of nationalism started in the 19th century when political communities were seeking freedom from old empires and fighting for the right to rule themselves. At that time, the ultimate goal of most nationalists was to create a sovereign state for their nation. However, nationalism has changed a lot in recent years and now the goals of nationalists are more diverse.

Nationalism is present in almost every country in the world. However, different social, political and economic conditions have lead to very different kinds of nationalism. The kind of nationalism that develops in a community often depends on how citizens see the state and their relationship to it. The political scientist Barry Buzan says that there are two important ideas of the state that are related to nationalism, the "nation-state" and the "state-nation".

The simplest explanation of the difference between these two is that in a nation-state the highest loyalty is to the dominant ethnic group (e.g. the Khmer in Cambodia, or Thai in Thailand). The institutions of the state are made to serve the interest of that group. In state-nations, the highest loyalty is to the state institutions. These institutions tend to treat all ethnic groups the same, so no one group is more important than any another.

It is important to note that there is no example of a pure nation-state or state-nation. Every state in the world has some features of both. The definitions given here are extremes that are given to highlight the difference between the two ideas.

	nation-state	state-nation
state identity		
culture		
secessionist parties		
citizen identity		
loyalty		

Activity

Complete the nation-state/state-nation table according to the information in 4.2.3

- Attachment to one major ethnic or cultural tradition.
- Multiple identities (citizens, national, ethnic, etc.)
- Secessionist** parties are illegal or marginalised
- Supports more than one cultural identity, e.g. more than one official language.
- Loyalty to the nation
- Attachment to more than one ethnic or cultural tradition.
- Secessionist parties can participate in the democratic political process.
- Single identity as members of the same cultural nation.
- Tries to create one cultural identity, e.g. one official language.
- Loyalty to the state

Look at the *timeline*. Which events were inspired by the idea of nationalism?

From what you have already learned from this book, where do you think the countries would go on this spectrum?

- South Africa in 1994
- Sri Lanka in 1979
- South Africa in 1993
- Myanmar today

Nation-state

State-nation



Activity

Activity

Preview...

What different kinds of nationalism are there in your country?

4.2.4 DIFFERENT KINDS OF NATIONALISM

These two ideas of the state have an important effect on the kind of nationalism that gains support in a political community. In the case of nation-states, nationalism is likely to be based on ethnic identity. Nationalists are likely to use the symbols, history and traditions of an ethnic group to attract support. For these reasons, this kind of nationalism is often referred to as "ethno-nationalism".

In contrast, citizens of state-nations are more likely to support a kind of nationalism that is based on their civic identity. "Civic nationalism" is based on shared civic values such as respect, diversity and tolerance. Civic nationalists are more likely to use these civic symbols and values to promote cooperation, compromise and unity.

These two forms of nationalism are only "ends of a spectrum". Many nationalists will share characteristics of both ethno- and civic nationalism.



Focus on Myanmar

Bogyoke Aung San on Nationalism

"I recognise both the advantages and disadvantages of nationalism. I love its advantages, but I am aware of its disadvantages. However, I also know that it is not easy for the majority of any nation to get over these disadvantages.

"I support nationalism if it encourages us to love our people and love others, or at least encourages us not to hate others. I support nationalism if it creates a sense of national and social justice in us, and motivates us to fight against oppression. I hate **imperialism**, whether British or Japanese or Burmese."

- *Bogyoke Aung San, Address delivered at a meeting of the Anglo-Burman Council, at the City Hall, Rangoon, on December 8, 1946 [text adapted for simplicity]*



Discussion

What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of nationalism?

4.2.5 ETHNO-NATIONALISM

A. CONSERVATIVE NATIONALISM

Conservative nationalists say that tradition, authority and a dominant culture are important sources of unity. They think that change and diversity are dangerous because they weaken traditional values and cause social conflict. Conservative nationalism can sometimes lead to **xenophobia**. This can be a very serious problem in states that have a lot of ethnic diversity.

Conservative nationalists believe in the idea of **integration**. They say that if ethnic, religious or cultural minorities want to live in a nation-state, and then they should change their behaviour to fit in with the majority. The idea of integration is popular with supporters of nation-states because it sends the message that there is one dominant culture that all others need to fit in with if they want to live in that state.

B. RADICAL NATIONALISM

Radical nationalists take the idea of national sovereignty to a very far extreme. They believe that their nation should have more power than others, and that it has the right to rule over other political communities. This is often based on history, where a nation used to have control over a larger area that now belongs to different political communities.

Radical nationalists often refuse to accept the sovereignty of other nations and expand their own sovereignty beyond the borders of their nation's territory. This is a very dangerous idea and has been the cause of wars, violence and human rights abuses throughout history. In the worst cases, radical nationalism has resulted in **genocide**, the attempt to destroy or remove all members of a racial or ethnic community in a state or region.

Many radical nationalists focus on other countries as the source of their problems. However, they often target "enemies" inside their country too. These "enemies" are often social, ethnic or religious minorities that are in some way different to them.

Radical nationalists use these "enemies" to **mobilise** support for themselves and their radical ideas. Many authoritarian governments also use this strategy to justify their rule. These governments also use these "enemies" to distract people from domestic problems and government corruption and/or mismanagement.

Preview...

What is "ethno-nationalism"?

Discussion

After you read 4.2.5.A:

Do you think that integration is an effective way to resolve conflict in a diverse community? Why?

Discussion

After you read 4.2.5.B:

1. In what ways can radical nationalism cause conflict in a society?
2. How does this conflict affect political stability?

Preview...

1. What is "civic nationalism"?
2. How might it be different to ethno-nationalism?

4.2.6 CIVIC NATIONALISM

Unlike ethno-nationalism, civic nationalism is not based on ethnic identity. It is not based on the traditions, culture or language of only one ethnic group. It is based on a citizen's legal relationship to a state. In states that contain several ethnic groups, civic nationalists promote a national identity that includes all of these ethnic identities. Citizenship in most countries can be given to anyone, regardless of their ethnic or national background. In this way, civic identity is based on the shared values of the state, and is often based on the ideas of **pluralism** and multiculturalism.

A. WHAT IS PLURALISM?

Pluralism is the belief that diversity (of opinions, actors and ideas) leads to the best kind of political system. Pluralists argue that diversity is healthy for society. They claim that diversity makes communities stronger by bringing different ideas, skills and views into the community.

Pluralism is based on the liberal idea that in a diverse community the best ideas will become the most popular. This only works when all citizens have the same opportunities to participate and all ideas are considered equally. This is why many pluralists are strong supporters of civil and political rights.

This is an important part of civic nationalism because it makes sure that diverse voices, ideas and values actually strengthen a community. If freedom of expression is limited, then minorities will feel politically and culturally marginalised. This can lead to resentment and conflict so pluralism is a strategy for both preventing conflict and promoting creativity and new ideas.

B. WHAT IS MULTICULTURALISM?

Multiculturalists support social, ethnic and religious diversity. Their goal is a society where no one is discriminated against based on race, ethnicity or religion. The multiculturalist idea of social justice is a state where no group is marginalised or exploited. They claim that the whole society benefits from the experience of diverse groups living together peacefully.

Multiculturalist policies try to give community members an opportunity to learn from the experience of other ethnic, racial and religious groups. Multiculturalists argue that much social conflict is caused by fear and ignorance about ethnic groups, religions and cultures that are different to our own.

They aim to prevent this conflict by promoting understanding between ethnic groups in diverse communities. These policies often involve promoting social, educational and cultural events where different groups have the opportunity to share their differences and discover the values and beliefs that they have in common.

Discussion

After you read 4.2.6.A:

What kind of civil and political rights are necessary for pluralism to function?

Discussion

After you read 4.2.6.B:

How can civic nationalism help to avoid conflict?

1. Look at the *actors list*. Put six actors into the correct place on the spectrum.
2. Add other political actors that are not on the list.
3. Look at the *timeline*. Which historical events are the actors (in the previous activity) related to?

Ethno-nationalist

Civic nationalist



1. Peace is not unity in similarity but unity in diversity. — Mikhail Gorbachev (president of the Soviet Union)
2. Every immigrant who comes here should be required within five years to learn English or leave the country. — Theodore Roosevelt (American President)
3. I strongly believed that Sri Lanka belongs to the Sinhalese, but there are minority communities and we treat them like our people. They can live in this country with us. But they must not try to demand too much because they are a minority. — Sarath Fonseka (Sri Lankan general)
4. This country, the **Republic** of Indonesia, does not belong to any group, nor to any religion, nor to any ethnic group, nor to any group with customs and traditions, but is the property of all of us. — Sukarno (first president of Indonesia)
5. The Arabs have to understand this is a Jewish state, and they have got to leave. Peacefully if they want; if not, we will make them. The only solution is to be stronger than they are. — Israeli settler
6. I do not want our loyalty as Indians to be affected by other competitive loyalties such as religion, culture or language. I want all people to be Indians first, Indian last and nothing else but Indians. — B.R. Ambedkar (Indian independence leader and civil rights activist)
7. I never regarded these people as being inferior ... because many black people, and coloured people, cooperated with government policies. — Hendrik Verwoerd (Apartheid-era President of South Africa)
8. Malaysia will not get anywhere as long as the political parties of the country do not reject, once and for all, race and religion-based politics for the sake of the wider long-term goal of **nation-building** and democratisation. — Dr. Farish A. Noor (Malaysian political scientist)

Activity

Activity

Sort the quotes into two types: *ethno-nationalism* and *civic nationalism* (see 4.2.5 and 4.2.6.)



▲ Mikhail Gorbachev, the last leader of the USSR. He played an important role in ending the Cold War between the USA and the USSR.

1. In the past, was nationalism a positive or a negative force in Myanmar?
2. What is the role of nationalism in Myanmar today?
3. Is it a positive or a negative force?

Discussion

Reflection



Laws to Promote Peace

1. Read the laws below and decide which are ethno-nationalist and which are civic nationalist.
2. Rank them in order of which is best at solving ethnic conflict.
3. In groups, make a list of the three laws you would choose to promote national unity and write the reasons you think these laws are important. You can use the laws here or write your own.

PROPOSED LAWS TO PROMOTE PEACE AND NATIONAL UNITY

1. Schools should have affirmative action policies to increase the number of teachers from ethnic and religious minorities.
2. It should be illegal for people of different ethnicities and religions to get married.
3. The punishment for racist crimes or hate speech should be increased.
4. Any immigrant who commits a crime should be sent back to their own country.
5. The government should only give national identity cards to people from the majority ethnic group.
6. Inter-cultural education must be part of every school's curriculum.
7. There should be regular meetings where community leaders from minority communities can discuss their concerns with the government and each other.
8. Majority religious and cultural organisations should not have to pay taxes.
9. At least 25% of government workers should come from ethnic and religious minorities.
10. It should be illegal to publish newspapers in minority languages.
11. The government should increase the number of police officers from ethnic and religious minorities.
12. All schools and universities must teach in the majority language only.

The Temple on Church Street

Activity

Read the text then follow the instructions.

On Church Street, in Oldtown, there is an empty building. It is on land which the town council owns. It used to be a quiet street but for years there have been problems around the old building. Drug dealers sell drugs there, and gangs of young people drink alcohol and fight inside it. Many people have complained to the police because of these problems. People also complain to the council that the building is ugly and dangerous.



A wealthy Buddhist from the area has recently bought the old building. She wants to build a Buddhist temple and community centre there. The temple would give the town's Buddhist community a place to practice their religion. The community centre would be a space where community members can meet each other, discuss issues and learn about each other's culture. She offered to pay 50% of the costs and another 25% will come from donations from local Buddhists. The council agreed to sell the land to her and pay the final 25% of the costs.

Work should start on the building next week, but the council has received lots of angry emails and letters complaining about the project. The council have decided to call a special town meeting and they hope to find a solution to the problem by the end of the meeting.

1. Imagine that you are a resident of Oldtown. Are you in favour of the plan? Why or why not? Write your opinion and keep it to refer to later.
2. Get into one of these four groups:
 - a. the Respect Party (multiculturalist)
 - b. the National Defence League (radical nationalist)
 - c. the Oldtown Civic Society (civic nationalist)
 - d. Traditional Nation (conservative nationalist)
3. Each group should decide what their reaction to the plan would be. Based on what you have learned, state what you believe should happen and why. Give reasons and use examples to make your arguments stronger.
4. Have a debate to decide whether the temple and community centre should be built. Each side will have an equal amount of time to present their arguments and ask questions.

**Opening Soon on Church Street:
The Oldtown Buddhist temple
and community centre**



All will be welcome!!

1. Has your original opinion of the plan changed after the debate? If so, why? If not, why not?
2. Look back at "Our Ideology" in chapter 3. Do you think this debate has changed your beliefs in any way?

Reflection

4.3 CHAPTER 4 CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY



▲ **Images of apartheid.** In South Africa, every area of life was separated.

▶ **Black South Africans protesting against Apartheid in the 1980s.**

Ethnic Politics in South Africa

In 1983 the government passed a new constitution which created a Tricameral Parliament (a parliament with 3 houses). It gave whites, coloureds and Indians voting rights and parliamentary representation.

Blacks made up the majority of the population but they were not represented at the national level. Whites sat in the House of Assembly (178 seats), coloureds sat in the House of Representatives (85 seats) and Indians sat in the House of Delegates (45 seats). Each House passed laws related to the affairs of their own racial groups, including health, education and other community issues. A cabinet of representatives from all three houses handled all laws about defence, industry, taxation and Black affairs. However, the white parliamentary house had a large majority on this cabinet, which gave whites control of the country.

This new constitution gave some representation to coloureds and Indians but the first elections in the Tricameral Parliament were mostly **boycotted** by coloured and Indian voters. This showed the anti-Apartheid solidarity felt among non-whites. The opening of the Tricameral Parliament caused protests and riots around the country. This marked the start of the longest period of black resistance to the apartheid government.



Ethnic Politics in Sri Lanka

In the mid-1950s, religious, cultural and linguistic issues played a very important part in Sri Lankan politics. The SLFP party easily won the 1956 general elections by making ethnic politics their main concern.

When the SLFP got into power, the new government created the Official Language Act, which made Sinhala the official language. Because of the act, the Tamil minority saw their language, culture and economic position as under attack. The Federal Party began a nonviolent protest which resulted in an agreement between the government and the Tamil minority.

The agreement allowed some Tamil autonomy in Tamil provinces and allowed the use of the Tamil language in administrative matters. However, this could not be implemented because of a peaceful protest by Buddhist monks. They said the agreement was a "betrayal of Sinhalese Buddhist people." These serious differences between the Sinhalese and Tamils resulted in race riots and civil war.

Since that time, voting has generally happened on ethnic lines. For example, the four-party Tamil National Alliance won the Tamil-majority areas in the north and the east. On the other hand, Buddhist monks stood for election for the Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) Party and won nine seats. The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress won five seats in the mainly Muslim regions.

CASE STUDY



▲ The LTTE, or Tamil Tigers, was the main armed rebel Tamil group and fought against the Sri Lankan government from 1976 until its defeat in 2009.

1. What is the role of conflict and cooperation in these case studies?
2. Are these case studies examples of ethno- or civic nationalism? Why?
3. Do you think the policies of the governments in these case studies are just? Why?
4. How do these case study relate to politics in your country?

Exercise

CHAPTER 5: GOVERNMENT



5.1 GOVERNMENT

Preview...

What is a government?

5.1.1 GOVERNMENT

In the simplest definition, a government is the leadership of a state. A government is a group of institutions that have the authority to make and implement decisions about public policy.

These decisions are usually related to the distribution of public resources and opportunities. Public resources include all the **revenue** that governments get from taxes, natural resources and other public goods. Public opportunities include access to education, healthcare and other social services.

Governments are also responsible for managing conflicts that result from this decision-making process and maintaining peace and security in society.



► One of the Myanmar government buildings in Naypyidaw.

Activity

If We Were the Government...

1. In groups, look at the list below. You have a budget of 100 million dollars. How would you spend it?
2. Present your budget to the class and explain how you made these decisions.
3. As a class, decide on a budget that you all agree with.

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| - social welfare | - law and order |
| - national security | - human rights |
| - social justice | - development |

5.1.2 PUBLIC POLICY AND LAWS

Public policy is a plan of action that governments take to achieve their goals. These goals are often related to meeting the needs of the people and solving society's problems. While they are in power, governments use public institutions to create, implement and enforce public policy.

Public policy decisions determine how public resources and opportunities are distributed. In a democracy, political parties get elected because most of the voters think that their policies will be the best for their country. As a result, debates about public policy are at the centre of democratic politics.

The authority of a government is put into effect through its laws. Laws are the most important tools that democratic governments have to accomplish their policy goals. Governments use laws to control people's behaviour, their quality of life and access to resources and opportunities. Ideally, democratic governments use this power to address society's problems and meet the needs of the people.

Governments are responsible for making, implementing and enforcing laws. These three steps can be seen in the following example:

1. The government makes a law that everyone who drives a motor vehicle must have a license.
2. This law is publicly implemented so that citizens are made aware of it.
3. Any person who is caught driving a vehicle without a license can either be jailed or fined by the police.

A. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LAW AND POLICY

Policies are the goals that the government wants to achieve; laws are the tools that governments use to achieve their policy goals.

- Once a law is passed, it applies to every citizen. In contrast, a policy is limited to the government that creates it. Other people may disagree with it and later governments may change or disregard it.
- Laws are more permanent. A government must follow a specific process to change or cancel a law. In contrast, every new government has a different public policy.

Preview...

1. What is public policy?
2. What is a law?
3. What do you think they are for?

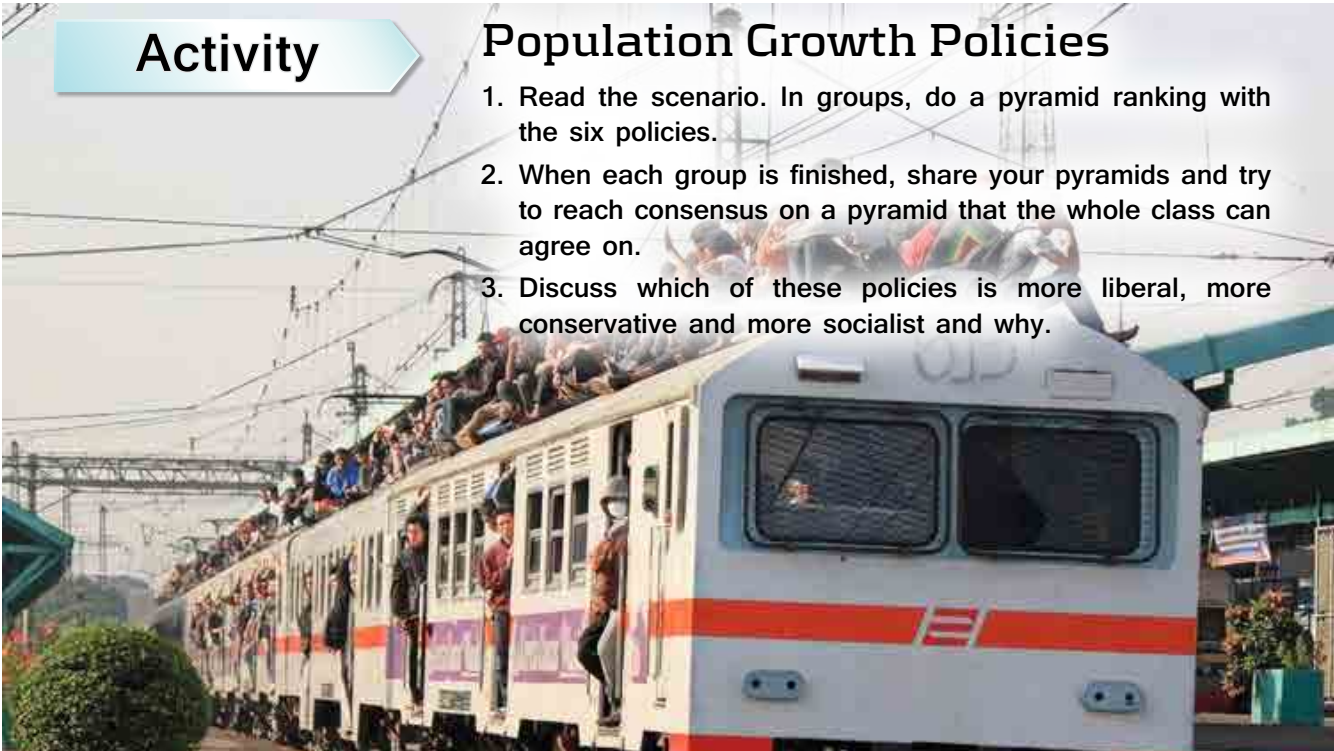


▲ All countries have laws. Governments make, implement and enforce them.

Activity

Population Growth Policies

1. Read the scenario. In groups, do a pyramid ranking with the six policies.
2. When each group is finished, share your pyramids and try to reach consensus on a pyramid that the whole class can agree on.
3. Discuss which of these policies is more liberal, more conservative and more socialist and why.



Scenario:

Your country is facing a serious problem. Its population is growing faster than its ability to provide goods and services to its people. You, as the government, must decide on a policy for how to address this issue.

A. Taxation Policy

Providing people with economic incentives can be an effective way to create social change. This policy would lead to a new tax law. The law would lower taxes for single people and people with small families. This would encourage them not to have many children.

B. Empowerment of Women Policy

When women feel they can be successful in their career they often decide to have fewer children. This policy would lead to new education and employment laws. These laws would give more opportunities to women.

C. Care of the Sick and Elderly Policy

People often have a lot of children because they need someone to take care of them when they are elderly or ill. If people feel secure that they will be taken care of in their old age, research shows that they do not have so many children. This policy would lead to new **social security** laws. Elderly people would receive pensions and **care facilities**.

D. Rural Development Policy

Many people in rural areas have large families because they need people to help them work on their farms. Providing alternatives to farm work can lead to fewer births in these areas. This policy would lead to laws that increase business and create jobs in rural areas.

E. Education Policy

Young people who have better access to education generally have fewer children. They know more about health practices and **family planning**. This policy would lead to laws that make family planning information and services available to young people.

F. Immigration Policy

Limits on immigration into the country reduces population growth. This policy would lead to laws that prevent anyone from moving into the country.

5.1.3 THE THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

There are three main functions of government: making laws, implementing laws, and enforcing laws. These functions are carried out by three "branches" of government:

- The legislative branch (making laws)
- The executive branch (implementing laws)
- The judicial branch (enforcing laws)

A very important feature of democratic government is that these three branches of government are independent of each other. Even though the functions of the three branches are very closely related, each branch is given its own rights, responsibilities and powers, which no other branch can interfere with. This idea is called "**separation of powers**" and is usually outlined in the constitution of a state.

A. SEPARATION OF POWERS

The main purpose of the separation of powers is to prevent tyranny of one institution over the others (and over the state in general). In many authoritarian governments, real power is held by only one branch of government (usually the executive). The other branches are easily intimidated or controlled by the executive branch. This undermines the rule of law and often leads to corruption and instability. Separation of powers avoids this by sharing the power between different branches so that one branch cannot gain too much power.

Separation of powers also means that no branch can act on its own without cooperating with the others. Forcing the different branches to agree on important decisions promotes participation and transparency.

B. CHECKS AND BALANCES

An important result of the separation of powers is that it creates a system of "**checks and balances**". This system allows the different branches to limit each other's power so that the three branches' power is balanced (or at least, more equal). For example, in the United States, only the legislature has the power to create a law, but the president has the right to **veto** (cancel or refuse) the laws that the legislature wants to create.

Systems of checks and balances also lead to a situation where the different branches have to work together because they depend on each other. For example, in the United States, the executive is the **commander-in-chief** (the leader) of the military, but only the legislature is allowed to declare war. In this example, the power to command the military and the power to declare war are equally important. However, because they are held by different branches, neither the executive nor the legislature has the power to fight a war on its own.

Preview...

1. What are the three "branches" of government?
2. What are their purposes?



▲ The logo of Myanmar's Supreme Court of the Union (in Naypyidaw).

Exercise

After you read 5.1.3:

1. What are the advantages of the separation of powers?
2. Can you think of any disadvantages to this?

Preview...

1. What is a legislature?
2. How are laws made?
3. What laws does your country need?



▲ The US Congress is the legislature of the United States Government.

Exercise

After you read 5.1.4 (on pages 78 and 79):

1. What examples of separation of powers can you see in 5.1.4.?
 2. What kind of checks and balances can you find in 5.1.4?
- Membership may be hereditary (passed through families) or by **appointment**.
 - Many upper houses are not directly elected, but appointed: either by the executive or in some other way. This is usually intended to produce a house of experts or respected citizens, who might not be chosen in an election.

5.1.4 LEGISLATURES

Legislatures are institutions where elected representatives from different communities come together to make decisions. Members of a legislature represent the interests and concerns of the people who elected them (their **constituents**). Because different communities have diverse interests, legislatures need to make laws that balance the needs and concerns of different communities as fairly as possible.

In order to do this, legislatures research and debate potential laws (**bills**) for the country. However, because there are so many different needs in a country, these debates can be long and difficult.

Every member of the legislature has the chance to argue for the needs of their constituents. They have an opportunity to raise awareness about what effect a law would have on their community and to persuade other members to vote for or against a law. Legislatures discuss and make changes to a bill until a majority of the members of the assembly agree to it. At this point the bill gets accepted or "passed". If the bill gets no resistance from the executive or the judiciary, the bill then becomes a law.

A. UNICAMERAL AND BICAMERAL LEGISLATURES

There are two main kinds of legislative system: unicameral and bicameral. Unicameral systems have legislatures with only one "house" (or group of members). About half of the world's countries have unicameral legislatures, including China, Nepal and Laos.

Bicameral legislatures have two different houses, an upper house and a lower house. Members of the upper house are often elected for a longer time (although not in Myanmar) and chosen because of their background, experience or qualifications. The lower house is chosen directly by the people and for a shorter time. This way the lower house directly represents the current wishes of the people. The upper house makes sure that these wishes are not too dangerous (i.e. lead to rights abuses or violent conflict). This is why upper houses are often allowed to veto or change the decisions of the lower house.

Unlike lower houses, the members of upper houses are not always chosen in elections. Upper houses are different in every country; however, some of the ways that members of upper house are chosen are:

- Regional areas may be better represented in the upper house than in the lower. For example, in Australia and the United States the upper houses have a fixed number of elected members from each state, regardless of the population. This can help to ensure that minorities' rights and interests are not ignored by the majority in the lower house.

Discussion

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a bicameral parliament?
2. In what ways are bicameral legislatures more democratic than unicameral ones? In what ways are they less democratic?



Focus on Myanmar

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Myanmar's Legislature

The Legislative Branch

- The 2008 constitution describes a bicameral legislature called the Union Assembly (Pyidaungsu Hluttaw).
- The two houses of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw are called the Pyithu Hluttaw (People's Assembly) and the Amyotha Hluttaw (Nationalities Assembly).
- Laws must be approved by both assemblies before they are sent to the President for approval.
- Members of the legislature are elected for five year terms.

Pyithu Hluttaw (lower house)

- There are a maximum of 440 members of the Pyithu Hluttaw.
- One quarter (25 per cent) of the seats in all legislatures are reserved for military **personnel** appointed by the Commander-in-Chief. The rest are elected on the basis of townships.

Amyotha Hluttaw (upper house)

- The Amyotha Hluttaw is made up of a maximum of 224 members. Each region or state can send up to 12 elected representatives to the Amyotha Hluttaw.
- The Commander-in-Chief appoints four members of the military from each region or state to the Amyotha Hluttaw (making a total of 56 appointed members).

1. What separation of powers can you see in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw?
2. What checks and balances can you see in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw?

Exercise

Activity

Our Government, Part 1

1. Read the scenario. In groups, discuss the possible effects of one of the proposed laws. Consider both the positive and negative effects of this proposed law. Use the chart below.
2. Make a presentation to the group.
3. After each group has made their presentation, vote on which laws you decide to "pass".
4. Discuss which of these proposed laws are liberal, conservative and socialist, and why.

Scenario

You are living 20 years in the future. Several social issues are causing political problems for the government and a series of laws is being proposed to address them. You are the lawmakers of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. You are considering seven proposed new laws (bills).



Law	Positive Effects	Negative Effects

Proposed Laws for a Future World

1. Because of problems caused by people moving across national boundaries to escape regional conflicts and find better economic opportunities, a law has been proposed that would stop all immigration and emigration for five years.
2. In order to promote economic equality, a law has been proposed that would greatly increase taxes on the rich.
3. In order to take care of the elderly, a law has been proposed that would require the government to provide pensions and care facilities to all citizens.
4. A law has been proposed that would require all young people to stay in school until they are 18 years old.
5. In order to improve the health of the population, a law has been proposed that would require the government to provide free health care to all citizens.
6. An affirmative action law has been proposed that would require 50% of all places in the parliament to be filled by women.
7. In order to promote rural development, a law has been proposed that any new hospitals and schools would have to be built in rural areas.

5.1.5 EXECUTIVES

The executive is responsible for implementing the laws that are made by the legislature. Executives have the rights, responsibilities and powers to make laws (written documents) into actions (such as distributing resources or creating organisations). For example, if a law is passed that all factories need to reduce the amount of pollution they produce, it is the executive's job to make sure they have the right training, equipment and resources to do that.

However, the executive has several other roles both nationally and internationally. Some of the most important functions of an executive are:

- **Diplomacy** (relations with other countries)
- Creating government budgets
- Control of the military
- Management and administration of government workers
- Emergency leadership (in times of natural disaster or violent conflict, for example)

There are two parts of any executive. The head of state is the "leader" who is a representative of the country. They are responsible for speaking for the country and taking part in national ceremonies. Secondly, there is the head of government. This is the person who is responsible for managing the daily work of running the government. They act as the leader of a group of ministers called a **cabinet**. Each minister is responsible for organising all of the work that the government does in a specific area such as health, agriculture, or education.

In some countries, there is a president or **monarch** who is the head of state, and a prime minister who acts as the head of government. These are called parliamentary systems. In other countries, the roles of the head of state and the head of government are combined in one person (usually a president). These are called presidential systems.

The amount of power the executive has is different in every country. In some presidential systems, presidents have the right to suggest, accept and veto laws made by the legislature. In other countries, their role is to only implement the laws made by legislatures. In this case, they cannot affect the decisions of the legislatures very much.



Preview...

1. What is an executive?
2. What roles does the executive have in government?

Activity

After you read 5.1.5:

1. Rank the five important functions of the executive listed in 5.1.5 in order of:
 - a. importance
 - b. difficulty
 - c. riskiness
2. What do you notice about these three lists?

Exercise

1. What kinds of checks and balances can you find in 5.1.5?
2. What examples of separation of powers can you find in 5.1.5?

◀ <http://www.president-office.gov.mm/>, the official web site of the President of Myanmar.



Focus on Myanmar



Myanmar's Executive



▲ Parliament buildings, Naypyidaw

System

- Presidential

Who makes up the executive?

- The President, the Vice Presidents, the Cabinet and the **Attorney General** are the executive branch of the government. The Attorney General advises the executive branch on legal issues.

How does the President get elected?

- The President is not elected directly by the people.
- Members of the Union Assembly nominate three presidential candidates. One is chosen by the People's Assembly, one by the Nationalities Assembly, and one by the military members of parliament.
- These candidates may be Hluttaw representatives or not Hluttaw representatives.
- The **nominee** who wins the majority of votes from the Union Assembly becomes the President. The two unsuccessful nominees become Vice-Presidents.

How does the cabinet get elected?

- The President is responsible for appointing most of the Ministers in the Cabinet. The Commander-in-Chief appoints the Ministers for Defence, **Home Affairs** and Border Affairs.

What powers does the President have?

- The President can declare war or peace. They can make or break **treaties**. The President signs and approves laws.
- In special situations described in the constitution, the President can declare a **state of emergency**. In a state of emergency, the Commander-in-Chief has greater powers.

Exercise

1. What separation of powers can you see in the Myanmar executive?
2. What checks and balances are there on the Myanmar executive?
3. Which do you think should have more power: the executive or the legislature? Why?

Our Government, Part 2

Activity

1. Read the scenario. In groups, consider the bills that have been passed by the legislature in Part 1. Each group should consider one of the bills and complete the table.
2. Make a presentation on the proposed law. Your presentation should outline the difficulties and costs of the law as well as the benefits.
3. After each presentation, the class should vote (or use consensus) to decide whether they will accept the law as it is, or send it back to the legislature.

Scenario

You are living 20 years in the future. Several social issues are causing political problems for the government and a series of laws is being proposed to address them. You are the executive of the government. The legislature has recently passed a set of laws for you to consider. (See the proposed laws on page 80.)



Law	Obstacles	Costs

Preview...

1. What is a judiciary?
2. What kind of courts are there in your country?

Discussion

Do courts protect and support the rule of law in your country? How?

Preview...

What is the role of a constitutional court?

Exercise

After you read 5.1.6 and 5.1.7:

What kind of checks and balances can you see in 5.1.6 and 5.1.7?

5.1.6 JUDICIARIES

The judiciary is responsible for enforcing the law. The main responsibility of a (democratic) judiciary is to support the rule of law in a state. Judiciaries are also responsible for fairly resolving conflicts. These conflicts can be between citizens (e.g. a divorce), between citizens and the state (e.g. land confiscation), or dealing with crime.

However, the judiciary also plays a very important role in government. This is because the most important laws that determine how government works are usually written in a constitution. Judiciaries are responsible for interpreting the meaning of these laws when they are not clear, or in conflict. This can be very important in politics since lack of clarity or conflict of meaning can cause serious problems in government. The judiciary acts as an independent judge that settles these disputes in a neutral way.

An important point about many judiciaries is that they give people the opportunity to appeal to higher levels of court if they feel that the decision that has been made at a lower level is wrong. Lower courts might be more vulnerable to political pressure or corruption, so the right to **appeal** is an important part of the rule of law. Independence of the judiciary is an important source of democratic legitimacy. If the judiciary is independent, the public will be more confident about using the courts to solve disputes and seek justice.

5.1.7 CONSTITUTIONAL COURTS

Having a government based on the separation of powers can mean that the responsibilities of the different branches can sometimes conflict. Sometimes the executive and the legislature both think that they have the right to make a decision (based on their understanding of the constitution). In these cases, a third group is needed to fairly resolve this conflict.

The main institution that is responsible for this function of the judiciary is called a "constitutional court". It is responsible for checking that laws passed by the government do not conflict with the basic laws of the constitution.

The roles of a constitutional court are:

- To interpret the constitution.
- To carry the power of **judicial review**: it can declare a law or action by the legislative or executive branch illegal because it conflicts with the constitution.
- To settle disputes between different branches of government.
- To check (monitor or control) the abuse of power.
- To decide on cases where individuals complain that their constitutional rights have been abused.

It is very important that these courts are independent from the other branches of government. Any pressure from the executive on the judiciary, or any close relationships between judges and politicians will weaken the judiciary's independence. For this reason, judges are usually chosen very carefully and have these positions for very long periods (often for the rest of their lives).

This causes problems for several reasons. Firstly, judges are not chosen in a democratic way. They are not elected, and there is often no way of removing them after they have been chosen. Secondly, judges are supposed to be politically neutral when making decisions. However, this can be challenging because every judge has political opinions. This means that choosing a judge can be a very political decision.

Discussion

After you read 5.1.7:

1. Would it be possible to have a government without a judiciary?
2. Are judiciaries undemocratic?



Focus on Myanmar



Myanmar's Judiciary



▲ *The Supreme Court of the Union, Naypyidaw.*

What are the different levels of courts in Myanmar?

- Township courts: for most people who are accused of breaking laws.
- High courts: courts of the state, region or Self-Administered divisions. Cases which can't be decided by those courts are sent to the Supreme Court.
- The Supreme Court: Judges decide about matters regarding:
 - treaties between Myanmar and other countries
 - legal issues between the national and the regional/state governments
 - legal issues between the regional/state governments.

How is the Supreme Court elected?

- The President nominates a **Chief Justice**.
- The Chief Justice and the President nominate candidates together for the positions as Supreme Court judges. Nominations must be approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.
- The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw cannot reject nominations for judges or for the Chief Justice unless the nominee does not meet the requirements in the Constitution.

Is there a constitutional court in Myanmar?






- Yes. The Constitutional Tribunal of the Union rules on issues related to the constitution.

1. What separation of powers exist in Myanmar's judiciary?
2. What checks and balances exist in Myanmar's judiciary?

Exercise

Exercise

1. Look at the *timeline*. Identify events that have caused changes in the system of government.
2. What kinds of separation of powers existed during the four periods on the table?
3. What kinds of checks and balances existed during the four periods on the table?
4. What does this tell you about the systems of government that existed during the four periods on the table?
5. Try and complete the last row in the table using the information in this chapter.

	Legislature (unicameral/ bicameral/no legislature)	Executive (Head of state/government)	Judiciary (constitutional court)
Union of Burma 1948-1962 	Bicameral Union Parliament (Lumyozu Hluttaw/lower house, Pyithu Hluttaw/upper house)	President (head of state) Prime Minister (head of government)	Yes
1962-1974 	None	President (head of state/government)	No
Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma 1974-1988 	Unicameral Pyithu Hluttaw (single-party legislature)	President (head of state) Prime Minister (head of government)	No
Myanmar 1988-2008 	None	1988-2003: Chairman of SLORC/ SPDC (head of state and head of government) 2003-2008: Prime Minister (head of state and head of government)	No
Myanmar 2008 – present 			

Our Government, Part 3

Activity

1. Read the scenario. Look at the list of constitutional rights on page 14.
2. In groups, consider the laws that have been accepted by the executive to see if there is any way that they might conflict with these constitutional rights.
3. Each group should make a presentation on whether they think that any of these laws could violate these rights so much that they would go against the constitution.

Scenario

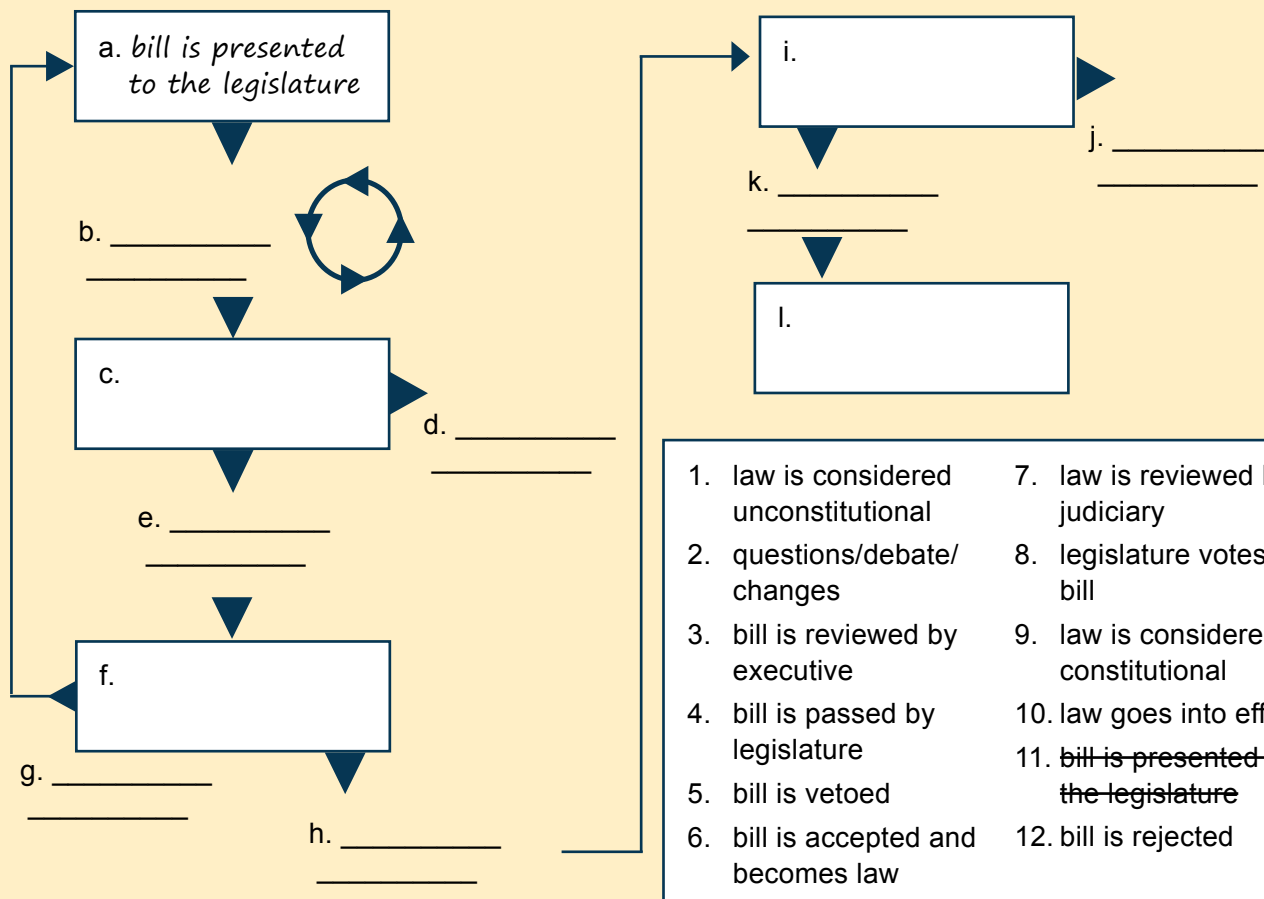
You are living 20 years in the future. Several social issues are causing political problems for the government and a series of laws are being proposed to address them. You are the judicial branch of the government. The legislature has recently passed a set of laws for you to consider. (See the proposed laws on page 80.)



From what you have learned in this chapter, complete the diagram using the steps in the box.

Exercise

How Laws Are Made



5.2 UNITARY AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS

Preview...

What are "centralisation" and "decentralisation"?

5.2.1 CENTRALISATION OR DECENTRALISATION?

Modern states are divided between national (central) and other local governments. However, there are many differences between the way these two levels of government work together in different countries. Some of the most important differences include:

- The different relationships between central and local governments (e.g. the constitutional "rules" about how the two levels of government work together)
- The different responsibilities that these two levels of government have (e.g. who collects taxes, who decides what is taught in schools.)
- The amount of control that central government has over local governments (e.g. whether local governments have their own police or courts)

Giving more power to the central, rather than local, governments is called *centralisation*. Taking power away from central government and giving it to local governments, is called *decentralisation*. The basic idea behind decentralisation is that local people are better than central government at finding solutions to local problems and issues.

Discussion

What are the dangers of centralisation and decentralisation in your country? Which do you think are more serious?

Preview...

1. What is a "federal" state?
2. What is a "unitary" state?

5.2.2 FEDERAL AND UNITARY STATES

Most states are either federal or unitary. Federal states are more decentralised than unitary states, and they generally fit best to the needs of large countries with diverse populations and minorities who live in different regions. Unitary systems of government are more centralised and generally fit better to the needs of small countries with less diverse populations.

5.2.3 FEDERAL SYSTEMS

Preview...

Federalism is a political system where the rights and responsibilities of government are divided between one central government and several regional governments. Usually, a federal system has two levels. The first level, central government, is usually responsible for a few important activities like the economy, defence and foreign relations. The second level (regional government) looks after the daily administration of their region (e.g. housing, social services and schools).

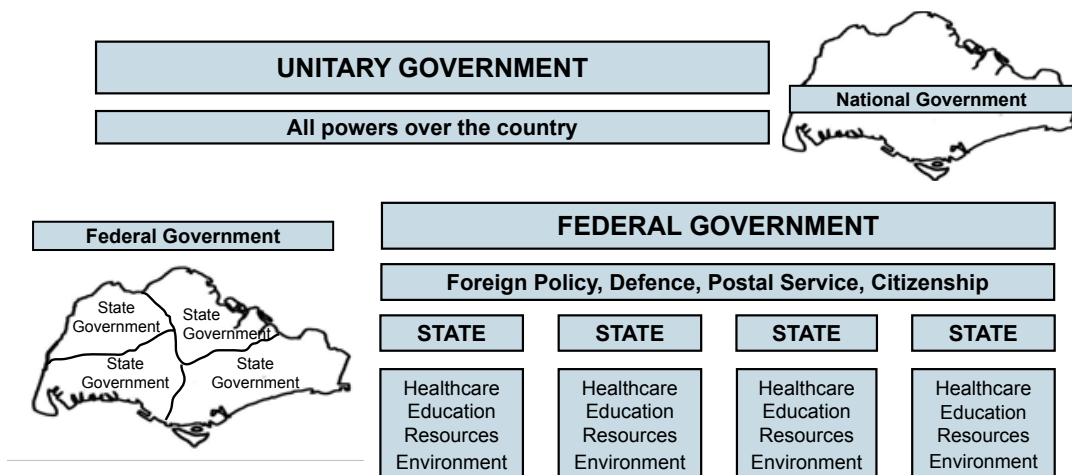
We say that federal states are more "decentralised". What do you think this means?

Each of these two levels of governments uses its power independently of the other. National governments are independently responsible for dealing with matters of national interest. Regional governments have powers of their own that they can use without the permission of the central government. In a democratic federal system, regional governments are elected independently of national governments and are accountable to the people of their own region.

Federal systems have two main objectives: to maintain the unity of the country, and to support regional diversity. Federalism supports the unity of a country by giving different groups and regions a civic identity that they all share. Regions can maintain their autonomy, but still feel that they are a part of the state. This can create unity within a state and make people less likely to want to secede. It supports diversity by allowing local governments to govern their communities in their own way. Allowing regions to govern themselves according to their values, culture and beliefs is an important way to promote multiculturalism and respect in a state. These two effects of federalism can help large and diverse countries to avoid social conflict.

In federal systems, these two levels of government agree to some rules about which levels of government are responsible for different political activities. This kind of political system is called "**power sharing**". Power sharing has been an effective way to resolve communal conflict because it is based on fixed rules that everyone agrees to before they are implemented. It gives different social groups a way to address their needs and concerns politically, without using violence.

▼ This diagram shows the main differences between the structures of federal and unitary systems.



Activity

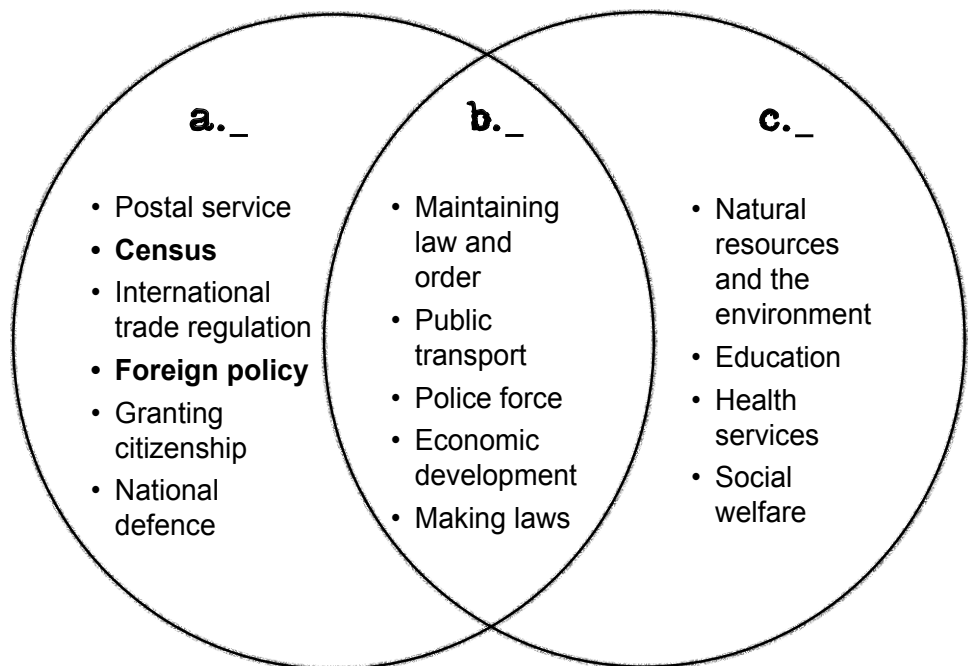
1. Label the Venn diagram with the correct levels of government.

i. national ii. regional iii. shared

2. Add the additional functions in the correct place.

iv. collecting taxes v. collecting waste vi. printing money

Division of Functions in the Canadian Federal System



Preview...

How do you think a unitary system is different from a federal system?

5.2.4 UNITARY SYSTEMS

Unitary states are much more centralised than federal states. In federal states, there are some parts of society and the economy that national governments have no control over. However, under a unitary system, local governments are much less powerful than the central government. This means that the central government can give orders to the local government to do almost anything.

Supporters of unitary governments say that they promote more unity and a stronger national identity. They claim that having a single, strong government makes different groups work together for national goals. This can help to build a shared identity by finding solutions to common challenges.

Supporters also say that unitary governments promote equal development better than federal states. Unitary states can control the social and economic situation of all the regions in a state. This gives them a "bigger picture" that helps them to make policies that consider all citizens in a state, not just the citizens of one region. Supporters of unitary states claim that this can avoid an unequal distribution of poverty and wealth.

Discussion

1. Supporters of unitary states say that they make the country more unified. Do you agree? Why?
2. Supporters of unitary states say they promote equality and equal development. Do you agree? Why?



Focus on Myanmar

The Myanmar State

The 2008 Constitution describes powers for the country's sub-national units. These cannot be taken away by the central government without a change to the Constitution. This is the first time in Myanmar's history that these powers have been given. It could be said that there is now a very limited federalism. However, the federalism is so limited that Myanmar remains a unitary state.

These limits are included in the Constitution. Chapter 1, Article 10 says: "No part of the territory constituted in the Union such as Regions, States, Union Territories and Self-Administered Areas shall ever secede from the Union".

The country is divided into seven Regions (formerly called Divisions), seven states, and the Union Territory of Naypyidaw. Each Region and State has its own government, led by Chief Ministers. The Chief Ministers are appointed by the President. All seven Regions and States are given equal powers under the Constitution. These governments are able to make some laws related to the economic, transport, communication and social sectors of their State or Region. They can also collect land taxes, transport taxes and taxes on all forest products except teak.

Each Region and State has a Regional Legislature which follows many of the same rules as the national legislature.



Level of government	Functions of government
National (country)	libraries
Regional (state/division)	libraries
Local (township)	libraries
Community (neighbourhood)	

Exercise

1. Complete the table by putting these government functions into different levels of the political system.

international relations
pollution control ~~libraries~~
education parks police
economic development
housing transportation

2. Think of more functions and add them to the table,
3. What did you learn from this exercise?

Preview...

5.2.5 FEDERAL VS. UNITARY SYSTEMS

What is better, a federal or unitary system?

Activity

Imagine that you are creating a new country. Which responsibilities would you allocate to national and regional government? Complete the table.

Responsibility	National or regional?	Why?
Funding of schools (including how much money should be spent on local schools)		
Water and power distribution (including which communities should receive electricity and water)		
Laws against discrimination (including how to enforce these laws)		
Language in schools (including which language should be used when teaching in schools)		
Complaints against the police (including how to handle these complaints)		
Ownership of land (including who has the right to own land in an area)		
Natural resources (including which natural resources are used and who benefits from them)		
Military service (including how many people should be in the military)		
Foreign treaties (including who has the power to make treaties with international organisations)		
Tackling corruption (including who is responsible for investigating corruption)		
Labour laws (including who sets working conditions and decides how to enforce them)		

Discussion

Go back to population growth laws that you decided on in this chapter. In groups, debate why it would be better if either the federal or regional governments implemented those laws.



Focus on Myanmar

Federalism in Myanmar – The Taunggyi Conference, 1961

Representatives at The Taunggyi Conference in 1961 agreed to amend the Union Constitution (drafted by the AFPFL in May 1947).

The 1947 Constitution was based on the idea of federal state. Shan and Karenni States were given the right to decide after ten years if they wanted to become independent countries. However, other ethnic groups were not given this right. Some states had their own state councils and could make laws for themselves. However, the President could disagree with those laws and the Prime Minister was responsible for choosing the state leaders.

The 1961 amendments would have created a Federal Union of ethnic national states. These states would have had the right of political autonomy — legislative, judicial and administrative powers in their own states. They would have had self-determination, including the right of secession (leaving the Union). The only areas that the central government would have control over were:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| a. foreign affairs | e. railways, airways and waterways |
| b. union defence | f. union judiciary |
| c. union finance and currency | g. sea customs and duty (taxes on goods delivered by sea) |
| d. postal services | |

The representatives also wanted to amend the Union Constitution to change the structure of the Chamber of Nationalities (upper house of Parliament). They wanted each ethnic national state to send equal representatives to the Chamber of Nationalities, no matter how big or small their state.

However, in 1962, Ne Win staged a **coup**, claiming it was necessary to "save the nation from disintegration". Parliament was dissolved, the constitution was suspended and the discussion about amendments and federal issues ended. Ne Win said "Federalism is impossible; it will destroy the Union." He also claimed that the parliamentary system was not good for the country.

The 1974 Constitution made Burma a unitary system. There were divisions and states; however, the power to make important decisions remained with the central government. The executive was formed by the Council of State and the Council of Ministers. Both were controlled by the President. The Council of Ministers had control over the judicial system and the Council of State had control over the legislative system. The government had a unicameral parliament lead by the Prime Minister. There were no elections for any of these government positions.

Make a table that lists all the advantages of unitary and federal states.

Activity

Which do you think would be the best system for your country – a unitary government or federalism?

Use the tables in 5.2.5. to conduct a debate on whether you think your country should be a federal or a unitary state.

Discussion

CHAPTER 6: CONSTITUTIONS



6.1 UNDERSTANDING CONSTITUTIONS

Preview...

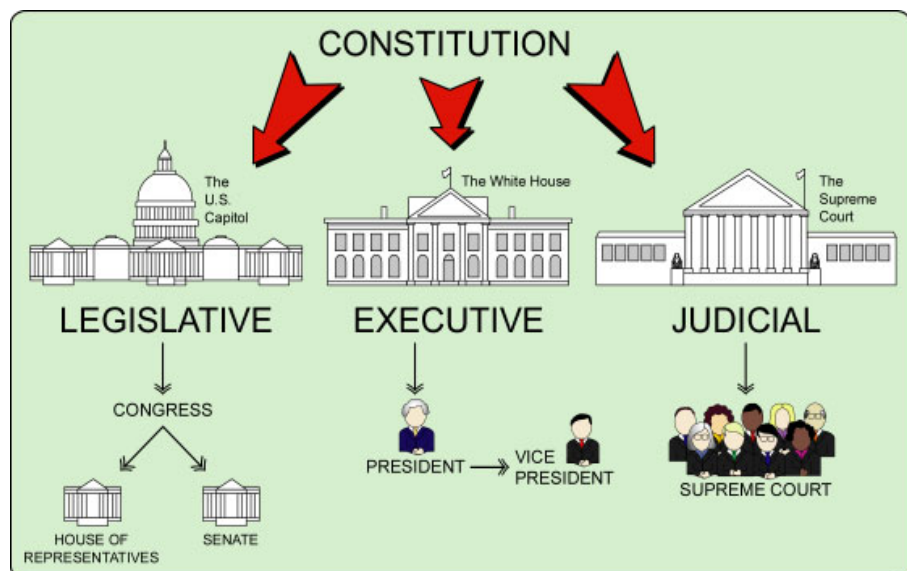
1. What is a constitution?
2. Have you read your country's constitution?

6.1.1 CONSTITUTIONS

A constitution is a plan of the structure and powers of government. Constitutions outline the rights, responsibilities and powers of each of the main institutions of government. They also set out the process of how governments make, implement, and enforce laws.

Constitutions set out the most basic rules about how government and politics work in a country. They contain permanent laws that determine how governments make (less permanent) laws and policies. Examples of these more permanent laws include citizens' rights and rules about how the constitution can be changed. These basic laws need to be considered when governments make laws and policies that are necessary to run the country.

Most countries' constitutions are written documents, however there are some (The UK, Israel and New Zealand for example) whose constitution is not one single document. Their constitutions are based on several documents and also unwritten "understandings" about how politics works in those countries.



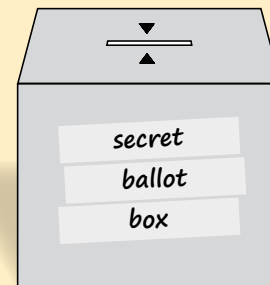
► A simple diagram showing that the constitution is the highest law in the USA. All the other branches of government get their power from the constitution.

In this chapter, many of the activities ask you to make difficult decisions. In groups, decide on a process for how decisions are made, for example:

- **Majority voting:** Discuss an issue, then vote. Whichever option gets the most votes is accepted.
- **Choosing representatives:** Members are temporarily chosen to have the authority to make certain decisions.
- **Choosing permanent decision-makers:** One leader makes all the decisions without consulting the group in any way.
- **Consensus:** Discuss until the group arrives at a collective opinion acceptable to all group members.

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each before making your decision.

Activity



▲ One way of reaching a decision could be to have a secret ballot (vote), with each person having one vote.

6.1.2 PARTS OF A CONSTITUTION

No two constitutions are exactly the same. Some are long and detailed (India's has 387 **articles**) and some are short (the USA's has seven articles). Myanmar's 2008 constitution has 457 articles (called "sections"), in 15 chapters.

Even though they are all different, most constitutions have four main parts:

- **PREAMBLE:** The preamble is usually a statement about the country and its history. Some preambles include a story about the important national events and traditions of that country and its people. The preamble often describes the institutions, beliefs and values that the legitimacy of the state is based on.
- **FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS (BILL OF RIGHTS):** This is a list of list of citizens' basic rights and statements about the limits of government power.
- **INSTITUTIONS AND OFFICES OF GOVERNMENT:** This section describes the structure of government. It also outlines the powers and responsibilities of government institutions.
- **AMENDMENTS:** This section describes the rules that must be followed if people want to **amend** the constitution.

6.1.3 PREAMBLES

A preamble is a statement at the beginning of a document that explains the importance of that document. In a constitution, a preamble explains the political values and goals of the people in the country. Constitutions often represent the values that the community thinks are most important. This shows us something about the political culture of the country. Values such as "freedom" and "tolerance" might suggest a liberal political culture, while values such as "tradition" and "law and order" would suggest a more conservative political culture.

Preview...

What are the different parts of a constitution?

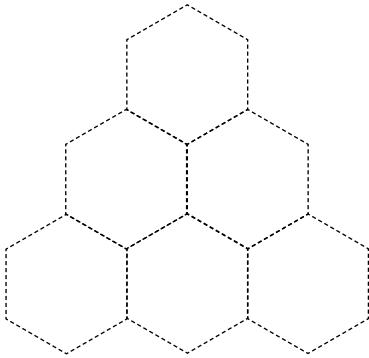


▲ The preamble of India's constitution.

Preview...

What is a "preamble"?

Reflection



1. Work in four groups. Choose six of the most important values from the list below that should go into your constitution. Make a values pyramid.

social justice obedience security peace order
 human dignity equality respect honesty family
 solidarity responsibility justice tolerance freedom
 competition unity patriotism

2. Put your values pyramids around the room. Look at other groups' values pyramid. If you want to change to another group, do this now.
3. Work together to decide on a values pyramid that all four groups agree with. If this is difficult, try using the different decision making processes from 6.1.1.

Discussion

1. Do you think the values that you just decided on as a class would be shared by most people in your country? Why or why not?
2. Which decision making process (from in 6.1.1.) was most effective? Did everyone accept the decision ? Why?



Focus on Myanmar

The Preamble of the Myanmar Constitution

We, the National people, firmly resolve that we shall:

- steadfastly adhere to the objectives of non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of National solidarity, and **perpetuation** of sovereignty;
- stalwartly strive for further burgeoning the eternal principles namely justice, liberty, equality and perpetuation of peace and prosperity of the National people;
- uphold racial equality, living eternally in unity fostering the firm Union Spirit of true patriotism;
- constantly endeavour to uphold the principles of peaceful coexistence among nations with a view to having world peace and friendly relations among nations.

Exercise

1. What values do you find in the Myanmar Constitution preamble? Were they the same that you chose in 6.1.3.?
2. What goals do you find in the Constitution?
3. What evidence do you see that these values and goals are being addressed?

Activity

Read the preambles of the constitutions below and answer the following questions for each:

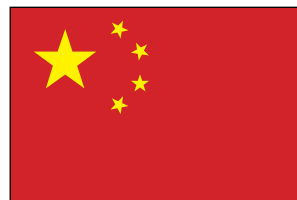
1. What values do you find in these preambles?
2. What do these constitutions tell you about the countries' pasts and their goals for the future?
3. What do these constitutions tell you about these countries' systems of government and ideology?

**The Russian Federation**

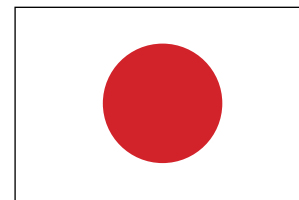
...We, the multinational people of the Russian Federation, united by a common destiny on our land ... preserving the historic unity of the state and self-determination of the peoples respecting the memory of our ancestors...

**Indonesia**

...to improve public welfare, to educate the life of the people and to participate toward the establishment of a world order based on freedom, perpetual peace and social justice...

**China**

...The People's Republic of China is a unitary multinational state built up jointly by the people of all its nationalities. Socialist relations of equality, unity and mutual assistance have been established among them...

**Japan**

...We, the Japanese people, will work for the fruits of peaceful cooperation with all nations and the blessings of liberty, and are committed that never again shall we be faced with the horrors of war through the action of government...

Vietnam

...carrying into effect the Program of National Construction in the period of transition to socialism, the Vietnamese people vow to fully preserve the tradition of patriotism, unite millions as one, uphold the spirit of self-reliance and self-improvement in the building of the country...

**Nepal**

...Pledging to accomplish the **progressive** restructuring of the State in order to solve the problems existing in the country relating to class, ethnicity, region and gender...

**Thailand**

...The major objectives of the new draft Constitution are to further promote and protect people's right and liberty, encourage people's roles and participation in the administration of the country, concretely check and cross-examine the use of the state power...

**East Timor**

...to fight all forms of tyranny, oppression, social, cultural or religious domination and **segregation**, to defend national independence, to respect and guarantee human rights and the fundamental rights of the citizen...



Preview...

1. What do you think "fundamental rights" means?
2. Which rights are fundamental?

Activity

6.1.4 FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

A. WHAT ARE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS?

Fundamental rights are usually defined as rights that cannot, under the majority of circumstances, be taken from a citizen. These rights are often listed in a country's constitution to protect citizens from rights abuses.

Constitutions establish the relationship between the state and the individual. They outline the responsibilities of individuals to the state, but they also make clear rules about which areas the government does not have the authority to interfere in. Constitutions often protect "basic rights" such as freedom of expression, freedom of religious worship, freedom of assembly and freedom of movement.

1. Look at the list of fundamental rights on page 14 and the combined values pyramid in 6.1.3.
2. For each of the values in the pyramid, choose two fundamental rights that are related to that value.
3. List these on sheets of paper and hang them on the wall next to your values pyramid.
4. What do you notice about the rights that you chose?

A. FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

Many constitutions have sections on fundamental rights but the kinds of rights that they protect (or don't protect) can be very different. For example, almost all liberal democracies protect the rights of free speech and association. More socialist countries such as Sweden protect labour laws and the right to social security.

In Germany, the democratic constitution makes "anti-democratic" activity illegal. This means that the state can ban political parties that it sees as being "against" democracy. In a similar way, the South African Constitution limits freedom of expression by banning the "advocacy of hatred that is based on race, ethnicity, gender, or religion, that could lead to violence."

B. EMERGENCY POWERS

In times of national crises, it is usually the responsibility of the executive to provide leadership. It is therefore common for constitutions to give the right to "emergency powers" when confronted by crises such as war, natural disasters, terrorist threats and civil disorder. Emergency powers usually mean that all decision making power goes to the executive and that fundamental rights are temporarily limited or cancelled. Supporters of emergency powers say they are necessary to maintain stability and make decisions quickly in times of national crisis. However, the power to declare a "state of emergency" and to impose executive rule has often been abused by governments who want to increase their power.

Discussion

After you read 6.1.4.B:

1. Do you agree with the part of the German Constitution that bans "anti-democratic" parties? Why or why not?
2. Do you agree with the part of the South African Constitution that bans "the advocacy of hatred ... that could lead to violence"? Why or why not?

C. EXAMPLES OF EMERGENCY POWERS IN USE

1. **GERMANY:** Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933 by misusing emergency powers to give all government power to the executive. Once in power, Hitler made so many authoritarian reforms that the Constitution (and all the citizens' rights that it protected) was cancelled.

After this experience, the current German constitution has been designed to be "Hitler-proof". It guarantees that no act of the executive, legislative or judicial branch of government can change or cancel the 19 basic civil rights and liberties written in the constitution. It also guarantees the federal, democratic and welfare state features of the political system so that a dictatorship can never happen again.

2. **INDIA:** President Indira Gandhi used emergency powers from 1975 to 1977. During the 1970s, Gandhi's party was becoming less and less popular. Riots and strikes spread throughout India, and the President faced decreasing support, accusations of corruption, and calls to step down. Gandhi suspended the Constitution by declaring emergency rule. Gandhi limited civil liberties, censored the press, banned opposition parties, and jailed over 100,000 political opponents.

Discussion

After you read 6.1.4.C and D:

1. Do you think that a "Hitler-proof" constitution would work in every country? Why or why not?
2. Do you think that the dangers of emergency powers are greater than the advantages? Why or Why not?



Focus on Myanmar

Article 354 of the Myanmar Constitution

Article 354

Every citizen shall be at liberty in the exercise of the following rights, if not contrary to the laws, enacted for Union security, prevalence of law and order, community peace and tranquillity or public order and morality:

- a. to express and publish freely their convictions and opinions;
- b. to assemble peacefully without arms and holding procession;
- c. to form associations and organisations;
- d. to develop their language, literature, culture they cherish, religion they profess, and customs without prejudice to the relations between one national race and another or among national races and to other faiths.



1. Can you think of any situations where it would be necessary to limit Article 354 (a)?
2. Can you think of any situations where it would be necessary to limit Article 354 (b and c)?
3. Can you think of any situations where it would be necessary to limit Article 354 (d)?

Discussion

Preview...

What do constitutions tell us about the way government is organised?

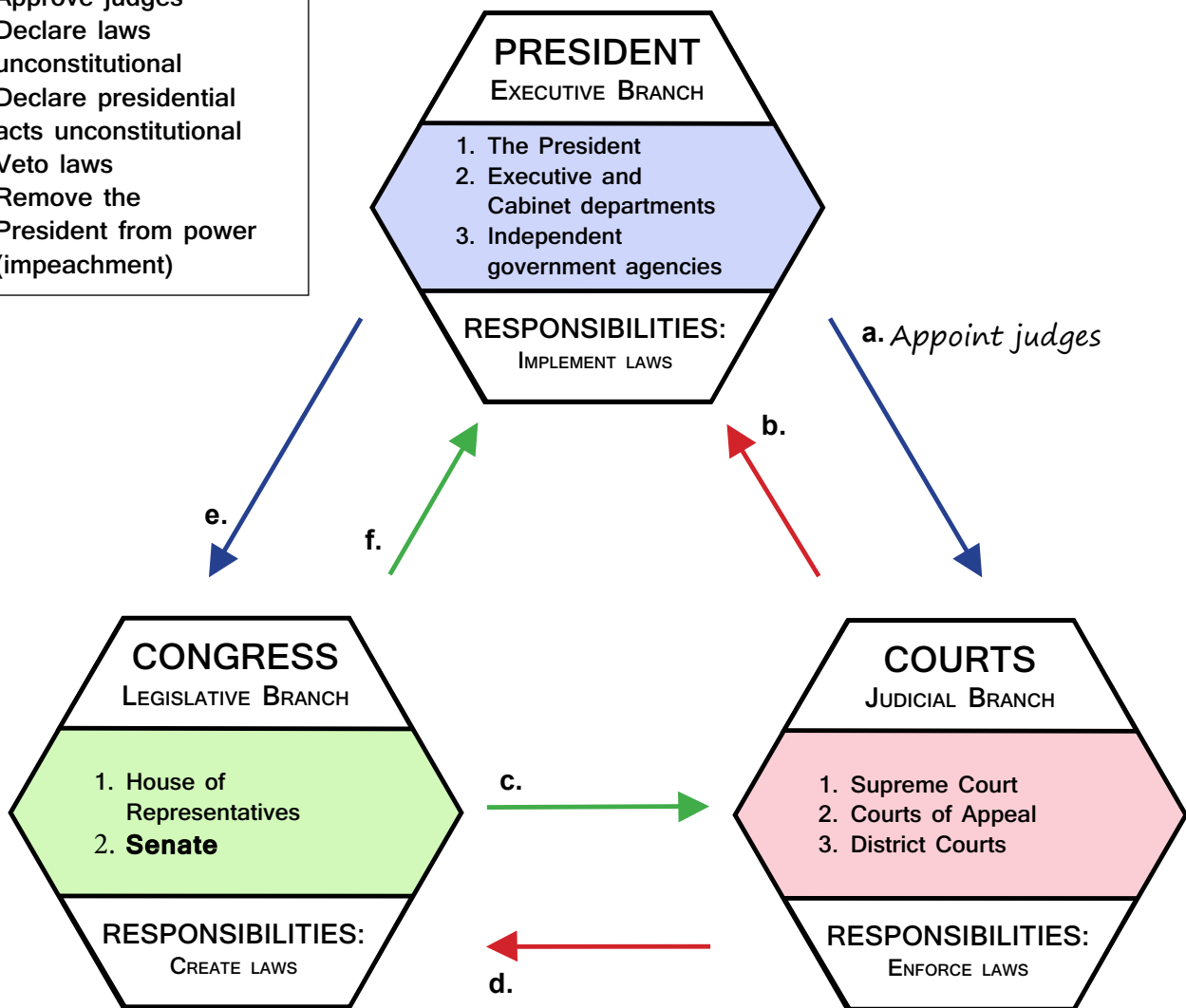
6.1.5 INSTITUTIONS AND OFFICES OF GOVERNMENT

A constitution is an agreement on the rules of the relationship between the government and the people. It makes clear rules about which institutions have the power to make which decisions. This is very important in a democracy because different parts of government need to be free from the power of other parts. By separating powers and responsibilities amongst the various institutions of government, constitutions act as an "organisational chart" for the government.

Activity

1. ~~Appoint judges~~
2. Approve judges
3. Declare laws unconstitutional
4. Declare presidential acts unconstitutional
5. Veto laws
6. Remove the President from power (impeachment)

Look at the diagram that outlines the system of checks and balances in the US Constitution and use what you have learned so far to match the powers (1-6) with the arrows that represent the checks and balances (a-f) on the different institutions of government.



6.1.6 AMENDING CONSTITUTIONS

Constitutions provide the basic or "higher law" which all other laws must follow. Because they are the foundation for all other laws in the country, constitutions are very difficult to change. However, because political and social situations change, there does need to be some legitimate way of changing the constitution if necessary. Finding a balance between changeability and stability is one of the biggest problems when writing a constitution.

A. HOW DO YOU AMEND A CONSTITUTION?

A common way of changing a constitution is by a process called amendment (adding to or taking something away from it). The rules about amending a constitution are usually written in the constitution itself. This usually involves a large majority (e.g. over 75%, rather than over 50%) agreeing to the change. Constitutional changes are very rare and generally only happen when there is a serious social or political issue that people want their representatives to deal with.

What kinds of social or political issues do you think might be important enough to change the constitution in your country?

B. WHAT IS A REFERENDUM?

A common method that is used to decide on constitutional changes is a "referendum".

A referendum is a nationwide vote on a specific issue. Referenda are different to other examples of voting (such as elections for candidates or political parties), since they are an example of direct (rather than representative) democracy. In a referendum, every citizen has the right to directly participate in the decision being debated. The results of the referendum will directly affect the outcome of the decision (e.g. if the majority of voters want to amend the constitution, then that amendment will be approved).

Supporters of referenda argue that they increase democratic legitimacy. They claim that including the public in major political decisions promotes participation and transparency. However, critics argue that leaving such important decisions to an uninformed public can be dangerous. Another disadvantage of referenda is that if they are not carried out in a free and fair way, then the results can easily be manipulated.

What are your views about referenda? Do you think they would be a good way to make major political decisions in your country? Why?

Preview...

1. Can a constitution be changed?
2. Why might people want to change a constitution?

Discussion



▲ Constitutional referendum campaign posters in Dublin, Ireland.

Discussion



Focus on Myanmar

How Easy Is It to Change the 2008 Constitution?

It is difficult to change or amend the 2008 Constitution. A three quarters majority (over 75%) of the Union Assembly has to approve an amendment for it to become part of the Constitution. Amendments to some important parts of the Constitution also require a referendum. These include rules about military appointed Members of Parliament, rules about who can be President and rules about declaring a state of emergency. In these cases, at least 50 per cent of voters must vote for an amendment for it to be accepted.

In July 2013 the 109-member Myanmar Constitution Review Joint **Committee** was formed. The Committee members include members of both houses of parliament, and political parties, military Members of Parliament and other individuals. The Committee claimed claims that it has three objectives, laid down by the parliament:

1. Developing a constitution that guarantees ongoing security and development of the country;
2. Building peace through national **reconciliation**;
3. Continuing the process of democratisation.

Discussion

1. What amendments would you suggest to guarantee the ongoing security and development of your country? Why?
2. What amendments would you suggest to build peace through national reconciliation? Why?
3. What amendments would you suggest to help the process of **democratic transition**? Why?
4. Which other amendments would you suggest to the constitution? Why?



The first ten amendments to the US Constitution are known as the Bill of Rights. ■

6.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSTITUTIONS

Preview...

From what you read in 6.1, why do you think a constitution might be important for a country?

6.2.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSTITUTIONS

A. CONSTITUTIONS CAN INCREASE DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY

A constitution can build legitimacy by establishing principles like checks and balances, accountability and the rule of law into a system of basic laws. If the people know that there are strict rules and limits on government power, this can increase their trust and make them more willing to obey the government.

A constitution with strong laws about who can have power and how they can use their power helps to limit corruption. It can also prevent one institution from getting too much political power. In order to achieve these goals democratic constitutions usually include the following features:

- separation of powers among the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government
- separation of powers among central and regional governments
- institutions that promote political participation (such as elections)
- rules, laws and institutions that promote transparency, accountability and the rule of law in government
- rules, laws and institutions that promote accountability and give citizens the opportunity to remove governments from power if they lose their legitimacy

B. CONSTITUTIONS CAN INCREASE STABILITY

Constitutions can also make states more stable because they often include systems for avoiding and resolving conflict. This means that reliable and tested systems will be in place to deal with crises or conflicts when they emerge. These conflicts can either be between different institutions (resolved by a constitutional court) or between different social groups (resolved by a bill of rights). In both cases, having basic laws that people can rely on is an important tool to promote peace and stability.

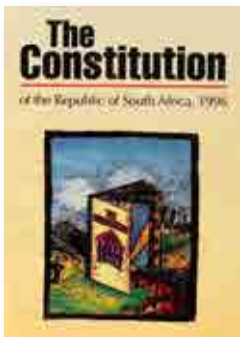


▲ Egyptian women waiting to vote on a new constitution in January 2014.

Activity

Read the preamble of South Africa's constitution and answer the questions. See 1.3 and 4.3 for more information on South Africa.

1. What does it tell you about the past experiences of South African people?
2. What does it tell you about their hopes for the future?



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

PREAMBLE

“We, the people of South Africa, Recognise the injustices of our past; Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land; Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity. We therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to — Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights; Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law; Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.”

Preview...

What are "majority rule" and "minority rights"?

6.2.2 MAJORITY RULE AND MINORITY RIGHTS

Majority rule and minority rights are very important ideas in modern constitutional government. These ideas are important because they allow governments to be as democratic as possible, without abusing the basic rights of its citizens.

The South African example is a good way to understand the importance of constitutions in diverse societies. When it was written, the oppressor and the oppressed in this new democracy were planning to live together as equals. It was not going to be easy for them to trust each other. They both had their own fears and they wanted to keep their interests (economic and political rights) safe.

The black majority wanted to make sure that the democratic principle of majority rule was enforced. The white minority wanted to protect its property and minority rights. This compromise was not easy. They both asked themselves difficult questions such as:

- How was this compromise going to be made into laws that people really followed?
- How could they be sure that the trust would not be broken in the future?

Read the quote from the Myanmar Constitution and answer the questions.

“The abuse of religion for political purposes is forbidden. Moreover, any act which is intended or is likely to promote feelings of hatred, enmity or discord between racial or religious communities or sects is contrary to this Constitution.”

1. How does this clause relate to majority rule and minority rights in Myanmar?
2. Do you think that this clause is being successfully enforced? Why or why not?

Activity



▲ One of several "Myanmar Constitution" smart phone apps.

6.2.3 MAJORITY RULE

To effectively manage the state, governments need practical methods for making decisions. If the agreement of every citizen in a country was needed for decisions to be made, almost no decision could be made and the government could not function. This means that some requirement (that is less than 100% agreement) must be chosen as the minimum standard for decision making.

Representation makes decision-making processes more efficient. When citizens choose people to represent them in public institutions (like parliaments), this reduces the number of decision makers to a more manageable number.

However, in order to function effectively, representative democracies need to have rules on what percentage of votes is necessary for a law to be accepted. Since in a democracy all citizens have the right to vote, some version of the majority principle (more than 50%) is often the most practical way for governments to make decisions. Majority rule means that a decision is accepted if more than 50% of the decision makers vote in favour of that decision.



◀ Myanmar politicians debating bills in the old Pyithu Hluttaw, in Yangon, in the 1950s.

Preview...

Why is majority rule important in politics?

Reflection

After you read 6.2.3:

Look at the decision making process you chose in 6.1.1.

1. Is it based on majority rule or some other system?
2. What were your reasons for choosing this system?

Preview...

Why are minority rights important in politics?

6.2.4 MINORITY RIGHTS

However, majority rule also has problems. For example, if there is a rule that more than half of the votes are needed to accept a decision and 51% of the voters vote "yes", then 49% (almost half of the people) will not be happy with the result. "Minority rights" make sure that even if the majority of a state wants to do something that would violate the rights of a minority, they will not be allowed to.

Minority rights make sure that the majority cannot make decisions that:

- cannot be changed in future (e.g. establishing a dictatorship)
- deny minorities the right to take part in the decision-making process
- lead to discrimination or human rights abuses against minority groups.

Reflection

Look at the decision making process again.

1. Is it designed to include or marginalise people whose opinions are in the minority?
2. What could you change to make sure that minority rights are respected?

Activity

Read the scenario and write a set of rules that address the following issues:

1. How should the funds be distributed between the groups?
2. Who should decide how the funds will be distributed?
3. How should decisions be made?
4. Should the groups be given rights of autonomy (i.e. the right to form their own group)?
5. What rules are necessary to protect the rights and interests of the majority and the minority?



The Sports Club



In the Central Sports Club, 75% of members are football players and 25% are chinlone players. Football and chinlone teams participate in competitions, and new members join the teams each year. Each member pays 20,000 kyat per year to the club.

Once a year, the club has a budget meeting. All members decide by majority vote how to spend the club's money.

The football players want to buy uniforms, new equipment and to improve the club's football pitch. The chinlone players also need uniforms, equipment, and to improve the club's chinlone courts.

Every year, the chinlone group loses the vote, so all the money goes to the football players. Now the chinlone players are getting angry. Their money is being spent on football and they get nothing. They feel that the system is unfair, and some chinlone players are talking about splitting off to form a separate chinlone club.

Most footballers don't understand these concerns. They say that majority rule is democratic. However, some of the football players feel that this not fair. They argue that if the chinlone players' needs are not considered, then it is not a real democracy.

1. In the previous activity, what obstacles did you face in creating the rules?
2. How did you overcome them?
3. Do you think the rules you all agreed on are fair? Why?
4. In what ways does this activity relate to politics in your country?

Reflection

6.2.5 ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

Electoral systems are the rules about how elections happen, which are usually outlined in a country's constitution. There are many different kinds of electoral systems, and the kind of system that a country chooses can be a very serious political issue. One reason for this is that the electoral system has a very big influence on the way that party politics works in a country.

In a representative democracy, or in any government system with elected representatives, the country is divided into areas called constituencies. Each constituency elects someone to represent it. Elections can be *single-member* or *multi-member*. A single-member election means each constituency chooses one representative only. Multi-member elections are when two or more representatives are chosen for each constituency.

Some of the most important questions that are related to electoral systems are:

- Do voters vote for a single candidate or for a whole party in the election?
- What kind of constituencies is the country divided into?
- How many candidates will be elected in each constituency?
- What percentage of support does a candidate need to win an election?

Depending on how an electoral system is organised, there will be different answers to each of these questions. Although there are many kinds of electoral system we can identify two main categories: proportional representation (PR) and single member districts (SMD).



▲ A woman voting in the Myanmar by-election in April 2012.

Preview...

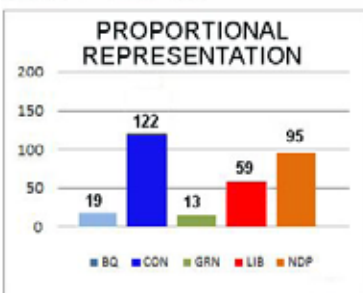
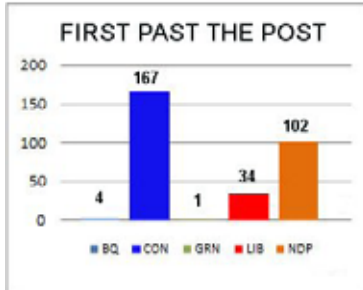
What do you know about your country's electoral system?

A. SINGLE-MEMBER DISTRICT (SMD)

The single member district system (sometimes called “first past the post”) is used in the United Kingdom and many of its former colonies, such as the United States, India and Myanmar. In this system, there is only one legislative “seat” per constituency. This means that the candidate with the largest number of votes will be chosen to join the legislature. To win, the candidate does not need to have a majority of the votes (i.e. more than 50%), but they only need to have a plurality (more votes than any other candidate).

Because there is only one seat per constituency, this means that all the votes for the unsuccessful candidates were “wasted” because they did not win. A result of this is that voters can feel that if they vote for a candidate who probably won't win, then there is no point in trying. This is one of the reasons why SMD systems lead to a kind of politics where there are only a few (very powerful) parties. For example, a communist might not vote for the communist party if they are so unpopular that there is very little chance they will win. Instead, the communist might vote for a liberal party so that they will have a better chance of beating the conservative party (whom the communist thinks are even worse).

The party that wins the majority of seats in an election will then control the legislature. This leads to political systems like the US and the UK, where two large parties that have similar ideologies and a lot of popular support are able to dominate politics.



Alison

▲ A diagram showing how the two different voting systems can strongly affect the outcome of an election.



Focus on Myanmar

Myanmar's Electoral System

Myanmar uses a "first past the post" (a kind of SMD) electoral system. This follows the British system, since Myanmar was a British colony.

Myanmar's current electoral system tends to favour mainstream and established political parties such as USDP or NLD. This is because in a SMD (sometimes called “winner-take-all”) system, the party with the most votes wins the seat, and all other parties get nothing.

This means that ethnic parties – which are usually smaller and have less funding and resources — do not win many seats even if they get a high percentage of the votes. For example, an ethnic party in Rakhine or Shan State could receive a large amount of votes but still win no seats if they get fewer votes than the winner.

As a result, ethnic parties are less likely to have any representation in Parliament even though they have a lot of support in some parts of the country. Currently only about 10% of the total national parliamentary seats belong to ethnic-based parties even though ethnic groups represent almost 40% of Myanmar's population.

Recently, an alliance of smaller opposition parties has been lobbying the Election Commission and the President to change the electoral system. It presented a proposal to Parliament suggesting that the country should change to a PR system.

B. PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION (PR)

The proportional representation (PR) electoral system is often found in newer democracies. It tries to reduce the amount of "wasted" votes as much as possible by giving out legislative seats based directly on the percentage of votes that party gets. For example, if a party gets 23% of the votes in an election, then they will get 23% of the seats in the legislature. An important result of this system is that there are more smaller parties in the legislature. This means that compromise is more important in countries that have PR electoral systems.

In contrast to SMD, PR systems are based on multimember districts (MMDs), where there is more than one seat for each constituency. Voters do not vote for one candidate in their constituency, but instead they vote for a party. Parties choose which of their members will take the seats for a constituency, based on the percentage of the votes they get.

Another effect of the PR system is that smaller parties have more of a chance to be represented in government. This often leads to more ideological diversity in their legislatures. This means parties need to cooperate and compromise if they want to pass legislation or form governments. In PR systems, one powerful party can be replaced by a **coalition** of many, less powerful parties to form a government. This makes coalition governments much more common in PR systems. However, because PR systems make it easier for smaller parties to join the legislature, there is often more ideological diversity in government. This can lead to conflict and even **deadlock**.

Exercise

After you read 6.2.5:

1. Which of these two systems is based more on the idea of majority rule? Why?
2. Which of these two systems is based more on the idea of minority rights?

Discussion

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems?
2. Which of these two systems would be better for your country?

Constitutional Consultants

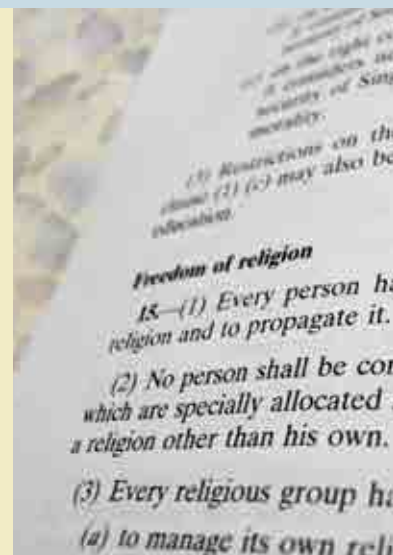
1. Read the scenario and answer the questions.
2. Make a presentation to the class that explains the reasons for your decisions.

Scenario

You are consultants hired to advise on the creation of a constitution for your country. You must write a report with recommendations for the government. In your recommendations, answer the following questions:

- a. What kind of separation of powers should there be?
- b. Who should have more power, the executive or the legislature?
- c. Should it be a federal or unitary system?
- d. Should the constitution include a bill of rights?
- e. What kind of majority rule would there be?
- f. What kind of minority rights would you include?
- g. What kind of electoral system should there be?

Activity



6.3 CHAPTER 6 CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY



Exercise

1. What does this extract tell you about minority religious rights in Sri Lanka?
2. What does this extract tell you about minority language rights in Sri Lanka?

Extracts from 1972 Sri Lankan Constitution

Chapter II – Buddhism

6. The Republic of Sri Lanka shall give to Buddhism the highest place and it shall be the duty of the State to protect and promote Buddhism while assuring to all religions the rights granted by section 18 (1) (d)

Chapter III – Language

Official Language

7. The Official Language of Sri Lanka shall be Sinhala.
9. (1) All laws shall be enacted or made in Sinhala.
(2) There shall be a Tamil translation of every law so enacted or made.
10. (1) All written laws shall be published in ... Sinhala and in Tamil translation as quickly as possible.

Language of the Courts

11. (1) The language of the courts ... shall be Sinhala throughout Sri Lanka and accordingly their records ... shall be in Sinhala.

CASE STUDY



Exercise

1. What does this extract tell you about the conflict between individual property rights and the right to be compensated for past discrimination?
2. What does this extract tell you about minority rights in South Africa?

Extracts from the South African Constitution

9. Equality

1. Everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection of the law.
2. To promote equality, legal and other measures may be taken by the government.
3. The state may not unfairly discriminate against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.
4. Discrimination on one or more of the grounds listed in subsection (3) is unfair unless it is established that the discrimination is fair.

25. Property

1. A person or community who lost their property after 19 June 1913 because of past racially discriminatory laws or practices has the right to get that property back or to be given an amount of money that is worth the same as the property.

Extracts from the Malaysian Constitution**Article 45**

(1) The Senate [the upper house] shall consist of elected and appointed members as follows:

(a) Two members for each State shall be elected; [note: there are 13 states = 26 members in total]

and

(aa) two members for the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur and one member for the Federal Territory of Labuan shall be appointed by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong [the head of state];

and

(b) forty members shall be appointed by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong.

Article 153

(1) It shall be the responsibility of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong to protect the special position of the Malays [the largest ethnic group in Malaysia].

(2) The Yang di-Pertuan Agong shall exercise his authority under this Constitution and federal law to protect the special position of the Malays ... and to ensure the reservation for Malays ... of positions in the public service and of scholarships, exhibitions and other similar educational or training privileges.

CASE STUDY**Exercise**

1. What conflict do you see between the role of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong as protecting the special position of Malays and his role in choosing the members of the upper house?
2. What does this extract tell you about minority rights in Malaysia?

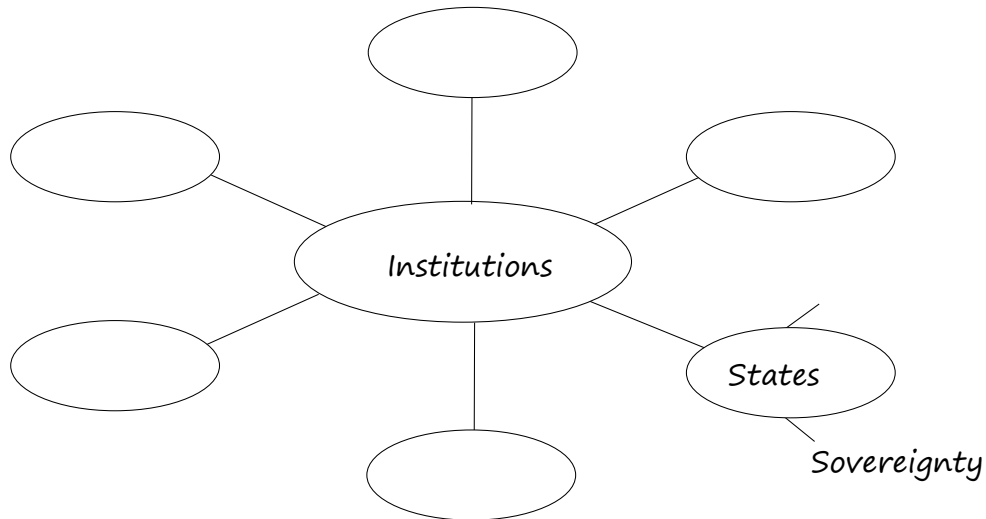
Compare the issues raised in the case studies with the situation in your country. What similarities can you identify?

Discussion

Unit 2 Review

Unit 2 Mind Map

Complete the mind map with important ideas you have learned in Unit 2.



Comprehension

1. What are some of the important features of a state?
2. What is the difference between a nation and an ethnic group?
3. What is the difference between ethnic and civic identity?
4. What is ethno-nationalism?
5. What is civic nationalism?
6. What is the difference between a policy and a law?
7. What does “checks and balances” mean?
8. What is a constitutional court?
9. What is decentralisation?
10. What is the difference between a federal and a unitary state?
11. What is a constitution?
12. What are emergency powers?
13. Why are minority rights important in a democracy?
14. What is a single member district electoral system?
15. What is a proportional representation electoral system?

Unit 2 Glossary

advocacy (n) – ထောက်ခံပြောဆိုခြင်း	democratic transition (n) – ဒီမိုကရေစီအသွင်ကူးပြောင်းမှု	personnel (n) – အမှုထမ်း
amend (v) – ပြင်ဆင်သည်	diplomacy (n) – သံတမန်ဆက်ဆံရေး	pluralism (n) – မူမတူယှဉ်တွဲမှု
appeal (v) – အယူခင်သည်	family planning (n) – သားဆက်ခြားခြင်း	power sharing (n) – အာဏာမျှဝေမှု
appoint (v) – ရွေးချယ်ခန့်ထားသည်	foreign policy (n) – နိုင်ငံခြားရေးရာမူဝါဒ	progressive (adj) – ဆင့်ကဲတိုးတက်သော
article (n) – (ဖွဲ့စည်းပုံအခြေခံဥပဒေပါ) စာပိုဒ်	genocide (n) – လူမျိုးသုဉ်းသတ်ဖြတ်မှု	reconciliation (n) – ပြန်လည်သင့်မြတ်ခြင်း
attorney general (n) – ရှေ့နေချုပ်	home affairs (n) – ပြည်ထဲရေး	republic (n) – ပြည်သူ့သမ္မတနိုင်ငံ
bill (n) – မူကြမ်း	imperialism (n) – နယ်ချဲ့ဝါဒ	revenue (n) – ဘဏ္ဍာရေး
boycott (v) – သပိတ်မှောက်ခြင်း	integration (n) – ပေါင်းစည်းခြင်း	secessionist (adj) – ခွဲထွက်ရေး
cabinet (n) – အစိုးရအဖွဲ့	invest (v) – ရင်းနှီးမြှုပ်နှံသည်	segregation (n) – ခွဲခြားမှု
care facilities (n) – စောင့်ရှောက်ရေးအထောက်အပံ့များ	judicial review (n) – တရားစီရင်ရေးဆိုင်ရာဆန်းစစ်မှု	self-determination (n) – ကိုယ်ပိုင်ဆုံးဖြတ်ချက်ချခြင်း၊
census (n) – သန်းခေါင်စာရင်း	mobilise (v) – စုရုံးသည်	senate (n) – အထက်လွှတ်တော်
checks and balances (n) – အပြန်အလှန်ထိန်းကျောင်းမှု	monarchy (n) – ဘုရင့်စနစ်	separation of powers (n) – အာဏာခွဲဝေမှု
chief justice (n) – တရားသူကြီးချုပ်	monopoly (n) – တစ်ဦးတည်းချုပ်ကိုင်ထားမှု	social security (n) – လူမှုလုံခြုံရေး
coalition (n) – ညွှန်ပေါင်း	nation-building (n) – တိုင်းပြည်တည်ဆောက်ရေး	state of emergency (n) – အရေးပေါ်အခြေအနေ
commander-in-chief (n) – ကာကွယ်ရေးဦးစီးချုပ်	nominee (n) – အမည်စာရင်းတင်သွင်းခံရသူ	territory (n) – နယ်မြေပိုင်နက်
committee (n) – ကော်မတီ	perpetuation (n) – တည်မြဲစေခြင်း	treaty (n) – သဘောတူစာချုပ်
constituent (n) – မဲဆန္ဒနယ်		veto (v) – ဗီတိုအာဏာကျင့်သုံးသည်
coup (n) – အာဏာသိမ်းခြင်း		xenophobia (n) – ပြည်ပသူစိမ်းများအားကြောက်ရွံ့မှုနီးတီးခြင်း
deadlock (n) – မတိုးတာမဆုတ်သာအခြေအနေ		



Unit 3: Actors

Unit Themes

- Unit 3 looks at the individuals and groups that are engaged in politics.
- It focuses on the media, civil society organisations and political parties.
- It examines the relationships they have with political institutions and with each other.
- It analyses political behaviour by looking at the goals, values and ideas that guide political actors.



Unit 3: Learning Goals

Knowledge

[Exercises]

In this chapter you will increase your understanding of:

- public opinion
- freedom of the press and censorship
- state-controlled and private media
- media management and “spin”
- civil society
- CBOs, NGOs and social movements
- CSO strategies
- political parties
- party systems

Skills

[Activities]

In this chapter you will develop your ability to:

- create an opinion poll questionnaire
- analyse the content of newspapers
- design a CSO project
- assign roles, create agenda and conduct meetings
- draft and present a manifesto
- use an ideology diagram
- identify strategies to increase support for a mock political party

Values

[Reflections]

In this chapter you will reflect on:

- your views on state-controlled and private media
- the sources of CSO power/influence
- your views on using strikes to achieve political goals
- the relationship between resources and strategies for CSOs
- the challenges of forming and running a mock political party

CHAPTER 7: THE MEDIA

Preview...

1. What do you think "public opinion" is?
2. Why do you think it is important for politicians?

Exercise

After you read 7.1.1:

1. What is an "opinion poll"?
2. Why might politicians find them useful?

Activity

1. Look at the *timeline*. In which events did public opinion affect government decisions?
2. In which events did government decisions affect public opinion?

7.1 THE MEDIA AND POLITICS

7.1.1 PUBLIC OPINION

When people talk about public opinion in politics, it has a more specific meaning than just the "opinion of the people". It refers to the way that the opinion of the people affects the way government acts. Public opinion can refer to the way most people feel about a single issue or event, a policy, or the government in general.

There are many ways of measuring public opinion, including:

- **polls** (i.e. when questionnaires are used to see how people feel about an issue)
- focus groups (where political organisations speak to a small group of people to see how they feel about an issue)
- elections (the number of people who vote for a party or politician shows how popular they are)
- demonstrations (if many people demonstrate for or against an issue, it shows that those people have very strong feeling about that issue).



▲ People in New York taking part in a peace demonstration.

Opinion Polling

Activity

1. In groups, write a questionnaire like the one on page 53.
 - These questionnaires should try and measure how your classmates feel about one of the issues discussed in this book.
 - It is important that every “yes” answer is linked to one side of an argument and every “no” answer is linked to the opposite side of the argument. See below for examples.

a. More socialist or more liberal. (Yes = socialist, no = liberal.) For example:

- Do you think the state should provide free healthcare to everyone?
- Do you think that high taxes are necessary for social justice?
- Is equality more important than liberty?

b. More in support of a nation-state or a state-nation. (Yes = nation-state, no = state-nation. For example:

- Do you think that unity is more important than diversity?
- Do you think that foreigners should have to adapt to the national culture?
- Do you think it would be dangerous if anyone could become a citizen of your country?

c. More in favour of a federal (decentralised) or a unitary (centralised) state. (Yes = federal, no = unitary.) For example:

- Do you think that local schools should be allowed to teach in the local languages?
- Do you think that local government is the best actor to solve local problems?
- Do you think that federalism reduces conflict?

2. Ask your questions to all class members. Count and analyse the answers.
3. Present the results of your poll to the class.

1. What did you learn about the political culture of your class?
2. Where do you think these beliefs come from?
3. What affects your political beliefs or opinions?

Discussion

Preview...

7.1.2 ADVANTAGES AND DANGERS OF PUBLIC OPINION

1. What are some advantages of basing political decisions on public opinion?
2. What are some dangers of basing political decisions on public opinion?

There is nothing controversial about the idea that people have opinions about certain political issues. However, because public opinion influences government actions, it can be controversial.

Democratic governments rely on public opinion to make sure that the policies they make will be popular (so that they can stay in power). In extreme cases, this can lead to laws and policies that abuse people's rights, destroy the environment or create other social problems.

Activity

Below are some of the advantages and dangers of the influence of public opinion on politics. Put them in the table.

Advantages	Dangers

1. Measuring public opinion helps the government to know the concerns of the people. This helps them to make policies that address these concerns.
2. There are many ways of measuring public opinion that can be inaccurate or biased (e.g. if questionnaires are only written in the majority language).
3. Measuring public opinion can inform the government about how popular their actions are, so that they have the chance to change if they want to stay in power.
4. People might not understand all the difficulties that governments face when dealing with a social issue.
5. Measuring public opinion is a way that governments can make difficult decisions about different policy options.
6. Most people may be uninformed about issues but still have very strong opinions about them.
7. Public opinion can change very easily. It may not be the best thing to base long-term policy decisions on.
8. Public opinion can be manipulated through propaganda and censorship.
9. Not all the public have the ability to understand complicated issues.

Discussion

How much do you think governments should think about public opinion when they make decisions? Why?

7.1.3 THE MASS MEDIA

The mass media (newspapers, television, radio, and the internet) plays a very important role in politics. Citizens get most of their information about the government from the mass media. The information that media organisations provide can support or oppose a policy or party. This gives the media a lot of power to influence public opinion.

The media can expose corruption and bad performance in the government. This way, the media promotes transparency and accountability. In a democracy, a government can lose an election (and its power) if information in the media makes the government unpopular.

For these reasons, the media is sometimes called the "fourth branch" of government after the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. Of course, the difference between the media and the other three branches is that there are much fewer checks and balances on a free media.

Preview...

What kinds of media do you use?

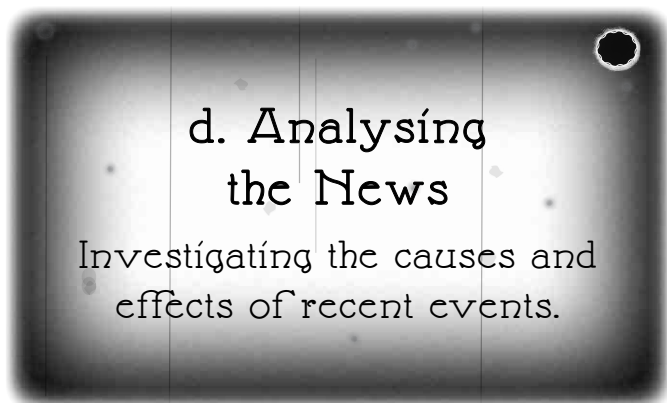


- ▲ Traditional print media is probably still the easiest way for most Myanmar people to read the news. However, the internet and social media are now very important for both individuals and media companies.

Preview...

7.1.4 THE MAIN ROLES OF THE MASS MEDIA

What does the mass media do?



Activity

1. Rank these according to what you think are most important.
2. Rank these according to what you think the average newspaper reader would think is most important.
3. Rank these according to what a newspaper would think is most important.

Discussion

Did you notice any differences in the different rankings? How can you explain these differences?

7.1.5 THE IMPORTANCE OF A FREE MEDIA

A free media is very important in democratic politics. Some of the most important functions of a free press include:

1. **PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY:** An important role of the media is to closely watch political institutions to make sure they are keeping their promises and not breaking the law.
2. **INFORMING THE PEOPLE DURING ELECTIONS:** The media gives people the chance to learn more about the candidates and parties participating in an election.
3. **INFORMING THE GOVERNMENT:** The media can inform the government about the opinions, needs and concerns of the people. This can help them to make policies that effectively address those needs and concerns.

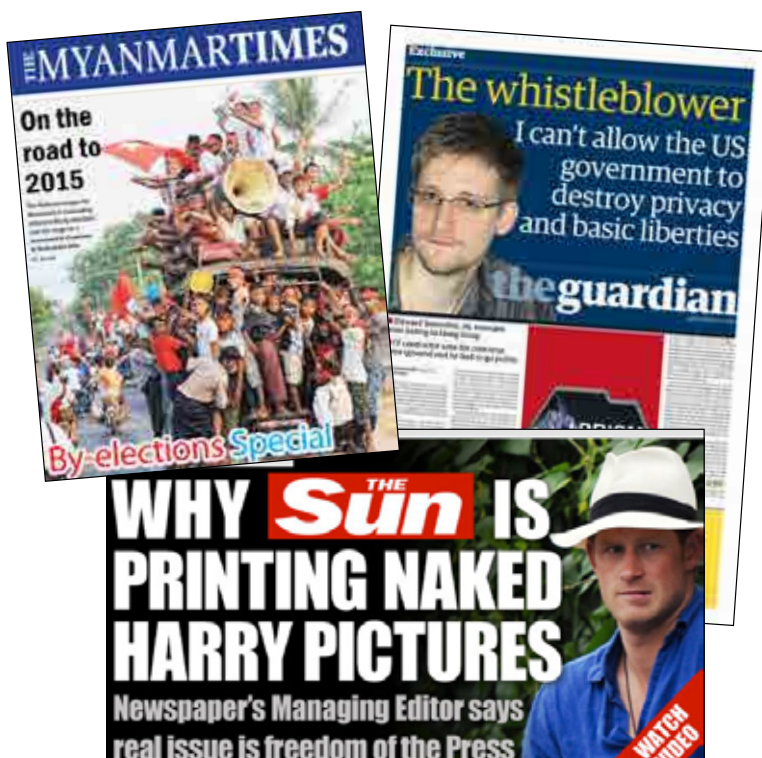
These roles give the media a lot of power. This power allows media organisations to act as checks and balances on government power. However, it also means that citizens need to be very careful with the information they receive.

Preview...

Why is freedom of the press important?

1. In what way does the media help to promote transparency in your country? Give examples.
2. What are the most important things that the media informs people about during elections?
3. What are the most important things that governments can learn about public opinion by looking at the media?

Discussion



- ◀ **Free press?** Clockwise from top left: The Myanmar Times reported on the 2012 by-election; British newspaper The Guardian published top secret information about the British and American governments in 2013. They argued that it is important to print the material when the British government tried to stop them; British newspaper The Sun argued that freedom of the press gives them the right to print naked pictures of Prince Harry.

Preview...

What is required for freedom of the press?

Exercise

After you read 7.1.6:

What are some of the threats to freedom of the press?

Discussion

In what ways does freedom of the press support democracy?

Preview...

Should governments ever be allowed to control information in the media? Why or why not?

7.1.6 FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

To successfully carry out these roles in society, it is important that the media is free from government control. If journalists are not free to write what they want, the information presented will not help the government and the people understand each other. If the government **censors** the news, then the media loses its ability to promote transparency. Some important requirements for a free media are:

- **PLURALISM IN THE MEDIA:** If the majority of the media is owned by the government (or businesses who are controlled by the government), this limits the availability of different or critical opinions. Minority or opposition groups will have less opportunity to express their views in the media. This can lead to conflict and miscommunication between the government and the people.
- **THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT CONTROL OR THREATEN THE MEDIA:** There must be strict laws that prevent the government from bribing or threatening journalists. Unless these laws exist (and are followed), journalists who discover corruption or ineffectiveness in government can be influenced to keep quiet.
- **CITIZENS NEED TO BE CRITICAL OF THE MEDIA:** People need to know which interests a newspaper, website, radio or TV station is promoting. Citizens should be exposed to many different kinds of media so they can get a full and balanced picture of political issues before they make a decision.

7.1.7 CENSORSHIP

Many governments try to influence public opinion by controlling the media and access to information. They often do this to increase their popularity or to reduce support for opposition groups. Censorship limits people's access to information about the state of the economy, political developments and other important issues. A highly controlled media can rob people of social awareness and balanced analysis.

Authoritarian regimes often place restrictions on freedom of expression. They claim that these are necessary to maintain stability and security. Examples of this include closing down the mobile phone network in Iran in mid-2009, and Egypt in late 2010. In other situations, governments try to stop journalists from reporting on controversial issues. For example, in 2009, journalists were forced to leave China's north-western province of Xinjiang in order to prevent them reporting on the ethnic violence there.



Focus on Myanmar

Historical Media Censorship in Myanmar

Between 1962 and 2011, freedom of the press was limited in Myanmar. The 1962 Printers and Publishers Registration Act created the Press **Scrutiny** Board. In 2005, this became the Press Scrutiny and Registration Division. It checked all publications, including newspapers, cartoons, advertisements, and illustrations. New publishers had to register with the Press Scrutiny Board. This long and difficult process meant that private news publications in Myanmar could only publish on a weekly or monthly basis. All daily newspapers in Myanmar were government-owned. During the 1988 protests, many people published information that was critical of the government. As a response, the military raised fines for newspapers that broke the rules from 2,000 Kyat to 30,000 Kyat.



For a long time, Myanmar was on Freedom House's (a non-governmental organization that does research on democracy and political freedom) list of "least free" countries for press freedom. In 2011, increasing press freedom led to Myanmar being taken off this list.

The Pros and Cons of Censorship

Look at the statements and decide if they are arguments for or against censorship.

diffolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to the inhabitants of these States: For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

1. Censorship causes long-term social effects such as ignorance and a lack of critical thinking and creativity.
2. Censorship of immoral material stops children from becoming immoral.
3. Censorship is sometimes necessary to preserve national security.
4. Censorship makes it harder to expose corruption.
5. Censorship can avoid spreading false information that could lead to violence.
6. Censorship can stop political opposition groups from expressing their ideas.
7. Censorship can protect people's right to privacy.
8. Censorship denies access to vital information. For example, if information about the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, is censored, this will cost many lives.
9. Censorship can protect indigenous cultures from the negative influence of foreign cultures.
10. Censorship can stop the media being used to spread prejudice and hatred (e.g. racism).
11. Censorship can control panic and rumours during a national emergency.
12. Censorship may be used to block legitimate criticism. This can lead to lack of accountability.
13. Censorship prevents individuals from making informed decisions and leads to bad government.
14. Censorship can negatively affect economic development.
15. Censorship can avoid religious conflict by banning material that insults religious communities.
16. Censorship can be used to hide human rights abuses.

Activity

The publication of this news-paper at this day, obliges the Printer to inform those Gentlemen indebted for this paper longer than Twelve Months, that, without pay, it cannot be continued to them more than Four Weeks from this date. — Subscribers at a distance can send their

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To be SOLD by PUBLIC VENDUE,
at Capt. Kendal Cole's, near Haddonfield, in New-
Jersey, on Monday, the 8th day of July instant, at

Preview...

Who should control the media?

7.2 MEDIA AND GOVERNMENT

7.2.1 PRIVATE VS. STATE-CONTROLLED MEDIA

Media organisations fall into one of two categories: private media and state-controlled media.

State-controlled media organisations are a part of the state. These newspaper offices, television channels and radio stations are all funded, managed and staffed by the state. In authoritarian states, these are often the only media organisations. In some states, they exist in competition with private media.

Private media organisations are businesses that are owned by citizens. They are accountable in the same way that all other businesses are (they need to pay taxes, obey the law etc.). In a free media, they are free from government control or influence.



Focus on Myanmar

Liberalisation of the Media

Since 2011, positive developments for press freedom include:

- The release of imprisoned **bloggers** and journalists.
- An end to pre-publication censorship.
- Removing bans on certain topics.
- The establishment of several independent journalists' and publishers' associations.
- Fewer reports of harassment and attacks against journalists.
- The removal of several foreign journalists from the government's **blacklist**.
- The return of private daily newspapers.

In addition, **exile** media groups continued to return to the country. Some of them opened offices and a few obtained publishing licenses. In 2012, for the first time, Yangon-based journalists could report on events such as the fighting between government forces and the KIA in Kachin State.

Formerly blocked websites are now accessible. These include information about on human rights and political reform. Also, many more independent and foreign newspapers are now permitted. For people with internet access, e-mail, **blog**, and social media platforms — including Gmail, Facebook, and YouTube — have become more popular.

However, some of these services have been used to spread misinformation and hate speech. The use of social media to encourage communal violence in Rakhine State is an example of this.



7.2.2 STATE-CONTROLLED MEDIA

A. ADVANTAGES

Supporters of state-controlled media say that if the state cannot regulate the media, then false or biased information will be more common.

They argue that making the media accountable to the government can prevent dangerous or misleading information from spreading. This makes sure that news that is likely to cause violent conflict can be limited.

Another argument for state-controlled media is that it can deal with important social issues or important public debates. The state can use the media to increase awareness so citizens can make more informed decisions.



▲ Venezuelan state TV showed the programme *Aló Presidente* (Hello, Mr President) until the death of President Hugo Chavez. Chavez used the show to promote his policies and speak to the country's poor, who were his main supporters.

B. DISADVANTAGES

The main disadvantages of a state-controlled media are that it often leads to censorship and reduces transparency.

In state-controlled media systems, journalists and editors work for the government. This gives the government much more control over what citizens see, hear or think. This makes it easier for the government to censor the news or produce propaganda.

While an independent media can provide more transparency in politics, a state-controlled media might not be able to. It is much more difficult for journalists to expose government waste, corruption or incompetence if the media is controlled by the government.

Preview...

1. What state-controlled media do you use?
2. Why do you use it?

Exercise

After you read 7.2.2:

1. What are the advantages of state-controlled media?
2. What are the dangers of state-controlled media?

Preview...

1. What private media do you use?
2. Why do you use it?

7.2.3 PRIVATE MEDIA

A. ADVANTAGES

One of the most important arguments for a private media is that it protects freedom of expression, transparency and accountability. A strong and independent press is an important feature of a healthy democracy because it limits corruption and inefficiency in government.

Supporters of private media also argue that in a free media market, the media reflects the views of the public, not of the government. This is because the newspapers that sell the most copies will reflect the opinion of the largest section of society. This means that the people set the agenda for the news rather than the government.

B. DISADVANTAGES

Privatisation of the media often leads to a situation where the popularity of a story is considered more valuable than its social importance. Critics argue that private media focuses on profitable news (sports, celebrity gossip, etc.), and not on important social or political issues. They say that the media is only concerned with entertaining people, not informing them.

In many countries, the majority of private media organisations are owned by only a few **corporations**. For example, in the United States, 50 corporations owned a majority of the news media in 1983. By 2003, the majority of news media was owned by only six corporations. Corporations that control so many news sources are very powerful and influential.

These corporations often make sure that all of their media sources promote the same ideology. Even though many different private news sources are available, media pluralism might still be weak. For example, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation owns hundreds of newspapers that share a very conservative ideology.

Exercise

After you read 7.2.3:

1. What are the advantages of private media?
2. What are the dangers of private media?

► Venezuelan private media was very critical of former president Chavez and his government. They also claimed that the government used its powers to reduce press freedom. The government claimed that private media is controlled by a wealthy elite.

Note: The picture of Hugo Chavez holding a gun is not real; it was created by the newspaper.



What Is "News", and What Is Not?

Activity

1. Collect different newspapers and complete the table.
2. Answer the questions.
 - a. What do you notice about the kinds of topics that are covered in each newspaper?
 - b. Do you notice a difference between newspapers that are closer to the government and ones that are more independent? What do you notice?
 - c. What else do you notice?

Newspaper Title	Headline	Headline Topic	Newspaper close to government or more independent?



Which do you think has greater advantages: state-controlled or private media? Why?

Reflection

Preview...

Why is the media important for politicians?

Exercise

After you read 7.2.4:

Why is media management important for politicians?

Preview...

What is "spin"?

Discussion

After you read 7.2.5:

What are the dangers of media management?

7.2.4 MEDIA MANAGEMENT

Another result of the increased power of the media is the idea of "media management". This idea is related to how the government uses the media to achieve its goals. In countries where there is limited freedom of the press, governments can manage the media by simple propaganda and censorship. However, in countries where the government cannot control the media directly, a complicated relationship has developed between the media and the government.

Staying in power is very important for a politician, party or government. This requires a good media image, so the support of the media is very important. The aim of media management is to ensure that:

- Good news is presented very loudly and clearly so that more people are exposed to it.
- Average news is presented in a way that makes it sound like good news.
- Bad news is presented very quietly, and in a way that makes it sound like average news.

7.2.5 SPIN

The practice of manipulating the news is often called **spin**. Spin has become a very important part of politics in most democratic countries. These governments employ thousands of staff to work on spinning news stories to make their party look good in the media. Some of the most important strategies for "spin doctors" are:

- checking information before it is given to the news media, to make sure that it does not make the government look bad.
- making sure that all the politicians in their party give the same message to the media. This makes it more difficult to know when the party is lying.
- leaking: A "**leak**" is when political actors give secret information to the media. This information usually makes their opponents look bad. So the aim of "leaking" is to become more popular, by making your opponents less popular.
- only giving information to media organisations that are friendly with the government.
- releasing "bad" news to the media at a time when there are a lot of other important events happening. This means that people do not pay a lot of attention to the bad news stories because they are focusing on the other news.
- rewarding journalists who write good things about the government (e.g. by giving them information before other journalists) and punishing those who write bad things (e.g. by not inviting them to **press conferences**).

Different Perspectives

Activity

Read the two articles and answer the questions.

1. How are the two articles different?
2. What was your reaction to the first one?
3. What was your reaction to the second one?
4. What techniques were used to create a reaction in the reader?
5. What was the intention of the writer of the first article?
6. What was the intention of the writer of the second article?
7. Can you tell from reading the two articles which version is more accurate? What additional information might you need to help you decide?
8. Are there any other possible perspectives on this same event?

a.

Riots Rock Waterside

Violent youths attack police

By Waterside Sun Reporters

Violent rioting took place last night in the Downtown area of the city. Youths threw heavy rocks at police, who attempted to calm the disturbance. They also shouted insults and threatened to set fire to vehicles and buildings.

The police tried to maintain order, but after an hour they arrested five youths who seemed to be

starting the violence. The five are currently being held in police cells while they await questioning. Riot leaders claim that the incident was started by an event earlier in the week. In this incident, police arrested a member of one of the local youth gangs while he was running away from the scene of a suspected robbery. Gang leaders are demanding a public apology from Waterside's chief of police.

b.

Anti-police Protests in Waterside

Local youth protest against police brutality

BY WATERSIDE GUARDIAN
REPORTER MALCOM TENNISHOE

Protesters marched through the centre of Waterside last night. They expressed anger and sadness at the imprisonment and beating of a 13 year-old boy.

The protestors, mostly youth from Waterside's poor communities, chanted slogans calling for the release of the boy, and an end to police violence. Police in riot gear tried to stop the protestors from

walking down the main street. When a rock was thrown by an unidentified protester, police used tear gas on the protesters, and charged into the crowd with batons, injuring several.

Five of the demonstrators are being held at the police station. Lawyers and family members have not been able to see them. Community leaders say there is a history of tension between

the police and young people in Waterside. Because of this they fear for the safety of the five students who are being held.

According to demonstrators, this trouble started with the unfair arrest and mistreatment of a 13 year-old boy the previous week. He had been running to escape two men who were trying to rob him when the police arrested him.

CHAPTER 8: CIVIL SOCIETY



8.1 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Preview...

What is "civil society"?

Activity

After you read 8.1.1.A:

Place the activities in the right place on the diagram.

- A CSO putting pressure on the government to change a policy.
- A business building a new factory.
- A government passing a law.
- A community school gets funding from businesses.
- A government giving a construction project to a private company.
- A community organisation protesting against the working conditions in a factory.
- A government school hosting a community meeting.

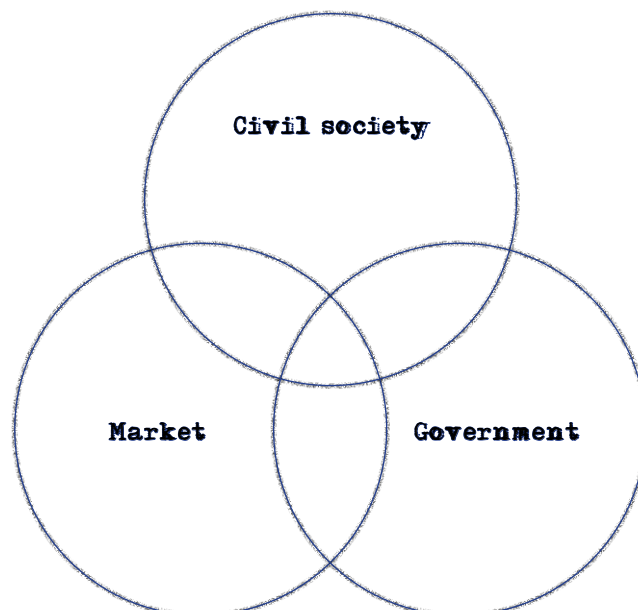
8.1.1 CIVIL SOCIETY

A. WHAT IS CIVIL SOCIETY?

Politics doesn't only happen in governments. There are many non-governmental actors involved in social and political activities. The name for this area of activity is civil society.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) are groups formed by people who share similar interests, values and goals. CSOs usually take part in social and political action to address social problems, defend their interests and achieve their goals. Because of their strong values and their commitment to social change, many CSO members work voluntarily and often take risks that other political actors do not.

Civil society is often said to be the third sector between the state and **market** (the area of commercial activity). No CSOs exist only to make profit (like businesses), and because CSOs are freely formed by citizens, they are independent from the activities of the state. However, it is very common that the actors in these three sectors interact with each other.



B. WHO IS CIVIL SOCIETY?

Civil society organisations are formed by citizens to address the concerns of citizens. Civil society is usually a very diverse sector. It includes many groups, many interests, and often a lot of cooperation and conflict between these groups.

Examples of CSOs include:

- non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- community-based organisations (CBOs)
- organisations that represent businesses or industries
- **trade unions** and professional associations
- gender, cultural and religious groups
- charities
- social and sports clubs
- environmental groups

Discussion

After you read 8.1.1.B:

1. What kinds of CSOs are working in your community?
2. What issues and concerns do they focus on?

▼ *The Yangon Bakehouse helps young people get jobs by teaching them useful skills.*



Our Organisation, Part 1

1. Individually, choose the most important social issue from: health, education, human rights, community development, the environment, gender equality.
2. Get into groups based on these. In your groups, decide on a specific issue related to your area. Your issue can be:
 - something that makes you very angry or sad
 - something that you think is unfair
 - something you want to change.
3. Identify one “core goal” for your group.
4. Work out the size and budget of your group. For each person in your group give yourself a hundred members and a one million kyats monthly budget.

Activity

Preview...

Why is civil society important?

Discussion

After you read 8.1.2:

1. How important are CSOs in your community?
2. What would it be like without them?
3. What are the dangers of a weak civil society?

8.1.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society organisations are a **platform** for groups to express their needs and interests to the government. CSOs inform people about social and political issues so that it is more difficult for the government to ignore them.

Civil society is an important part of democratic politics. A strong civil society shows that citizens are actively participating in politics. Independent CSOs often promote transparency and accountability and act as checks and balances on government power.

The bottom-up power of a strong civil society can be a threat to authoritarian governments. As a result, these governments often try to limit civil society organisations. This means that civil society is often weak and lacks independence in authoritarian states. However, civil society has frequently played a very important role in the transition from authoritarianism to democracy.

This section will look at some of the most important kinds of civil society actors: community based organisations (CBOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and social movements.



▲ The Local Resource Centre is a Yangon-based organisation which helps other civil society organisations through information sharing and skills development. Their website (<http://www.lrcmyanmar.org>) has information about the work of lots of CBOs and NGOs in Myanmar. See the Focus on Myanmar box on page 135 for more information.

8.1.3 COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS

Community-based organisations (CBOs) are **grassroots** civil society organisations. The majority of these groups are based in rural areas.

CBOs bring community members together to provide services in areas such as health, education and social welfare. These include **micro-credit** groups, village development committees and community clinics. Many CBOs are faith-based, and most of their activities are financed by the community.

One of the biggest advantages of CBOs is that the community is directly involved in the planning and implementation of their projects. CBO members are more likely to understand the situation in their own communities. This local knowledge means that CBO activities often address the concerns and needs of the community better than other actors.

1. What kinds of CBOs are working in your community?
2. What kinds of services do they provide?
3. What challenges do they face?
4. How successful are they at achieving their goals?

Preview...

What is a "community-based organisation"?

Exercise

After you read 8.1.3:

What are the strengths and weaknesses of CBOs?

Discussion

8.1.4 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

A. WHAT IS AN NGO?

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are nonprofit organisations that operate independently from governments. They may operate at a local, national or international level. They work on **public interest** issues such as public health, the environment, human rights and development.

Many NGOs provide services that are not adequately provided by governments. For example, if a government does not have the capacity or resources to deliver health care to rural areas, this service could be provided by an NGO. Because they are concerned with areas in which government **performance** is lacking, they often criticise government policies. This means that their activities can be quite political.

Many local NGOs can reach populations and/or areas that the other political actors cannot. These NGOs often have better local knowledge and networks than state actors. This helps them to provide goods and services in areas that the state cannot or will not work. These include isolated and war affected areas that government workers find difficult to access.

Preview...

What is a "non-governmental organisation"?



▲ The Myanmar Clown doctors visit children in hospital. They use laughter to help them feel better.

Discussion

1. What kinds of NGOs are working in your community?
2. What kinds of services do they provide?
3. What challenges do they face?
4. How successful are they at achieving their goals?

B. THE ACTIVITIES OF NGOS

Service (or operational) NGOs work directly with beneficiaries by providing services such as **emergency relief**, development assistance, medical aid or food to people who need them. Examples of these NGOs would include *Metta Development Foundation* and the *Myanmar Red Cross Society*.

Advocacy NGOs **campaign** via the media, education and through directly engaging with political actors to call for social change. They focus on issues such as human rights, social justice or environmental protection. Examples include *Rakhine Coastal Region Conservation Association*, *Karen Environmental and Social Action Network* and *Earth Rights International*.

Some NGOs combine both operational and advocacy roles. For example, the international NGO *Oxfam* provides services such as clean water and sanitary health for refugee populations but also campaigns on issues affecting communities such as poverty and women's rights.

Most NGO funding comes from private donors, from their own fund raising campaigns (individual donations), and sometimes (for larger NGOs) from government agencies, **development banks** (e.g. *World Bank* or *Asian Development Bank*) or the United Nations (UN).

However, government or international funding raises questions about the independence and "non-governmental" nature of some NGOs. This is because NGOs that rely on funding from other political actors are often less independent. These governments or international organisations that provide funding can influence NGOs and determine the people and issues they focus on.

Exercise

After you read 8.1.4.B:

1. In what ways do NGOs challenge the government?
2. In what ways do NGOs support the government?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of NGOs compared to CBOs?

Most NGO funding comes from private donors, from their own fund raising campaigns (individual donations), and sometimes (for larger NGOs) from government agencies, **development banks** (e.g. *World Bank* or *Asian Development Bank*) or the United Nations (UN).

However, government or international funding raises questions about the independence and "non-governmental" nature of some NGOs. This is because NGOs that rely on funding from other political actors are often less independent. These governments or international organisations that provide funding can influence NGOs and determine the people and issues they focus on.



▲ Web banner for the Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN) (<http://www.kesan.asia>).



Focus on Myanmar

NGOs in Myanmar

The Free Funeral Service Society (FFSS)

The FFSS has offered free funeral services since 2001. It provides services regardless of social status, nationality or religion. Its activities include:

- helping poor families to pay funeral costs
- opening a low-cost restaurant
- providing affordable health care through community clinics



Local Resource Centre (LRC)

The LRC was set up in May 2008 in response to Cyclone Nargis. It was created by international donors and NGOs to support local organisations in their emergency relief efforts. Its activities include:

- networking with local and international organisations
- providing access to information
- facilitating practical training and support on project management

The '88 Generation Students' Group

This is a network of activists from the 1988 pro-democracy uprising. Now it is a civil society actor that promotes democracy and national reconciliation. Its activities include:

- advocating for political reform
- participating in the peace process in Myanmar's ethnic minority areas
- strengthening Myanmar's civil society



KESAN

KESAN is a nonprofit organisation working with local communities in Karen State. It promotes sustainable development by preserving indigenous knowledge, building capacity and promoting policy change. Its activities include:

- supporting community-based **livelihood** initiatives
- raising awareness about the environment and climate change
- advocating for policies that ensure participation, ownership, gender equity and environmental sustainability

1. Which of the NGOs above are advocacy NGOs?
2. Which of the NGOs above are service NGOs?
3. Which have features of both service and advocacy NGOs?

Exercise

1. Which do you think are more important, advocacy NGOs or service NGOs? Why?
2. Do you think the government in your country sees NGOs more as a challenge/threat or a support? Why?

Discussion

Preview...

1. What is a social movement?
2. What social movements do you know?

Exercise

After you read 8.1.5:

What are the strengths and weaknesses of social movements?

8.1.5 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Like CSOs, social movements are groups of people who join together to take part in social action to address social problems. However, there are some important differences between social movements and CSOs. Firstly, social movements are bigger than individual CBOs or NGOs. They usually focus on large social issues such as environmental destruction, women's rights or land rights. Social movements attract many different organisations because they focus on issues that affect large sections of society.

Secondly, social movements are less organised than most CSOs. Because of their size and diversity, they are more like alliances than organisations. They do not usually have clear leadership, main offices or other features of NGOs.

Social movements generally focus on advocacy rather than providing services. They often try to influence government to make laws or policies that address the issues and concerns of that movement. Like many advocacy NGOs, social movements are closely related to the idea of social **activism**.

Many social movements want to do more than just influence the government. They rely on grassroots support and bottom-up power to create social change. Social movements have often been associated with the idea of civil disobedience and social justice. They often use **direct action** strategies such as demonstrations and occupations.



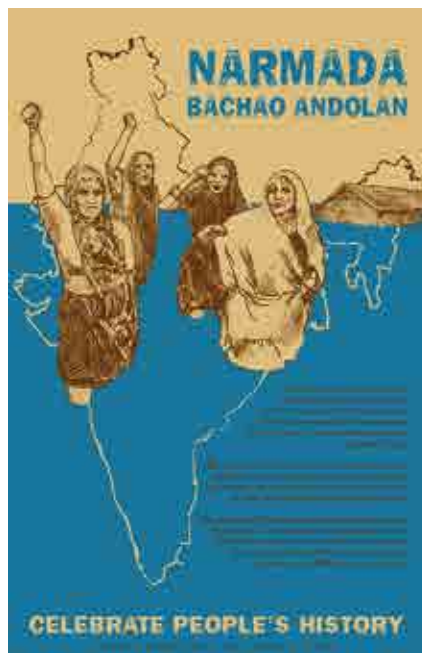
- ▲ Occupy is a world-wide social movement with many aims, including better democracies, fairer distribution of wealth, and an end to corrupt banking practices.

8.1.6 DIFFERENT KINDS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

There are two main kinds of social movements: *issue-specific movements* and *generic movements*.

A. ISSUE-SPECIFIC MOVEMENTS

Certain events or issues create so much popular support or anger that social movements grow up around them. Narmada Bachao Andolan, in India, is a good example of this kind of movement. The movement started with the specific issue of the creation of the Sardar Sarovar dam on the Narmada River. The movement's objective was to stop the dam from being constructed to protect the people who live there. It grew into a bigger movement that opposed other big dam projects and policies of the government that supported them. These kind of movements usually have a clear leadership and a higher level of organisation, but do not often last very long.



Preview...

What issues do social movements in your country focus on?

Exercise

After you read 8.1.6.A:

What kinds of issue-specific movements have taken place in Myanmar? Give some examples.



Focus on Myanmar

Citizen Responses to Cyclone Nargis

In May 2008 a powerful cyclone hit the Ayeyawady Delta. An estimated 2.4 million people were affected and approximately 130,000 people were killed. At first, the government did not allow NGOs and UN agencies to access the area and so it was very difficult for help to reach people in need. However, a wide range of activities by private citizens, local NGOs, faith-based organisations, businesses and other local groups began to help. They provided emergency aid, food, medicine and other relief items.

Many individuals from all over the country collected money and supplies, and took them to the disaster areas. They used their own transport and donated time, money and goods. It was a citizens' response. People did not wait for permission from the government, but took their own steps to help their fellow citizens.



▲ Myanmar people giving and receiving aid after Cyclone Nargis.

B. GENERIC MOVEMENTS

Compared to single-issue movements, generic movements generally last longer and focus on broader issues. The environmental movement and the women's movement are examples of generic movements. Environmental movements protest against many kinds of unsustainable policies and actions. Likewise, women's movements put pressure on the government to create or change policies that address different issues faced by women.

Generic movements represent many different actors who share the same goals and values. For example, the environmental movement is a label for a large number of individuals, CSOs and issue-specific movements. All of these have separate organisations, independent leadership and often have different views on the kind of social change they want to achieve.

Exercise

After you read 8.1.6.B:

What kind of generic movements have taken place in Myanmar?

Exercise

Below is a page from a directory of Myanmar CSOs but the information is in the wrong order. Match the names with the correct description.

Organisation Name	Description of Activities
1. Myanmar Trade Union	a. We look after our members' right to good working conditions. We meet employers and discuss wages and health and safety in the workplace. We are very concerned about issues like employment.
2. Myanmar Business and Employers Association	b. We represent unemployed people in Myanmar. We want more people to know about the lives of unemployed people. We want to do something to reduce the number of people who are out of work. We try to protect the rights of unemployed people. We meet with the government to discuss the issue of unemployment.
3. Community Education Council	c. We are an organisation for business people and employers. We want to see Myanmar's economy grow so we offer our views on the best way to do this. We try to influence the government to make policies that will help businesses grow. We also provide training and support to help people to start new businesses.
4. Myanmar Women's Association	d. We are a voluntary organisation for people with physical disabilities. We are divided into branches which act as pressure groups locally to ensure that services for our members exist in their areas. We also provide services like sports, therapy and educational courses for our members.
5. National Youth Council of Myanmar	e. We are a large organisation made up of a number of smaller organisations all working with young people. These organisations come together for training and to discuss issues common to them all. We also meet with government departments to discuss policies that might affect young people.
6. Myanmar Farmers' Association	f. Our organisation supports community based education centres in our region. We provide textbooks and teacher training to communities who have difficulty accessing government schools.
7. Myanmar National Association for the Unemployed	g. Our members are from all over the country. We look after their interests on matters like farm income and agricultural policy. We often meet with the government to discuss these matters.
8. Myanmar Wheelchair Association	h. Our members are women from all parts of Myanmar. We are involved in helping women set up businesses and in providing women with services and courses they find useful.

8.2 THE WORK OF CSOs

8.2.1 INSIDER AND OUTSIDER GROUPS

Some CSOs are closer to the government than others. This affects the kinds of strategies they use. An important difference is between "insider" and "outsider" groups.

A. INSIDER GROUPS

Insider groups have a close relationship with the government. They can regularly speak with politicians because they are very powerful. Insider groups usually represent important sectors of the economy, such as industries, businesses or labour groups. However, other CSOs can also have a close relationship with the government if they deal with social issues that are politically important.

The relationship between insider groups and politicians can be good for them both. Insider groups benefit because they can put direct pressure on policy makers. This allows them to represent their interests and concerns more effectively than groups who cannot communicate with the government as easily.

Having the support of insider groups can also be very important for a government. For example, if the government wants to improve the economy, they will often take the advice of groups that represent important industries. This is also true for individual politicians. If a politician supports policies that benefit these powerful groups, he or she can rely on the support of those groups. Having the support of insider groups can increase a politician's political power.



◀ The Myanmar Peace Centre (can be found on Facebook) is an NGO which reports to the President's office.

Preview...

1. What is an "insider" group?
2. What is an "outsider" group?

Exercise

After you read 8.2.1.A:

1. Where do insider groups get their power from?
2. How do insider groups try to influence government?

Discussion

Are insider groups undemocratic? Why or why not?

B. OUTSIDER GROUPS

Outsider groups generally represent groups who have less political power (even though they might have many more supporters). Some examples of outsider groups include peace campaigners, environmental activists or animal rights groups. These groups do not usually have the ability to talk to the government directly. As a result, they need to use indirect strategies to put pressure on the government.

Exercise

After you read 8.2.1.B:

1. Where do outsider groups get their power from?
2. How do outsider groups try to influence government?

Outsider groups try to gain public support and sympathy for their goals and their activities by carrying out information campaigns, organising demonstrations or creating **petitions**. Most of these groups try to influence the mass media into giving more attention to the issues they focus on.

Outsider groups might be outsiders because they do not have enough power to have access to the government. However, they could be outsiders because they choose to be – for ideological reasons, for example.

Activity

Put the words and phrases into the correct place in the table.

access to policy-makers (often) little radical goals
 a lot moderate goals elite grassroots
 no/limited access to policy-makers

	Insider Groups	Outsider Groups
Closeness to government		
Use of the media		
Goals		
Support from...		

Discussion

1. What are some of the factors that make CSOs powerful?
2. Think of an CBO, NGO or social movement in your country. Explain three factors that affect the power of that group.

Reflection

Rank these in order of importance for CBOs. What do you notice about your list?

wealth size organisation and leadership ideology
 grassroots support closeness to the government

8.2.2 CSO STRATEGIES

A. LOBBYING

A common way civil society actors influence public policy is through **lobbying**. CSOs try to influence members of the government through meetings, phone calls or writing letters. Politicians often listen to lobbyists to understand the needs and concerns of the group the lobbyists represent. Lobbyists try to persuade the government to make decisions that benefit their group or interest. For example, they might try to convince members of the legislature to vote for or against a proposed law or to get the executive to make or change policies.

Many people see lobbying as a legitimate political activity, but it also has dangers. Professional lobbyists are very expensive because they give groups the ability to increase their influence on the government. For this reason, lobbying has been criticised because it means that groups with more money and power can “buy” the support of the government.

Preview...

How might CSOs try to influence government, and why?

Discussion

After you read 8.2.2.A:

Do you think lobbying is undemocratic? Why or why not?



Focus on Myanmar

The Myitsone Dam Project

The Myitsone dam project was announced in 2001. Following this, the Myanmar government communicated with representatives from the construction industry to decide who would implement the building project.

In 2006, the China Power Investment Corporation (CPI) made an agreement with the government to start work on the dam. In 2007, 12 leaders from Kachin State asked General Than Shwe and the Ministry of Electric Power to cancel the project.



▲ The Myitsone Dam site.

The Burma Rivers Network (BRN) sent a letter to the Chinese government requesting that Chinese companies in Myanmar should have to do environmental and social **impact assessments**. The BRN also asked companies to release information publicly, and to consider opinions of affected communities in decision-making processes.

Government minister Zaw Min responded to this by saying that the Myitsone dam project had started after an environmental impact assessment was completed. However, the results of this assessment were not released publicly.

On 30 September 2011, President Thein Sein announced that the project would be suspended. The President of CPI responded by warning that stopping construction could lead to legal action and has been putting pressure on the Myanmar government to restart the project ever since.

1. What examples of lobbying can you see in the Myitsone Dam example?
2. How effective was it?

Discussion

B. ADVOCACY

Advocacy is when an individual or a group tries to influence government actions and policies by raising awareness about a particular issue or cause. It influences the government indirectly by affecting public opinion on an issue. There are many strategies used by advocacy groups including media campaigns, speeches and publishing research reports. The main aim of these activities is to increase public support for the kinds of policies that the group wants. It is a strategy that is often used by outsider groups to defend the rights of marginalised groups in society.

Discussion

1. Which marginalised groups do CSOs advocate for in your country?
2. How successful are these CSOs at achieving their goals?
3. What examples of advocacy can you see in the Myitsone Dam example? How effective were they?

C. DEMONSTRATIONS

Like advocacy, the aim of a demonstration is to influence the government by making people aware of an issue. However, while advocacy tries to do this by presenting information, demonstrations try to get public support by creating an event that people – and the media – cannot ignore. Demonstrations can be dramatic events, so even a very short video on the television news can have a very big impact on public opinion.

Demonstrations and other kinds of direct action are strategies that require few resources (e.g. money or skilled staff). This makes them popular with CSOs that do not have the power to influence government directly.

D. STRIKES

A **strike** is when workers stop work in order to force an employer to agree to their demands. These demands are usually related to working conditions or pay (for example when factory workers stop working until the management listens to their concerns about safety).

However, the goal of a strike can also be very political. For example, doctors might go on strike because the government is reducing the health care budget. Like demonstrations, strikes can attract media and public attention to an issue. However, they also make use of these groups' economic power by stopping the goods and/or services that they provide. This can cause people to get angry with the government and put more pressure on them to change their policies.



▲ A teachers' strike in Chicago, USA.

Exercise

1. Which of these strategies are more likely to be used by insider groups?
2. Which of these strategies are more likely to be used by outsider groups?



Focus on Myanmar

The 8888 Uprising

The 8888 Uprising was a series of marches, demonstrations and protests against Ne Win's BSPP government. On 5 September 1987, Ne Win announced the withdrawal of new currency notes. Students were angry at the government's decision because their savings for tuition fees were instantly lost. The students' anger increased after a fight in a Yangon tea shop. Some students were injured in the fight, but the others involved were not punished. The violent reaction of the police to these events caused the students to protest against the police and the government.

These student-led protests were quickly joined by other citizens including government workers, monks, air force and navy personnel, teachers and hospital staff. Pamphlets and posters appeared on the streets, dissident newspapers were freely published, and marches and speeches calling for change took place frequently.

A general strike began on 8 August 1988. Mass demonstrations were held across Burma as ethnic minorities, Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, students, workers and the young and old all demonstrated against the government. In Mandalay Division, a more organised strike committee was led by lawyers. This committee focused on multi-party democracy and human rights. Farmers who were also angry with the government's economic policies joined the protests in Rangoon. In one village, 2,000 of the 5,000 inhabitants also went on strike.

The uprising is still remembered and honoured today. On 8 August every year, demonstrations and events are held around the world to remember the event.

1. What examples of demonstrations can you see in the 8888 Uprising example? What were the demonstrators trying to achieve?
2. What examples of strikes can you see in the 8888 uprising example? What were the strikers trying to achieve?

Discussion

Do you think that it is acceptable for doctors, police officers and teachers to go on strike to demand better working conditions? Why?

Reflection

1. Look at the *timeline*. Which events have involved civil society actors? How did these actors affect politics in these events?
2. Which of the CSO strategies (lobbying, advocacy, demonstrations and strikes) were used during these *timeline* events?

Activity

1. How do CSOs try to influence government in your country today? How successful are they?
2. Which strategies put the most pressure on government? Why?

Discussion

Preview...

Are powerful CSOs good or bad for society? Why?

8.2.3 CSOs AND SOCIETY

A. ADVANTAGES

When people participate in civil society, they make use of the rights to *freedom of association* and *freedom of assembly*. This promotes civic participation and strengthens democracy.

Civil society organisations put pressure on the government to pay attention to the needs and concerns of ordinary citizens. This creates more accountability and transparency in government and increases political participation.

Another advantage of CSOs is their ability to provide **humanitarian** and development aid directly to marginalised communities, especially in isolated and war-affected areas. A strong civil society often empowers groups to address issues affecting their communities.

B. PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

Some people claim that civil society actors have now obtained a large amount of political power without anyone directly electing or appointing them.

Another criticism of CSOs is that their structure is often undemocratic. Some are dependent on leaders who manage the organisation in a top-down way. For young people in these organisations, there is often little space to challenge opinions or discuss decisions made by senior leaders.

Another problem is that many people think that "civil society" is the solution to all of society's problems. In countries where government services are weak, there can be a danger of unrealistic hopes and beliefs about what civil society can do.

Discussion

After you read 8.2.3:

1. How do CSOs weaken democracy?
2. How do CSOs promote democracy?

► The first Myanmar Women's Forum was organised by the Women's Organisations Network (WON) and the Women's League of Burma (WLB) in 2013. Both organisations work for women's empowerment.

<http://womenofburma.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/WONMM>



အမျိုးသမီးများအဖွဲ့ချုပ် (ပြန်တစ်နိုင်)

Women's League of Burma (WLB)



Put the statements about CSOs in the correct place in the table.

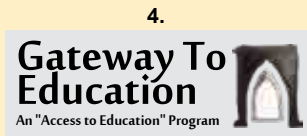
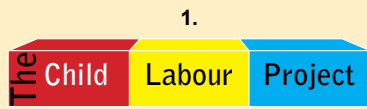
Activity

	Benefits	Dangers
Equality		
Discussion and debate		
Accountability		
Participation		
Decision making		

- a. Insider groups can make inequality worse by giving powerful groups even more influence in politics.
- b. They introduce more ideas and views into political discussions so that the government (and society) becomes more informed and produces better policies.
- c. CSOs are often very passionate about the issues they are dealing with. This can cause conflict if these issues are controversial or sensitive.
- d. CSOs (especially social movements) are "free schools of democracy" where members can learn the skills of how to participate in politics.
- e. They are one of the checks and balances that limit and control government power. They make the government more accountable by putting pressure on them to do what they promise and to protect the rights of minorities.
- f. They have power, but no accountability to anyone. This means that they are not as legitimate as governments or parties, but they still have strong influence on politics.
- g. The information that CSOs provide (reports, etc.) can help the government to make accurate decisions and effective policies.
- h. Unelected lobbyists and insider groups undermine electoral politics by having more power to take part in politics than average citizens.
- i. They make politics very difficult because politicians need to balance the needs of many different powerful groups when they are making policy.
- j. They allow social groups that are ignored by political parties to represent their interest to government and society.

Activity

1. Match the CSOs (1-4) with the correct descriptions (a-d).
2. Match the CSOs and their descriptions with the correct aims (i-xiv).



- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>a. Helping students to express their opinions, and giving them access to information about social justice issues, is the best way to promote democratic participation as adults. This project will work with schools to ensure that students' opinions are heard on issues of importance to them. It will:</p> <p>b. Many children in our country are forced to work in dangerous jobs from an early age. This project is essential to protect children from abuses, and ensure that they grow up in a situation which will allow them to develop fully. It will:</p> | <p>c. A decent standard of living is essential to the healthy development of children, and their future ability to contribute positively to society. This project will raise the standard of living in our country so that children can develop fully. It will:</p> <p>d. Abuse and neglect affects the most defenceless members of society. Victims may grow up physically, mentally and emotionally handicapped as a result. This project aims to eliminate physical and mental abuse, exploitation and neglect of children and young people. It will:</p> |
|--|--|
-
- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>i. Produce curriculum on human rights and social justice issues, understanding of students' own culture and the cultures of others, peaceful conflict resolution, and environmental education</p> <p>ii. Set up education and counselling for parents on issues of abuse and neglect, and train social workers, police and health care workers</p> <p>iii. Promote construction of affordable housing with sanitary facilities</p> <p>iv. Set up agricultural programmes to enable families to meet their basic nutritional needs</p> <p>v. Educate teachers about equality in the classroom</p> <p>vi. Organise food cooperatives to make basic food items more affordable</p> <p>vii. Set up programmes in schools and youth groups about getting away from abuse and neglect, saying "no" to drugs-, and dealing with sexual abuse and exploitation</p> | <p>viii. Advise the Ministry of Education and provide information to parents on how young people can develop the skills and attitudes needed for life in a diverse society</p> <p>ix. Establish a reporting system for children and young people who are being forced to work at an early age</p> <p>x. Pay special attention to the situation of minority children, who are more likely to be involved in child labour</p> <p>xi. Provide support services to families who need their children's income</p> <p>xii. Establish drop-in centres where young people may receive advice and counselling about abuse and neglect</p> <p>xiii. Work with the government to establish a minimum working age and regulate conditions of employment</p> <p>xiv. Distribute food to the hungry</p> |
|---|---|


Discussion

1. Do you think that CSOs and social movements are good or bad for society?
2. Why are some Myanmar CSOs more successful than others?

Our Organisation, Part 2


Activity

Look at the list of statements and the budget that your group made at the start of this chapter. Use that and the information from this chapter to complete the checklist:

CSO Checklist

1. Name of CSO: _____

2. Issue(s) the CSO focuses on:

3. Main aim(s) of the organisation (may be more than one aim):

- To provide a service _____
- To change government policy _____
- To change people's behaviour/attitude _____
- Other (explain) _____

4. Type of activity(ies) which the group engages in:

- Lobbying (trying to influence politicians) _____
- Campaigning (organising activities to attract public interest) _____
- Awareness raising (education programmes, using media, etc) _____
- Nonviolent direct action (protests, boycotts, strikes) _____
- Providing goods or services to communities who need them _____
- Other _____

1. Why did you choose these strategies?
2. How did your size and budget affect your decision?
3. Do you think this organisation would be effective in achieving its core goal? Why or why not?


Reflection

CHAPTER 9: POLITICAL PARTIES

9.1 POLITICAL PARTIES

Preview...

What is a political party?

9.1.1 POLITICAL PARTIES

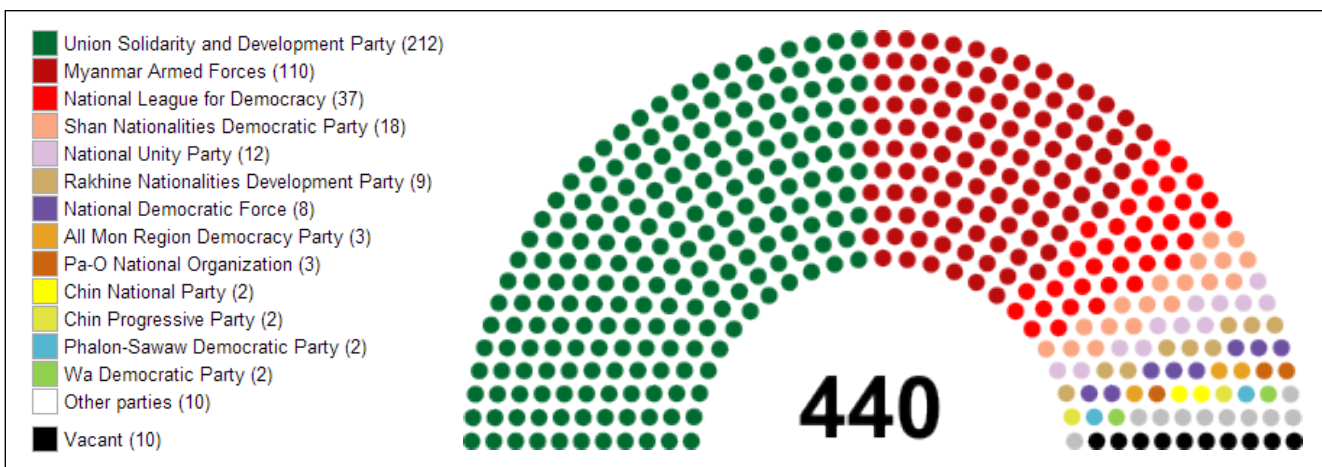
A. FEATURES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties are groups of people who have similar opinions about politics. They often share interests, identity or ideology and work together to achieve their political goals.

People form political parties:

- to have a louder voice in society
- to make suggestions about what kind of policies the government should make
- to promote their ideas and values to the public
- to support party candidates running in elections.

Political parties try to gain political power by having as many party members as possible elected to the legislature and/or executive. They aim to win a majority of seats in the legislature (in parliamentary systems) or win a popular vote for the executive (in presidential systems). If they succeed, they become the "ruling party" and control the government. All other parties are known as opposition parties.



▲ Seats in the Pyithu Hluttaw structure after the 2012 Myanmar by-election.

Our Political Party: Identity

1. Individually, write down the three most important values that you think society should have.
2. Form a group with people with similar ideas to yours. Decide whether your group will focus on community, regional or country-wide issues.
3. Draft an agenda for a meeting to define your political identity. In the meeting, you should answer the following questions:
 - a. What are the biggest social, economic and political problems facing our community/region/country?
 - b. What is our ideology? Is it more socialist, liberal, conservative or somewhere in between?
 - c. What name do we give our party? Why does this name express our political identity? Can you think of a symbol that represents our political identity?

Activity



B. ORGANISATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES

There are three levels to each political party.

1. The members of the party who are trying to become elected to the government (politicians).
2. Full-time or part-time party workers. These people receive a salary from the party and carry out the daily activities of running the party.
3. The party membership. Some might be involved in party organisation; others might volunteer time or donate money to the party.

Our Political Party: Roles

Each member of the group should have a role in the party. There are three roles to choose from (limited roles should be chosen either by consensus or majority vote):

- a. The Chairperson. Your task is to make sure that your group follows a decision-making process (from chapter 6) during your meetings. You are also responsible for making sure that everyone has a fair chance of expressing their opinion.
- b. The Spokesperson. The spokesperson is responsible for explaining your party to the other members of the class. Try to appeal to the students who have not yet joined a party, and try to win over members from other parties, particularly those closest to your ideology.
- c. Writers. Writers are responsible for writing all the documents and speeches that will be produced by the party.

Activity



Preview...

What do political parties do?

9.1.2 PARTY FUNCTIONS

The main function of a political party is to help people organise themselves so that they can achieve more as a group than they can alone. In this way, parties form one voice that represents its members to the government and the rest of society. Some other functions of political parties include:

A. PROVIDING ALTERNATIVES TO GOVERNMENT POLICY

Parties offer suggestions on public policy. Parties research and discuss ways that the government could manage the country better, and then present these ideas to the public.

A **manifesto** is a document that outlines a party's suggestions for better public policies. Manifestos include political goals and details of steps that the party will take to achieve their goals if they become the government.

When political parties present their manifestos to the people, they need to explain them. This requires political education and awareness raising about the issues addressed in their manifesto. This helps to give people a better understanding of the current situation by providing information about social and political problems and explaining their causes and effects.

Manifestos also describe how the party's policies would solve these problems. Opposition party manifestos might also explain how the current government's policies are failing to solve these problems. This is an important part of democratic politics because it supports pluralism and public debate.

B. CHOOSING AND SUPPORTING CANDIDATES IN ELECTIONS

When there is an election for a position in government, parties select members and support them in their election campaign. Parties choose candidates in different ways. In some countries, such as the USA, the supporters of a party choose its candidates. In other countries, like India, party leaders often choose which party members will contest an election. After a candidate is chosen, parties help them to organise their election campaign.

During the campaign, the party assists its candidates in different ways. Party workers might give information to the media, write speeches or do research. This helps candidates to understand the needs and concerns of the voters and communicate them effectively. Other party members might hand out pamphlets, put up posters or organise events. These activities are very important to mobilise public support at the grassroots level.

Discussion

After you read 9.1.2.A:
Who should be mainly responsible for political education? Parties, the government or civil society? Why?

Discussion

After you read 9.1.2.B:
In what ways do better-funded parties have an advantage during an election campaign?

Our Political Party: Goals

1. In your groups, discuss:
 - a. What is your top priority?
 - b. What are your other goals?
 - c. What is the best situation for the people of this community/region/country? Specifically:
 - the political situation
 - the social situation
 - the economic situation
2. Present your ideas to the class.

Activity



C. ACTING AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE

Like civil society organisations, parties can provide people with opportunities to participate in politics. Social groups can express their wants, needs and concerns to the government by forming or supporting political parties.

This increases people's ability to criticise the government if it is not performing well. Political parties can listen to the concerns of their supporters and bring them to the government with a louder, clearer voice. This is an important part of making sure that the government is accountable. However, this closeness to the people also means that politicians need to be honest and work hard for their supporters. If they don't, they will lose support and decrease their political power.

D. PROMOTING STABILITY IN POLITICS

Some people argue that parties make politics more organised. This is because parties are able to present well-researched suggestions that represent the opinions of large groups of people. If party members all share the same opinion about a policy decision, it makes it easier for legislatures to make decisions quickly and effectively.

Parties can also promote stability by developing political leaders. Political parties provide their members with training and the experience of political leadership. By taking part in party politics, professional politicians get the skills, knowledge and experience that are needed to lead government ministries.

Discussion

After you read 9.1.2.C/D:

1. Do parties act as a bridge between the people and the government in your country? Why or why not?
2. Do parties promote stability in your country? Why or why not?
3. Do you agree that parties produce better political leaders? Why or why not?

Activity



Our Political Party: Manifesto

1. In groups, think of your ideal situations from the Goals Activity on page 151. Decide on some policies for your party that will help you achieve these goals.

What we would do to achieve the best situation:

- a. We would stop...
- b. We would continue...
- c. We would create...

2. Present your ideas to the class.

Preview...

What is a "party system"?

9.1.3 PARTY SYSTEMS

A party system is the environment and structure that parties exist in. There are different relationships between political parties in different countries. This is based on several factors including the political culture of that country and the way that the government is designed in the constitution. There are three main party systems:

A. DOMINANT-PARTY SYSTEMS

In a dominant-party system, one party is so popular (or powerful) that it is the only party with a good chance of winning elections. This system is common in countries that got their independence from a colonial power after a **liberation struggle**. In this case, the political or military organisation that won the conflict often becomes the ruling party of the country for many years. This is often because of the legitimacy it got from leading the country to independence and/or the power it gained during the struggle.

Examples include ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe (in power since independence in 1980), or the African National Congress of South Africa (in power since the end of Apartheid in 1994). A more extreme version of this is the "single-party state", where there is only one party and forming other parties is against the law. Examples of this system include the authoritarian regimes in China and North Korea.



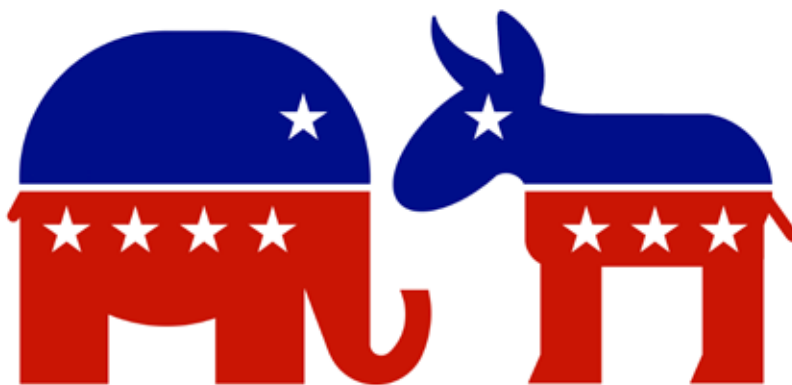
▲▶ North Korea is one of the few communist states in the world today. It is also an example of a single-party state.



B. TWO-PARTY SYSTEMS

Two-party systems are dominated by two major political parties. Other smaller parties exist, but only two parties are able to get enough votes to win an election.

These parties are usually popular enough that they can win enough votes to have a majority in the legislature. In this system, power usually changes between the parties every two or three elections. Two-party systems are usually very competitive because what is bad for one party is good for the other. This leads to a situation where cooperation in government can be difficult. Two-party systems are more common in single member district electoral systems. Examples of this kind of system include the UK, France and the USA.



▲ **Left:** In the USA, there are two main parties: the Republicans and Democrats, whose logos are an elephant and a donkey respectively. Elections in the US are fought between these two parties; **Right:** President Barack Obama (on the left) is a Democrat and President George W. Bush is a Republican.

C. MULTIPARTY SYSTEMS

A multiparty system is when more than two parties have a good chance of coming to power, either on their own or by joining with other parties in a "coalition". A coalition is when two or more competing political parties join together to increase their chances of winning an election. They usually do this to get enough votes to form a majority in the legislature.

Coalitions can either happen before or after an election (once the votes have been counted and there is no clear winner). In this system, the government is often made when several parties come together to make a coalition government. In a coalition government, the different parties share the responsibilities of running the state. For example, the Minister of Education will come from one party and the Minister for Health will come from another. Multiparty systems are more common in proportional representation electoral systems, such as those used in Brazil, Germany and Israel.

Discussion

After you read 9.1.3:

1. What is the role of conflict and cooperation in party systems?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the different party systems?
3. How does the electoral system affect the party system?
4. How would you describe the party system in your country? Is it changing? How?

Activity

Reading Election Results

1. Read the most recent election results (in blue) for each of the countries and decide if each has a dominant party system, a two-party system or a multi-party system.
2. Read the previous election results and decide if each country's system has changed over time.

South Africa Seats (out of 400)

Political Party	1994 Election	1999 Election	2004 Election	2009 Election
African National Congress	252	266	279	264
Democratic Party	7	38	50	67
Inkatha Freedom Party	43	34	28	18
New National Party (formerly National Party)	82	28	7	-
United Democratic Movement	-	14	9	4

Source: South Africa Independent Electoral Commission

Sri Lanka Seats (out of 225)

Political Party	2000 election	2001 election	2004 election	2010 election
People's Alliance	107	77	-	-
United People's Freedom Alliance	-	-	105	144
United National Party	89	109	82	-
United National Front	-	-	82	60
Tamil United Liberation Front	5	15	-	-

Source: Department of Elections, Sri Lanka

Malaysia % of Seats

	Political Party	1999 election	2004 election	2008 election	2013 election
Ruling Coalition	United Malays National Organisation	36.98	49.8	35.6	39.64
	Malaysian Chinese Association	15.10	14.2	6.8	3.15
	Malaysian Indian Congress	3.65	4.1	1.4	1.80
Total Ruling		76.56	90.4	63.1	59.91
Opposition coalition	Democratic Action Party	5.21	5.5	12.6	17.12
	Islamic Party of Malaysia	14.06	3.2	10.4	9.46
	People's Justice Party	2.60	0.5	14.0	13.51
Total Opposition		21.88	9.2	36.9	40.09

 Source: Election Commission of Malaysia (<http://www.spr.gov.my>)

9.2 KINDS OF PARTIES

9.2.1 MASS PARTIES AND MEMBERSHIP PARTIES

There are two important kinds of political party: "membership" parties and "mass" parties.

A. MEMBERSHIP PARTIES

Membership parties usually have a smaller number of supporters. This is because they often have strict ideologies that party members share. As a result, these parties expect a lot from their members and generally have a very close relationship with them.

Their policies are based on their ideology and values. This makes it more likely that members will agree with each other, and promotes strong unity among party members. On the other hand, they often get less support from non-members because not everyone in society agrees with their specific ideology.

Examples of membership parties include some nationalist parties, communist parties and parties based on ethnicity or religion.

B. MASS PARTIES

Mass parties try to get as much support as possible. For this reason they do not expect a lot of participation from their nonprofessional members. A mass party's main goal is to get as many votes as possible. A common word for mass parties is "catch all" parties because they suggest policies that try to "catch" as many supporters as possible.

As a result, mass parties do not usually have very strict ideologies. Their ideology is usually in the middle: not too liberal, not too socialist and not too conservative. However, because they try to represent so many different voices and opinions, party members do not always agree with each other. This means that this kind of party is generally less unified than membership parties.

Look at the *actors list*. Choose six political parties and put them on the spectrum in the correct place.



Preview...

Where do parties get their support from?

Exercise

After you read 9.2.1:

Look at the three different party systems in 9.1.3. In which of these systems would membership parties be more successful? What about mass parties?

Discussion

Which of these two kinds of party are more successful in your country? Why?

Activity

Activity



▲ A 1960s election poster by the British Conservative ("Tory") Party. It uses racist feelings to encourage people to vote for them.

Our Political Party: Strategy

1. Decide on the best strategy for your party. Answer the following questions:
 - a. How can we increase support for our party?
 - b. Which social groups share our goals?
 - c. Would we be willing to change our values to get more support? Why or why not?
 - d. Would we be willing to change our manifesto to get more support? Why or why not?
2. Present your ideas to the class.

Preview...

What are "left-wing" and "right-wing" parties?

9.2.2 LEFT-WING AND RIGHT-WING PARTIES

Often the terms **left-wing** and **right-wing** (or just left and right) are used to describe the ideology of political parties. This description came from the French National Assembly (the legislature) during the 18th century. In this assembly, the supporters of the liberal revolution sat on the left, and the supporters of the old system (a monarchy) sat on the right. Since then, "left" and "right" have been used to describe the differences between the social and economic policies of different parties. Parties that do not have strong views (or have a mixture of views) are called "centrist". Some of the main features of left- and right-wing ideologies are:

A. LEFT-WING

- **IMPORTANT VALUES:** Solidarity, social justice, and equality.
- **POLITICAL ATTITUDE:** Moderate or radical (in favour of change).
- **VIEWS ON EQUALITY:** Support equality of outcome.
- **LIBERTY:** Economic equality over economic freedom.
- **COMMON POLICIES:** Social welfare, high taxation on the rich, national health service, laws against discrimination, regulation.

B. RIGHT-WING

- **IMPORTANT VALUES:** **Individualism**, economic freedom.
- **POLITICAL ATTITUDE:** Usually conservative.
- **VIEWS ON EQUALITY:** Support equality of opportunity only.
- **LIBERTY:** Economic freedom over economic equality.
- **COMMON POLICIES:** **Privatisation**, deregulation.

Political Quotes

Read the statements and decide if they are left-wing or right-wing.

Activity

1. *THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SUPPORT THOSE WHO CANNOT SUPPORT THEMSELVES!*

2. *I BELIEVE THAT IF WE HAVE TOTAL ECONOMIC FREEDOM, THEN ONLY THE BEST INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS (INCLUDING BUSINESSES) WILL BE SUCCESSFUL AND WE WILL LIVE IN A BETTER SOCIETY!*

3. *TAXES DON'T INTERFERE WITH MY LIBERTY, POVERTY DOES!*

4. *THE GOVERNMENT HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT WOMEN, ETHNIC MINORITIES AND HOMOSEXUALS AGAINST DISCRIMINATION!*

5. *WE SHOULD REGULATE BIG BUSINESSES SO THAT THEY SERVE THE PEOPLE'S INTERESTS!*

6. *IF I HAVE MORE MONEY, I SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO KEEP IT, AND BUY BETTER EDUCATION AND HEALTH SERVICES FOR ME AND MY FAMILY!*

7. *UNREGULATED BUSINESSES MAKE MORE MONEY AND THIS IMPROVES THE ECONOMY!*

8. *IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO LOOK AFTER OURSELVES, NOT THE GOVERNMENT!*

9. *I BELIEVE THAT THE FREEDOM TO BE ECONOMICALLY SUCCESSFUL IS MUCH MORE IMPORTANT THAN EQUALITY!*

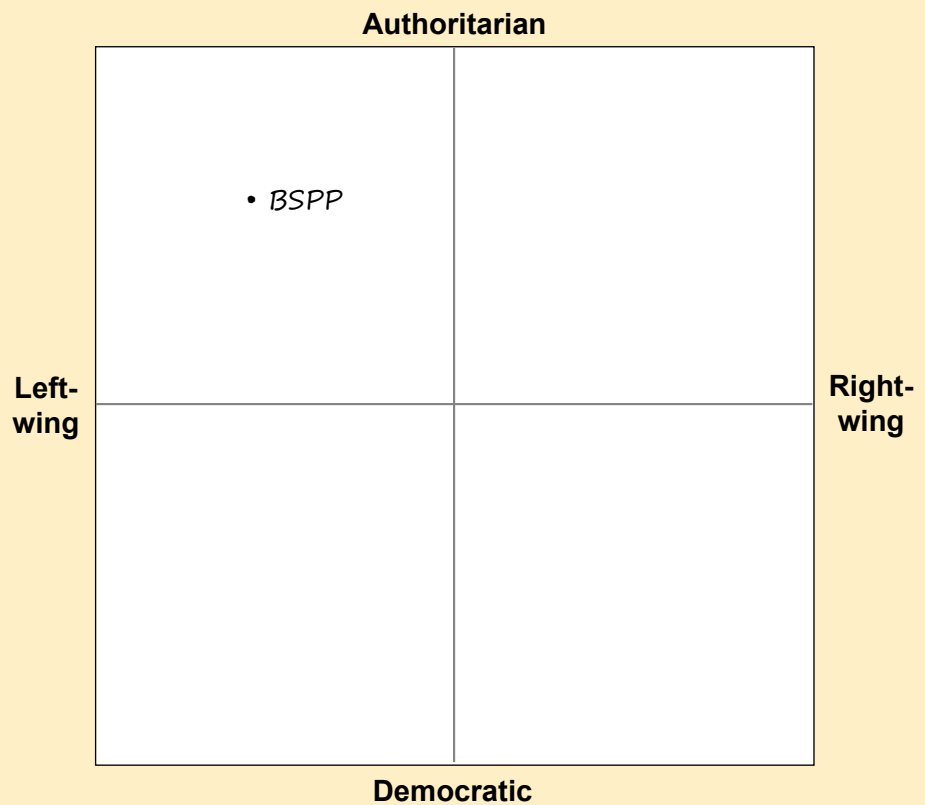
10. *A BIG WELFARE STATE WILL MAKE PEOPLE HEALTHIER, MORE ABLE TO WORK AND SO IT WILL IMPROVE THE ECONOMY!*

11. *I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO PAY FOR SOMEONE ELSE'S EDUCATION OR HEALTH SERVICE!*

12. *WE NEED HIGH TAXATION TO REDISTRIBUTE WEALTH TO THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST!*

- Put these ideologies in the correct place on the diagram on the next page.
 - liberalism
 - conservatism
 - socialism
 - communism
 - anarchism
 - libertarianism
- In pairs, discuss your answers.

Activity



Activity

1. Put the political parties below onto the diagram.
2. Look at the *actors list* and add six more political parties to the diagram.
3. Add other political parties that you know to the diagram.
4. In groups, compare your diagrams and discuss the differences.

a. The Liberal Party of the Philippines

The Liberal Party's ideology includes a commitment to "an open, diverse, democratic society, based on a market economy, political openness, and an honest, effective government that will serve the interests of the majority of Filipinos."

b. Democratic Action Party (DAP) of Malaysia

DAP's ideology is that all Malaysians should have equal access to educational and economic opportunities. DAP says that equality does not exist under the current system. The party believes that Malaysia should uphold the values of democracy and human rights.

c. The Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV)

The CPV is the only legal political party in that country, and is in control of the state's institutions, including the civil **bureaucracy**, military, police, the courts and the state-controlled media.

d. Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party) (PAN)

PAN's ideology includes respect for the rule of the people, a commitment to democracy, progress and social justice with roots in religious values. The party's ideology is based on five principles (*Pancasila*): religion, community, unity, representative democracy and social justice.

e. The Nepali Congress Party (NC)

The NC supports a democratic society based on the value of pluralism. The party claims to avoid the dangers of extreme left and extreme right ideologies. The NC has a centrist ideology. It wants to promote economic growth at the same time as protecting social justice and equality.

Our Political Party: Ideology

1. Discuss where you would put your political party on the ideology diagram.
2. Make a presentation to the class to explain your decision.

Activity

9.2.3 PROBLEMS WITH POLITICAL PARTIES

A. PARTIES CAN BE UNDEMOCRATIC

In some parties the leaders control the other party members. These leaders don't allow the other members to express their opinions or make decisions. When making decisions, party leaders do not have meetings or votes to see what all the members want. Party leaders help their friends get positions of power in the party.

B. PARTIES CAN BE INFLUENCED BY WEALTHY DONORS

Election campaigns are very expensive. To pay for these campaigns, parties often try to get the support of rich individuals or companies. This gives these rich people and large businesses a lot of political power because they have a lot of influence over the parties they support. This can cause party leaders to value money more than ideology or the needs of the people.

C. PARTIES ARE BECOMING VERY SIMILAR

In some countries (especially in two-party systems) the only political parties that can win an election are mass parties. These parties need as many votes as possible, so they try to have popular policies and a weak ideology. As a result, they are becoming more and more similar. Voters do not have a choice between parties with very different ideologies and manifestos. As a result, politics is often reduced to personal attacks about the private lives of politicians or other unimportant issues. This is a big cause of the "**democratic deficit**" that is happening in many countries. People do not feel like they have the opportunity to vote for a party that will make any political changes. This makes them not want to vote at all.

Preview...

What are some problems of political parties?

Reflection

After you read 9.2.3:

1. When you formed your party, was the process democratic? Was it easy? Why?
2. Was your party similar to other groups' parties? How? What things were different? Why?

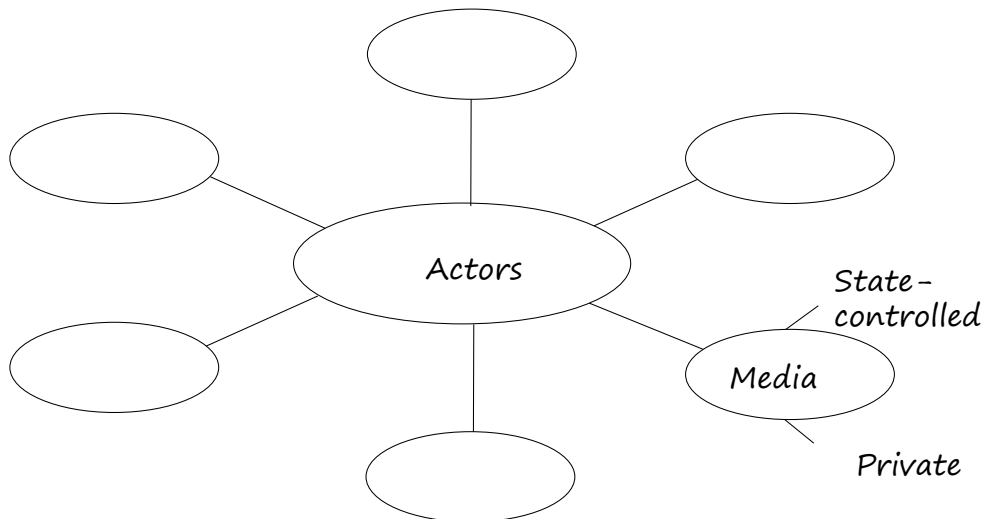
1. What are the problems with political parties?
2. Could governments work without political parties?
3. In what ways do parties support democracy?
4. What can be done to solve some of the problems faced by political parties?

Discussion

Unit 3 Review

Unit 3 Mind Map

Complete the mind map with important ideas you have learned in Unit 3.



Comprehension

1. What are the advantages and dangers of basing policy decisions on public opinion?
2. What is required for freedom of the press?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of state-controlled media?
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of private media?
5. What is media management?
6. What is civil society?
7. What is the difference between a service and an advocacy NGO?
8. What is the difference between lobbying and advocacy?
9. What is the difference between insider and outsider CSO strategies?
10. What are the advantages and disadvantages of CSOs?
11. What do political parties do?
12. What is a coalition government?
13. What is the difference between a mass and a membership party?
14. What is the difference between a right- and a left-wing party?
15. What are some problems of political parties?

Unit 3 Glossary

activism (n) – လှုပ်ရှားပြောင်းလဲရေးလှုပ်ဆောင်မှု

blacklist (n) – အမည်ပျက်စာရင်း

blog (n) – ဘလော့ဂ်

bloggers (n) – ဘလော့ဂ်ဂါများ

bureaucracy (n) – ဗျူရိုကရေစီ၊ ကြီးနီစနစ်

campaign (v) – လှုပ်ရှားမှု

censor (v) – ဆင်ဆာ

corporation (n) – ကော်ပိုရေးရှင်း၊

democratic deficit (n) – ဒီမိုကရေစီ ကျင့်သုံးမှု အားနည်းလာမှု

development bank (n) – ဖွံ့ဖြိုးရေးဘဏ်

direct action (n) – တိုက်ရိုက်လှုပ်ဆောင်ချက်

emergency relief (n) – အရေးပေါ်ကူညီကယ်ဆယ်ပေးရေး

exile (adj) – တိုင်းပြည်မှ နှင်ထုတ်သည်/ခြင်း

grassroots (n) – အခြေခံလူတန်းစား

humanitarian (aid) (n) – လူသားချင်းစာနာထောက်ထားမှုဆိုင်ရာ (အကူအညီ)

impact assessment (n) – သက်ရောက်မှုကို လေ့လာဆန်းစိမ်းခြင်း

individualism (n) – တစ်ဦးတစ်ယောက်ဖြစ်ခြင်း၊ ပုဂ္ဂလိကဖြစ်ခြင်း

leak (n) – ပေါက်ကြားမှု

left-wing (adj) – လက်ဝဲယိမ်း

liberation struggle (n) – လွတ်မြောက်ရေးကြိုးပမ်းမှု

livelihood (n) – အသက်အိုးအိမ်

lobby (v) – စည်းရုံးဆွဲဆောင်သည်။

manifesto (n) – ကြော်ငြာစာတမ်း၊ ပြန်တမ်း

market (n) – ဈေးကွက်

micro-credit (n) – ငွေကြေးချို့တဲ့သူများအတွက် ချေးငွေ ချေးပေးခြင်း၊ အသေးစား ချေးငွေ

(government) performance (n) – (အစိုးရ) လုပ်ဆောင်နိုင်မှု

petition (n) – လျှောက်လွှာ၊ အသနားခံစာ

platform (n) – မျက်နှာစာ၊ မူဝါဒလမ်းစဉ်

poll (n) – စစ်တမ်းကောက်ယူမှု

press conference (n) – သတင်းစာရှင်းလင်းပွဲ

pressure group (n) – ဖိအားပေးအဖွဲ့။ (အစိုးရ၊ အဖွဲ့အစည်းတစ်ရပ်ရပ်ကို) ၎င်းတို့ဦးတည်သည့် ကိစ္စတစ်ရပ်အတွက် နည်းအမျိုးမျိုးဖြင့် အရေးဆိုသောအဖွဲ့။

privatisation (n) – ပုဂ္ဂလိကပိုင်ပြုလုပ်ခြင်း။

public interest (n) – အများပြည်သူအကျိုး

right-wing (adj) – လက်ယာယိမ်း

scrutiny (n) – မျက်စိဒေါက်ထောက် စိတ်စစ်ဆေးခြင်း

spin (n) – လူထု၏ ထင်မြင်ချက်အား လွှမ်းမိုးနိုင်ရန် သတင်းလှည့်ပတ်ခြင်းဖြင့် ကြိုးစားဖော်ထုတ်ခြင်း

strike (n) – သပိတ်မှောက်ခြင်း

trade union (n) – အလုပ်သမား သမဂ္ဂ

TIMELINE

- **1885 Third Anglo-Burmese War:** Trade dispute and concerns over French interest in Burma causes the British to demand King Thibaw to give up some of his power. King Thibaw refuses and the British invade, remove him from power and take direct control of central Burma and indirect control of the Frontier Areas.
- **1920 University boycott:** Students protest against the University Act. The Act established British control over the universities, set high tuition fees and required a high level of English. Students succeed in lobbying for the opening of National Schools not controlled by the British. National Day (November 22) commemorates the beginning of this strike.
- **1930 Founding of the Dobama Asiayone (We Burmese Association):** Members call themselves Thakin ("master"). Most of its membership are students and other young intellectuals unhappy with British rule.
- **1930 – 1931 Saya San Rebellion:** Peasants fall into debt and lose their land to moneylenders. Saya San leads a peasant revolt. He is captured and hanged by the British.
- **1936 The second university student strike:** Aung San and Ko Nu, leaders of the Rangoon University Students' Union (RUSU) are expelled from university, causing widespread strikes in Rangoon and Mandalay. This leads to the formation of the All Burma Students' Union (ABSU).
- **1938 1300 Revolution:** Oilfield workers go on strike against the British Oil Corporation. Students organise a march from Chauk to Rangoon, where they are joined by other workers. The strike spreads countrywide after the British kill a student.
- **1942 – 1945 Japanese occupation:** The Thirty Comrades receive military training in Japan, and form the Burma Independence Army (BIA). The BIA and the Japanese drive out the British, and the Japanese occupy Burma. Half a million Indians flee to British territory. Fighting throughout Burma causes hardship, inter-ethnic tension, and violence, for instance, between the BIA and Karen at Myaungmya. Although Burma gains some formal independence, the Japanese maintain control.
- **1944 – 1945 Anti-fascist revolution:** The Anti-Fascist Organisation (AFO) leads a revolt against the Japanese with aid of the British. Resistance Day (March 27; re-named Armed Forces Day by the later government) commemorates this revolt.
- **1946 Civil War** It begins in several parts of Burma with the revolt of Red Flag CPB, Mujahid, and APLF, followed in 1948 by KNDO, MNDO and PNO. In the 1950s and 60s they are succeeded by other groups such as KNU, NMSP, KNPP, SSA, KIO and KNPP.
- **1946 – 1947 Negotiations with British:** The Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) led by Aung San negotiates with the British for independence for Burma proper and for the Frontier Areas if they agree to join an independent Burma. Some ethnic minority groups, such as the Karens, lobby for their own states.
- **1946 – 1947 Panglong Conferences:** In February 1946 the AFPFL meet with Kachin, Shan, Chin, and Karen people to discuss the formation of a federal Burma. In February 1947, representatives of Kachins, Shans and Chins agree to join a federal union in exchange for autonomy and the right to secede (become an independent state) at a later date. Union Day (February 12) commemorates the signing of the Panglong Agreement.

- **1947 Assassination of General Aung San:** On July 19, armed men enter the Secretariat building and kill Aung San and six members of the Executive Council. Former Prime Minister U Saw is tried and executed for this.
- **1948 Burma's Independence:** On January 4, The AFPFL becomes the ruling government in Burma, replacing the British. U Nu becomes Prime Minister and Sao Shwe Thaik becomes President.
- **1948 Ethnic minority alliances:** KNDO allies with Mon National Defence Organisation (MNDO) and temporarily takes over Mawlamyine and, in 1949, Insein. This begins a series of alliances between ethnic minority nationalist groups including the National Democratic Front (NDF) in 1975 and the Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB) in 1988.
- **1958, 1963 Peace talks:** Kodaw Hmaing organises peace talks with armed resistance groups.
- **1958 – 1960 Caretaker Government:** U Nu's AFPFL government allows Ne Win and other army officers to take control. This was a result of ongoing civil war and a split in the AFPFL.
- **1961 State Religion Act:** U Nu introduces Buddhism as the state religion. People of other faiths, such as Christians and Muslims, are unhappy about this.
- **1962 Military Coup:** On March 2, General Ne Win seizes power. His administration is called the Revolutionary Council. This occurs after U Nu announces he will consider demands for federalism. The Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) forms later that year.
- **1974 Constitution rewritten:** Constitution is rewritten to recognise a socialist one-party state under the BSPP.
- **1974 U Thant affair:** After former UN Secretary General U Thant dies in the United States. His body is brought to Rangoon, where thousands attend his funeral. BSPP leaders plan to bury him in an ordinary cemetery. Students take his body and bury it at the site of the former Student Union, protesting against BSPP policy. The army stops the protest, killing students and burying U Thant at the foot of Shwedagon Pagoda.
- **1988 Demonstrations (aka '8888', '88 Uprising'):** Widespread student demonstrations occur following government demonetisation, which ruins many people's personal savings. Students protest demanding democracy. This builds up to a mass uprising across Burma. Soldiers and police violently stop the protests. General Ne Win resigns and the BSPP dissolves. Student parties such as ABSDF and DPNS, as well as Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, emerge as political forces.
- **1988 SLORC:** General Saw Maung establishes the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) following the coup of September 18th 1988. The economy opens to international trade.
- **1990 Elections:** The NLD wins a majority of the vote. SLORC annuls the election result, does not allow MPs to take office and stays in control of the government. Many NLD leaders are imprisoned or flee the country.
- **1994 – 1995 Rise and fall of Manerplaw:** Ethnic minority and democratic groups join forces. The KNU-held town of Manerplaw is their base. A group of KNLA soldiers break away to form the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), which negotiates a ceasefire with SLORC and helps them to capture Manerplaw.

- **1989 – 1995 Ceasefires:** Several ethnic minority armies negotiate ceasefires with SLORC in exchange for limited regional autonomy. These include the UWSA in 1989, KIO in 1994 and NMSP in 1995.
- **1997 ASEAN membership:** ASEAN accepts Myanmar as a member. Myanmar gains greater regional economic connections as a result of the membership.
- **2007 Saffron Revolution:** Buddhist monks protest against growing economic hardship caused by cuts in government fuel subsidies. Ordinary people join the monks demanding political change. The SPDC violently stops the protests.
- **2008 Cyclone Nargis:** The worst natural disaster in Myanmar's history, with casualties estimated between 100,000 and 200,000. Thousands of Myanmar people form civil society networks and NGOs to distribute aid privately.
- **2008 New constitution completed:** The constitution, begun in 1993, is completed by the Constitutional Convention (boycotted by the NLD and other pro-democracy groups).
- **2010 Election:** The Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) wins a majority in elections and Thein Sein becomes President. The NLD boycotts the election. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi remains under house arrest until after the election. The NDF and other groups claim that there were problems with the election.
- **2011 Thein Sein inaugurated as President:** Inauguration on 30 March. The USDP takes the majority of seats in parliament, with 25% reserved for the military.
- **2011 – 2012 Ceasefires:** The government agrees ceasefires with most remaining non-ceasefire ethnic armed groups including the SSA-S, KNU and KNPP.
- **2011 Myitsone Dam:** Myanmar's government stops construction of a controversial hydroelectric project financed and led by a state-owned Chinese company. This is seen as a government response to public pressure.
- **2012 Letpadaung Mine protests:** Villagers protest that a Chinese mining company, in partnership with the Burmese government, has polluted their farmland. Government inquiry commission headed by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi offers farmers financial compensation, but does not punish police who injured protesters.
- **2012 Buddhist-Muslim conflicts:** Starting in Arakan State and spreading to many locations around the country, violence breaks out between Buddhists and Muslims.
- **2012 By-elections:** Elections are held to fill 46 vacant parliamentary seats. NLD party won in 43 of the 44 seats they contested. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi becomes a Member of Parliament.
- **2013 Nationwide ceasefire negotiations:** Government peace negotiators and the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC) a coalition of 11 ethnic armed groups, have a series of meetings in attempts to reach a nationwide ceasefire. There are difficulties because the UNFC wants political discussions about the future of ethnic areas to start immediately, while the government wants to focus on economic development and talk about political settlements later.

ACTORS LIST

88 Generation Students' Group: Formed in 2005 by former students active in the 88 Uprising. They were active during the Saffron Revolution in 2007, and many of its members were imprisoned following this. They advocate for national reconciliation, social justice and democracy.

All Burma Monks Alliance (ABMA): Formed in 2007 by a group of senior monks as a response to the economic and social problems existing in Myanmar. ABMA leaders played a prominent role in the September 2007 Saffron Revolution. They work to defend the religious and cultural foundations of the nation.

All Burma Students' Democratic Front (ABSDF): Formed in 1988 by students who participated in the 1988 uprising. They oppose military dictatorship and support democracy and human rights both through armed struggle and political means. The ABSDF signed a ceasefire with the government in 2013. The ABSDF advocates for internal peace and a federal union in Myanmar.

Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPLF): First called the Anti-Fascist Organisation (AFO), the AFPLF was formed in 1944 by Aung San and others. They were made up of many different political parties held together first by Aung San, and then by U Nu. The AFPLF dominated parliament until the 1962 military coup, when leaders were arrested and imprisoned by the new military government. During this time, the AFPLF followed a nationalist policy based on unity and consensus, parliamentary democracy and a mixed economy of free market and socialist systems.

Arakan National Congress (ANC): A network of various Arakanese organisations. They were formed in 1942 to protect Arakanese rights. In 1945 the Arakan People's Liberation Party (APLP) was formed when they broke away from the ANC. Their armed wing is the Arakan Defense Army (ADA).

Aung San, General (1915 – 1947): Burmese independence leader, and founder of the modern Burmese army (Tatmadaw). He is considered to be the founder of the Union of Burma. He organised the Panglong Conferences and was responsible for bringing Burma's independence from British colonial rule, but was assassinated in 1947, six months before independence.

Aung San Suu Kyi (1945 –): The daughter of Aung San, she entered politics during the 1988 uprising. She was a founder and chairperson of the National League for Democracy (NLD). She was detained under house arrest ahead of the 1990 elections and spent almost 15 of the next 21 years there. She won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. Released in 2010, she was elected to be a Member of Parliament in the 2012 by-elections.

Ba U Gyi, Saw (1905 – 1950): Karen political and military leader and founder of the KNU. He attempted to negotiate with the British for an independent Karen State in 1946/7 before Burma's independence in 1948. He was killed in fighting in 1950.

Bhante Ashin Nyanissara (1937 –): Buddhist monk, also known as the Sitagu Sayadaw. He calls for a socially-engaged Buddhism, and has built hospitals, schools, water pumps and other social projects. In 1978 he established the Sitagu International Buddhist Missionary Centre. He was heavily involved in relief efforts following 2008's Cyclone Nargis.

Border Guard Force: Tatmadaw administered military forces based on the borders of Myanmar. They consist of former ethnic armies who signed a ceasefire.

Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP): Formed in 1962 by Ne Win and other generals following his coup. The BSPP was the only legal political party until 1988. The BSPP advocated for a programme called the "Burmese Way to Socialism" which had both communist and Buddhist influences. It said that parliamentary democracy was not suitable for Burma. It started to create a socialist economy by nationalising all businesses. The BSPP followed a policy of economic and political isolation, and suppressed any opposition.

Burman Muslim Organisation (BMO): Formed in 1945 by U Razak to cooperate with the AFPFL to get independence.

Chin Independence Army (CIA): Formed in 1961 by leaders including Son Ka Pao to protect Chin rights through military and political means.

Chin National Front (CNF)/Chin National Army (CNA): Formed in 1988 to protect the rights of Chin people and fight for ethnic autonomy through political and military strategies. Its aims include securing self-determination of the Chin people, promoting democracy, and establishing federal union. The CNF signed a ceasefire with the government in 2012. The CNF opposes the 2008 Constitution.

Communist Party of Burma (CPB): Formed in 1939 by Aung San, Thakin Soe and others. The CPB fought for independence and then against Japanese occupation. They claimed to fight for a 'national democratic revolution' against oppression, imperialism, and capitalism to achieve the goal of a 'people's democracy'. Many members were active supporters and organisers of the 1988 Uprising.

Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB): Formed in 1988 in Thailand as an alliance of pro-democracy exile organisations and ethnic minority armed groups.

Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, Democratic Karen

Benevolent Army (DKBA): In 1994 the DKBA split from the Christian-dominated KNU, led by Buddhist Karen leaders including U Thuzana. The DKBA signed a ceasefire with the government in 1995 and aligned with the Tatmadaw.

Democratic Party for a New Society (DPNS): Burmese political party formed in 1988 by Moe Thee Zun and others to oppose the military dictatorship and support democracy. Membership was mostly of students active in the 88 Uprising. The party went underground and many were imprisoned or fled to Burma's borders. The DPNS now operates openly in Myanmar. They advocate for representative democratic government, decentralisation, federalism, social justice, and economic opportunities for all of society.

Democratic Party (Myanmar): The Democratic Party (Myanmar) advocates for human freedoms and rights in politics, economy, justice. It also promotes freedom of thought, speech and assembly. It argues that the government should only be responsible for services that the private sector cannot provide. It believes that private businesses should never be nationalised.

Dobama Asiayone: Anti-colonial Burmese nationalist organisation formed in 1930. Members called themselves Thakin (master) instead of using this term for the British. The slogan of the organisation was "Burma is our country; Burmese literature is our literature; Burmese language is our language. Love our country, raise the standards of our literature, respect our language."

Generation Wave: Pro-democracy youth movement formed in 2007, after the Saffron Revolution. Members use social media, hip-hop music and graffiti to spread their message.

Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO): Formed in 1961 to fight for autonomy for Kachin State, the KIO controlled much of Kachin State until the 1990s. Their military wing, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) is the second largest ethnic army in Myanmar. The KIO signed a ceasefire with SLORC in 1994, with many issues unresolved. They resumed armed struggle in 2011 and ceasefire negotiations are in process.

Karen National Union (KNU): Formed in 1947 by Saw Ba U Gyi. The KNU were initially fighting for an independent Karen state and greater rights for Karen people. Their military wing, the Karen National Defense Organisation (KNDO), was formed in 1949. They later changed their name to Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). The KNU signed a ceasefire with the government in 2012.

Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP): Formed in 1957. The KNPP's goal is to achieve autonomy and human rights for Karenni State, by both political and military strategies. They signed a ceasefire with the government in 2012.

Karenni National Organisation (KNO): Formed in 1947 to protect the rights of Karenni people through political and military means.

Khun Sa (1934-2007): Leader of the Mong Tai Army. The MTA were the region's biggest opium producers, and the US government ordered his arrest. To avoid this, he surrendered to the Burmese government in 1996. He lived comfortably in Yangon running business interests until his death.

Kodaw Hmaing, Thakin (1876 – 1964): Nationalist, poet and peace activist. He was involved in the independence movement and organised the 1958 and 1963 peace talks between the government and ethnic armed opposition groups.

Myanmar Peace Centre (MPC): The MPC was formed by the Myanmar government, academics and strategic advisors, with support from Peace Support Donor Group. They provide policy advice and assistance to the peace process. They are involved in implementing ceasefire agreements, political negotiations, and coordination of assistance in conflict areas.

National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma

(NCGUB): The NCGUB was formed by NLD leaders in 1990 as a government in exile after SLORC refused to recognise the results of the 1990 elections. Following Aung San Suu Kyi's release from house arrest in 2010 and later entry into Parliament in 2012 as an MP, the NCGUB was dissolved in September 2012.

National Council of the Union of Burma (NCUB): A network of representatives of armed groups and exiled political organisations, including the NDF, DAB, NCGUB, and NLD-LA. The NCUB was formed in 1992 and aims to achieve a democratic federal system in Myanmar.

National Democratic Force (NDF): Formed in 2010 after splitting from the NLD. The NDF formed to contest the 2010 elections, boycotted by the NLD. The NDF's goal is to attain individual freedom and to promote the role of the private sector in the economy, but ensure that the government regulates the market. The party advocates for democracy and human rights. It says that the best way to achieve these is through the formation of civil society organisations.

National Democratic Front (NDF): A group founded in 1976 to represent all of the main ethnic nationalities in Myanmar. The NDF works for a democratic federal state and includes the CNF, KNU, NMSP and KNPP.

National League for Democracy (NLD): Formed in 1988 by pro-democracy leaders including Aung San Suu Kyi. The NLD won the majority of votes (58 percent) in the 1990 national elections, but the result was not recognised by military government. Many NLD MPs and members were imprisoned, or fled to Myanmar's borders. The party advocates for human rights, freedom of speech, the rule of law, and national reconciliation. Other issues that the NLD advocates for are freedom for the media, increasing social benefits and constitutional reform.

National Unity Party (NUP): Formed by the military and Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) members to take part in the 1990 general election. The party's political ideology is "the Burmese way to the benefit of the people," which is designed to conform with national characteristics and national pride. The party aims to maintain the history, culture and tradition of the country while bringing benefits to the well-being of the people.

Ne Win, General (1910 – 2002): Political and military leader. One of the Thirty Comrades. In 1949 General Ne Win became Chief of Staff of the Burma armed forces (Tatmadaw) and was later put in charge of a caretaker government by the then Prime Minister U Nu from 1958-1960. Ne Win seized power in a military coup in 1962 and created the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP). He remained chairman of it and effectively head of state until he resigned during pro-democracy demonstrations in July 1988. He was put under house arrest by the SPDC in 2002 and died shortly after.

New Mon State Party (NMSP): Formed in 1958 by Nai Shwe Kyin. The NMSP fights for Mon rights and autonomy for Mon state. The NMSP fought alongside the KNU and was an active member of a number of ethnic alliances. The NMSP signed a ceasefire agreement with the government in 1995. They advocate for a federation of free nationalities that have the right of self-determination and the right of secession.

Nu, U (1907 – 1995): First Prime Minister of the Union of Burma, U Nu led the AFPFL government during 1948-1956, 1957-1958, and 1960-1962. U Nu was Buddhist and he made Buddhism the official religion of Burma in 1961, which angered some non-Buddhist ethnic groups. He was removed from power in the 1962 coup by General Ne Win and imprisoned for four years. He later attempted unsuccessfully to lead armed resistance against Ne Win from Thailand in the early 1970s. He was pardoned and allowed to return to Burma in 1980 where he was active in the 1988 demonstrations.

Pa-O National Organisation (PNO): are a political party with three representatives in the Amyotha Hluttaw (as of April 2014). Their armed wing, the Pa-O national Army, signed a ceasefire with the government in 1991.

Rakhine National Party (aka Arakan National Party) (RNP): The RNP was formed in 2014 when the Rakhine Nationalities Development Party and the Arakan League for Democracy merged. Their aim is democracy, federalism and the development of Rakhine State.

Razak, U Abdul (1898 – 1947): Burman Muslim leader and founder of the Burma Muslim Organisation. U Razak was Minister of Education in Aung San's cabinet. He was assassinated in 1947.

San, Saya (1876 – 1931): Burmese leader and doctor. In 1930-31 Saya San led a rebellion against British control. He was hanged by British authorities.

Saw Maung, General (1928 – 1997): Senior general and army commander in the BSPP era. He was the founder and chairman of SLORC from 1988-1992.

Shan Nationalities Democratic Party (aka the White Tiger Party) (SNDP): The SNDP was formed in 2010. It followed on from the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy, closely allied to the NLD. The SNLD won the second largest number of seats in the unrecognised 1990 election. The SNLD leader, Khun Htun Oo, was arrested in 2005 and served seven years of a 93 year prison sentence, before being released in 2012.

Shwe Thaik, Sao (1918 – 1986): Shan politician and last Sawbwa (hereditary leader) of Yawnghwe, and first President of Burma from 1948-1952. He was arrested during the 1962 coup and died in prison.

Shan State Army (SSA): Formed in 1964, it received backing from the CPB until 1989 when it reached a ceasefire with the government. It has developed a political wing, the Shan State Progress Party (SSPP). The SSA is now referred to as the Shan State Army-North (SSN-N).

Shan State Army-South (SSA-S): Originally part of the SSA, but continued armed resistance as the Shan State United Revolutionary Army (SURA) and later as the SSA-S, after the 1989 SSA ceasefire with the government. The SSA-S reached a ceasefire with the government in December 2011. It has a political wing, the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS).

Soe, Thakin (1906 – 1989): Burmese political leader and founder of Burma Communist Party and its Red Flag Faction.

State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC): Group of generals who seized control in a military coup on September 18, 1988, during the pro-democracy demonstrations. SLORC claimed this was to prevent disintegration of the Union of Burma. SLORC changed its name to the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) in 1997.

State Peace and Development Council (SPDC): New name for SLORC. It was officially dissolved in 2011 following the election of a civilian government led by Thein Sein.

Tatmadaw: The armed forces of Myanmar, including the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. It has been engaged in many conflicts with ethnic and political armed opposition groups since independence in 1948. The Tatmadaw has dominated much of Myanmar's politics through the leadership of generals who have also acted as heads of state, including Ne Win (1962-1988), Saw Maung (1988-1992) and Than Shwe (1992-2011). The Tatmadaw has 25 percent of the seats in parliament reserved for it according to the 2008 Constitution.

Tay Za (1964 –): Wealthy Burmese businessman. His business interests include Air Bagan, logging, construction, tourism and mobile phone services. He was a close associate of former SPDC chairman, Than Shwe.

Than Shwe, General (1933 –): Senior general and the chairman of SLORC/SPDC. He was effectively head of state of Myanmar from 1992 to 2011.

Thant, U (1909 – 1974): Secretary General of the United Nations 1961-1971. After his death, student led-protests at the lack of respect shown to him by Ne Win were violently stopped in Rangoon.

Thein Sein (1945 –): Former SPDC general and President of Myanmar since March 2011. He was also Prime Minister from 2007 until 2011. During Thein Sein's time as President the government has made some political reforms including release of political prisoners and establishment of ceasefires with most ethnic armed groups.

Thirty Comrades: Group of thirty founding members of the Burma Independence Army trained by the Japanese in 1941. They were led by Aung San and also included Ne Win.

Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP): Political party formed in 2010. It grew out of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) originally established by SLORC in 1993. The USDP won the 2010 elections, and is the current (in 2014) ruling political party in Myanmar. The party supports the Constitution's legal binding that no part of the country must ever secede from the Union.

United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC): Formed in 2011 by a coalition of ethnic armed groups. It currently has 11 member organisations: KIO, KNU, KNPP, NMSP, SSA-N, CNF, Pa-O National Liberation Organisation (PNLO), Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF), National United Party of Arakan (NUPA), Lahu Democratic Union (LDU), and Wa National Organisation (WNO). The UNFC is involved in a series of negotiations with the government to reach a nationwide ceasefire agreement.

United Wa State Army (UWSA)/United Wa State Party (UWSP): Formed in 1989 following the collapse of the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) forces in the Wa region of northeast Shan State. It signed a ceasefire with the government in 1989. The UWSP controls the Wa Self-Administered Division. The UWSA is the largest ethnic army in Myanmar.

Women's League of Burma (WLB): A network of women's organisations from different ethnic groups. Set up in Thailand in 1999. The WLB facilitates women's participation in the struggle for human rights, democracy and equality.

Young Man's Buddhist Association (YMBA): The YMBA was founded in 1906. At first, it built and ran schools using private donations and government grants. It was an important part of the nationalist movement in Myanmar, and was opposed to British rule. Today, the YMBA in Myanmar promotes national and religious commitment and provides educational and recreational opportunities for youth.

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69			http://www.learnquestion.com/seevak/sites/2012/gorbachev/info.html	Unknown
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70	Ian Burt	white dove snip	http://www.flickr.com/photos/oddsock/283888330/	CC Attribution 2.0 Generic
71	Joe Mabel	Kadampa Buddhist Temple, 6556 24th Ave NW (Ballard neighborhood) Seattle, Washington, USA	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ballard_Kadampa_Buddhist_Temple_01.jpg	CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported
72	warrenski	Women: Non Europeans only	http://www.flickr.com/photos/warrenski/2528357427/	CC Attribution 2.0 Generic
72	Guinnog	Sign in Durban that states the beach is for whites only.	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:DurbanSign1989.jpg	CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported
72	Paul Weinberg	This image was captured during protests against Apartheid in South Africa in the 1980s.	http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anti-Apartheid_Protest_02_F.jpg	CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported
73	Tamilan93	Eelam vlag	http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eelam_flag.png	CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported
73	Unknown	A LTTE car with soldiers, in Killinochi, april 2004	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:LTTE_car_with_soldiers_in_Killinochi_april_2004.jpg	CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported
75	Unknown	Unknown	http://www.poonak.org/	Unknown
76	oktaviono	A crowded KRL electric multiple unit train with passengers riding on the outside in Jakarta, Indonesia.	http://www.flickr.com/photos/27827512@N03/7261153830/	CC Attribution 2.0 Generic
80	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
87	Woody Wonder Works	The Night Lights of Planet Earth	http://www.flickr.com/photos/wwwworks/2712985768/in/photostream/	CC Attribution 2.0 Generic
91	TUBS	Map of administrative divisions of Myanmar	http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Myanmar_administrative_divisions_-_de_-_colored.svg	CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported
94	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
101	Blue-Haired Lawyer	Posters for the Irish European Fiscal Compact referendum, 2012 campaign on lower Ormond Quay in Dublin.	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Irish_Fiscal_Compact_referendum_posters.jpg	CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported
103	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
116	David Andersson	March in Support to Occupy Wall Street Oct 5 2011	https://lh5.googleusercontent.com/-3b6BA21mhUg/To0SEcxiGjI/AAAAAAAAGJ0/a-xdO46i4KU/w754-h506-no/DSC_0018.JPG	Unknown
120	James Vaughan	1954 ... soviet radio!	http://www.flickr.com/photos/x-ray_delta_one/5092237346/	CC Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 Generic
120	William	Old Philips TV	http://www.flickr.com/photos/potrzenie/6088059547/	CC Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0 Generic
120	Alvar Lidell.jpg: Liftarn Derivative work: Mattgirling (talk)	Alvar Lidell, c1945	http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BBCmarconi-atype.png	CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported
136	Nick-D	Occupy Sydney in May 2013	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Occupy_Sydney_in_May_2013.jpg	CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported
142	DannyManhattan	Teacher's Strike in Chicago	http://dannymanhattan.deviantart.com/art/chicago-teachers-union-strike-354699964	CC Attribution-NonCommercial-No Derivatives 3.0 License.
148	Unknown	Pyithu Hluttaw Structure 2012	http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:2012_Pyithu_Hluttaw_structure.png	CC Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported
149	Unknown	Gate of Heavenly Peace	http://i.images.cdn.fotopedia.com/ktwenchuan-QtgPOHAKsOU-original/Beijing_/The_City_of_Beijing/Districts/Dongcheng_District/Tiananmen_Square/Tiananmen/Tiananmen-Red_flag_politics.jpg	CC Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported
152	Darwinek	Flag-map of North Korea	http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flag-map_of_North_Korea.png	CC Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported
152	Nicor	Mangyongdae Children's Palace	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mangyongdae_Children%27s_Palace_09.JPG	CC Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported
153	Unknown	Unknown	http://theflyingcameldotorg.wordpress.com/2012/05/29/bush-and-obama-together-at-last/	Unknown
153	DonkeyHotey	Republican Elephant & Democratic Donkey – Icons	http://www.flickr.com/photos/donkeyhotey/6262122778/	CC Attribution 2.0 Generic

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