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## Ch: WORKING INSTITUTION (Notes)

### Why is the minister more powerful than the civil servant?

In a democracy the will of the people is supreme. The minister is an elected representative of the people and thus empowered to exercise the will of the people on their behalf. Minister is

finally answerable to the people for all the consequences of his/her decision. That is why the minister takes all the final decisions. The minister is not, and is not expected to be, an expert in the matters of her ministry. The minister takes the advice of experts on all technical matters and then takes the decision.

### Prime Minister and Council of Ministers

There is no direct election to the post of the **Prime Minister**. The President appoints the

Prime Minister.

- The President appoints the leader of the majority party or the coalition of parties that commands a majority in the Lok Sabha, as Prime Minister.
- In case no single party or alliance gets a majority, the President appoints the person most likely to secure majority support.
- The Prime Minister does not have a fixed tenure. He continues in power so long as he remains the leader of the majority party or coalition.

After the appointment of the Prime Minister, the President appoints other ministers on the advice of the Prime Minister which are usually from the majority party or the coalition that has the majority in the Lok Sabha.

- The Prime Minister is free to choose ministers, as long as they are members of Parliament.
- A person who is not a member of Parliament can also become a minister. But such a person has to get elected to one of the Houses of Parliament within six months of appointment as minister.

**The Council of Ministers** is the official name for the body that includes all the Ministers. It usually has 60 to 80 Ministers of different ranks as mentioned below:

1. **Cabinet Ministers** are usually top level leaders of the ruling party or parties who are in charge of the major ministries. The cabinet is the inner ring of the Council of Ministers and comprises about 25 ministers.

2. **Ministers of State with independent charge** are usually in-charge of smaller Ministries. They participate in the Cabinet meetings only when specially invited.
3. **Ministers of State** are the junior minister, who are assigned to assist cabinet ministers and the ministers of state with independent charge.

*Parliamentary democracy in most countries is often known as the Cabinet form of government* because most of the decisions are taken in Cabinet meetings. Every ministry has secretaries, who are civil servants. The secretaries provide the necessary background information to the ministers to take decisions. The Cabinet as a team is assisted by the Cabinet Secretariat.

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