

Chapter 5. Panchayati Raj

Very Short Q&A:

Q1: What is the literal meaning of panchayat?

Ans: Suru

Q2: In the Hardas village, women go to get water from which river?

Ans: council of five people

Q3: Who prevents the Panchayat from misusing the village money?

Ans: The Gram Sabha

Q4: The secretary of the Gram Panchayat is not an elected person but is appointed by _____.

Ans: The government

Q5: Who is responsible for keeping a record of the Gram Panchayat and the Gram Sabha?

Ans: The secretary of the Gram Panchayat

Q6: Panchayati Raj system is in which level of a democratic government?

Ans: first level

Q7: The Panchs and the Gram Panchayat are answerable to the _____.

Ans: Gram Sabha

Q8: What do you mean by Gram Sabha?

Ans: A meeting of all adults who live in the area covered by a Panchayat.

Q9: Who is a Sarpanch?

Ans: Panchayat's President

Q10: What does 'BPL' stand for?

Ans: below Poverty Line

Q11: Two village Panchs were awarded the Nirmal Gram Puruskar in 2005. To which state did they belong?

Ans: Maharashtra

Q12: What is the 'Panchyati Raj system'?

Ans: A process through which people participate in their government.

Q13: How many levels are there in a Panchayat Raj System?

Ans: Three

Q14: Name the three level of the Panchayat Raj System.

Ans: Gram Sabha at the village level, Samiti or Janpad Panchayat at block level and the the District Panchayat or the Zila Parishad at the district level.

Q15: What is the other name for Janpad Panchayat?

Ans: Panchayat Samiti

Q16: Panchayat Samiti has many _____ under it.

Ans: Gram Sabha

Q17: What is Zila Parishad?

Ans: District Panchayat

Q18: Who approves the work of the Gram Panchayat?

Ans: Gram Sabha

Q19: What is Watershed development in a village?

Ans: The way of conserving water and refilling it in a village

Q20: The water problem in a village can be solved by planting trees, constructing dams and tanks. True/False

Ans: True

Q21: The concept of Gram Swaraj was conceived by _____.

Ans: Mahatma Gandhi

Q22: The Gram Panchayat meets _____ to implement the development programmes.

Ans: Regularly

Q23: Who presides the meeting of the Gram Sabha?

Ans: The Panchayat President or the Sarpanch

Q24: One of the important feature of the 73rd Amendment Act is _____.

Ans: reservation for SCs/STs

Q25: The work of the Gram Panchayat has to be approved by the _____.

Ans: Gram Sabha

Q26: The Gram Sabha meetings are presided by the Sarpanch. True/False

Ans: true

Q27: Who recommended the establishment of Panchyati Raj institutions?

Ans: Balwant Rai Mehta Committee

Q28: The Gram Panchayat is elected for _____ years.

Ans: five

Q29: State the another name of Zila Parishad.

Ans: District Panchayat

Q30: Sarpanch is the Panchayat's President.

Ans: true



Q31: In rural areas, people directly participate in the decision making through _____.

Ans: Gram Sabha

Q32: The developmental work at the district level is taken care by the _____.

Ans: Zila Parishad

Q33: The Gram Panchayat has a secretary who is also the secretary of the _____.

Ans: Gram Sabha

Q34: The block plans are coordinated and consolidated by the _____.

Ans: Zila Parishad

Q35: Every village Panchayat is divided into _____.

Ans: wards

Q36: What is the age limit to become a member of the Gram Sabha?

Ans: 18

Q37: What is the main aim of the Panchayati Raj System?

Ans: involve people's participation

Q38: All the three levels of Panchayati Raj Institutions are elected directly by the _____.

Ans: people

Q39: All India Panchayat Adhyaksha Sammelan was held in 2002 in _____.

Ans: Delhi

Q40: The Gram Panchayat is prevented from misusing the village money by Gram Sabah.
True/False

Ans: true

Q41: Who approves the list of people below the poverty line in villages?

Ans: Gram Sabha finalizes and approves the list of the people below the poverty line in rural areas.

Short Q&A:

Q1: What are the functions of the Gram Sabha?

Ans: The Gram Sabha is the key factor in making the Gram Panchayat a responsible local body. It prevents the village Panchayat from doing wrong things like misusing money. It plays an important role in keeping an eye on the elected members.

Q2: Describe the importance of the local government.

Ans: The local government develops the feeling of self-reliance among the local people. It develops initiative and spirit of cooperation. It trains local people in running the Central and the State administration. It finishes the local work with speed and with minimum expenditure.

Q3: What is the main objective of the Village Panchayat?

Ans: The main objective of the village Panchayat is to improve the condition of the villagers and to make them self-sufficient.

Q4: Does the Right to Information Act also include the Panchayati Raj System?

Ans: RTI Act was approved by the Parliament; it covers not only government offices at the Centre, but also all government bodies set up by the States and Union Territories. Panchayati Raj Institutions (Part IX) of Indian Constitution are covered by the Act. It provides citizens the right to access of Panchayat information. Citizens can examine works, documents and records of the government.

Q5: Who forms the Gram Panchayat and for what term they are elected?

Ans: The Ward members (Panchs) and the Sarpanch form the Gram Panchayat. Gram Panchayat is elected for a term of five years.

Q6: Describe the formation of a Panchayat.

Ans: Each village Panchayat is divided into wards i.e division into smaller areas. Citizens of each ward elect a representative who is known as the Ward Member or Panch. All the ward members together make a Panchayat.



Q7: What are the objectives of 'watershed development programme'?

Ans: The objectives of "watershed development programme" are:-

- a. To control desertification
- b. To encourage restoration of ecological balance
- c. To promote economic development of village community

Q8: Discuss the role of Gram Sabha.

Ans: Gram Sabha finalizes and approves the list of the people below the poverty line in rural areas. The Gram Sabha is a key factor in making the Gram Panchayat play its responsibility and be accountable. It is the place where all plans and policies for the work of the Gram Panchayat are placed before the people. The Gram Sabha checks the Panchayat from doing incorrect things like misusing money or favoring certain people. It plays an important role in keeping a watch on the elected representatives and in making them answerable to the people who elected them.

Q9: What are the responsibilities of the Sarpanch in Gram Panchayat?

Ans: Sarpanch has various responsibilities, some of them are as follows:-

- a. Looking after street lights, construction and repair work of the roads in the villages and also the village markets, fairs, festivals and celebrations.
- b. Keeping a record of births, deaths and marriages in the village.
- c. Looking after public health and hygiene by providing facilities for sanitation and drinking water.
- d. Providing for education. Implementing development schemes for agriculture and animal husbandry.

Q10: Where does the Gram Panchayat get its funds from?

Ans: The source of funds of Gram Panchayat are:

- Collection of taxes on houses, market places, etc.
- Government scheme funds received through various departments of the government- through the Janpad and Zila Panchayats.
- Donations for community works etc.

Q11: Which award is given by the Government for excellence by the Panchs?

Ans: The Panchs of different Gram Panchayats are awarded with the Nirmal Gram Puruskar by the central government for their excellent work every year.

Q12: Panchayat Samiti is organised at block level. It consists of head of Gram Panchayats falling within its jurisdiction. The head of Panchayat Samiti is known as Block Pramukh or Pradhan etc.

Ans: South Africa

Q13: What is the function of the third level of Panchayati Raj?

Ans: Zilla Parishad or District Panchayat is the apex body of Panchayati Raj System. It examines and approves the budget of panchayat samitis in the district. Issues directions to the panchayat samitis for efficient performance of their functions. Coordinates development plans prepared by the panchayat samitis. It distributed funds, allocated by the State government to the panchayat samitis in the district. It collects statistics relating to the activities of local authorities in the district.

Q14: State the main objectives of Panchayati Raj.

Ans: Helps in strengthening the democracy at grass-root level. It has twin objectives:- Democratic decentralization and local participation.

Q15: Name the officer who has the greatest importance in the community development?

Ans: Block Development officer has the greatest importance in community development.

Q16: How is the Pradhan of the village Panchayat elected?

Ans: The elected members of the Gram Panchayat elect from among themselves a Sarpanch and a Deputy Sarpanch for a term of five years.

Q17: Who is a Sarpanch?

Ans: All the members of the Gram Sabha elect a Sarpanch who is the Panchayat President. Seats for Sarpanch are reserved for women who belong to scheduled caste and scheduled tribes. Sarpanch presides over the meetings of the Panchayat.

Q18: What are the duties of a District Commissioner?

Ans: The District Commissioner is also called the collector or District Officer. He is the representative of the state Government. He looks after the district administration. It is his duty to coordinate the work of the government officers of the district.



Q19: Explain all the function of the Zila Parishad.

Ans: The main function of the Zila Parishad is to coordinate all the activities of the Panchayati Raj. It gives advice to the State government on the work of the Panchayats and the Samitis. It prepares a plan for its district development.

Q20: What problem did the villagers in Hardas village face? What did they do to solve this problem?

Ans: The villagers in Hardas village were facing the water problems. The problem was discussed in the Gram Sabha meeting and a conclusion was arrived at; thus, watershed development programme came into operation. Soon it was completed and the villagers took a sigh of relief.

Q21: Explain the relation between the Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha.

Ans: The work of the Gram Panchayat has to be approved by the Gram Sabha. In some states, Gram Sabha forms committees like construction and development committees. The members are from the Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat. They work together to carry out specific tasks.

Q22: What problems are discussed in the meeting of the Gram Sabha?

Ans: The meeting of the Gram Sabha begins with the Panchayat president. The members of the Gram Panchayat present a plan on repairing the road that connects the village to the main highway. They also discuss about the water and water shortages. Finally, they discuss about the finalization of the BPL list, which has to be approved by the Gram Sabha.

Q23: What was the criterion for making the BPL list?

Ans: The first Below Poverty Line was made in the Rajya Sabha on December, 21, 1978 by the then Prime Minister. BPL was based on the rupee value of a specified nutritional requirement. The cost of the grain that fulfils this nutritional standard was calculated. This cost was the poverty line.

Q24: Mention the powers of the Nyaya Panchayat.

Ans: The Nyaya Panchayat has the power to settle only minor and criminal cases such as thief's, gambling, simple injury etc. It can impose a fine of upto one hundred rupees. It cannot send any person to jail. It also solves disputes relating to custody and maintenance of children and dependants. The cases tried by the Nyaya Panchayat are decided quickly in an inexpensive manner.

Q25: Describe the success of the Panchayati Raj



Ans: The Panchayati Raj has not been able to achieve its aim fully. The Panchayati Raj has set up a link between the government and the villages in every corner of the country. The villages in India have become politically awakened and in almost every home people discuss about the problem of the country.

Q26: Describe the failure of the Panchayati Raj.

Ans: Failure of panchayati raj: The elected representatives often forget their duties and promises which they made with the villagers at the time of elections.

Q27: Why do we need a local government?

Ans: A local government is very important. The aim of the local bodies is to solve the local problems by cooperation and without depending upon others. The local people only know their problems and for meeting their needs, it is the local people who take interest. They also finish the work with speed and with least expenditure. The local government also lightens the work of the Central and State government. They also provide training of administration to the people at lower levels.

Q28: What are the key features of Gram Sabha in the Gram Panchayat?

Ans: The quorum for a Gram Sabha meeting remains one tenth of the total member. It is important to have 1/3rd of the quorum as women members. Gram Sabha will have a supervisory body which audits and regulates the functioning of the Gram Panchayat. Recommendation of the Gram Sabha will be binding on the Gram Panchayat. The secretary of the Gram Panchayat can be removed only if the Gram Sabha approves it. All the villages within the Gram Panchayat can have separate Gram Sabha.

Q29: Why do you think Panchayats are so important in our country?

Ans: Panchayats have been in existence since ages. After 73rd amendment of the Indian constitution in 1993, they got the constitutional status. The panchayats have been conceived as development agencies. They aim at rural development by involving the rural community. Panchayati Raj strengthens the foundation of the Indian democracy. It provides representation to the weaker sections of the society namely, Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes and women. The Gram Panchayat maintains water sources, village wells, tanks and pumps, street lighting and drainage system. The Panchayati Raj system also reduces the burden of the state government. Though the Panchayati raj system functions independently, but it is the state government that formulates the rules and regulations regarding the functioning of the local self-government. Due to all these reasons, the Panchayati Raj system is very important for the successful administration of a democratic country like India.



Q30: State five rules that became effective from April 1993 regarding Panchayati Raj.

Ans: In 1992, the Parliament amended the constitution and formulated rules for the Panchayati Raj system. The state and the centre had to follow these rules from April 1993 onwards. The rules are listed below: It should be a three-tier system – the village level, the intermediate or block level and the district level. Direct elections should be conducted for all the seats in the panchayats. The state should ensure representation of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population in the area. Minimum of one third of the total number of seats is to be reserved for women. A member of panchayat should not be less than 21 years of age. The State Election Commission should hold regular panchayat elections.

Long Q&A:

Q1: Explain Mahatma Gandhi's belief related to Panchayati Raj.

Ans: Gandhi's idea of village Swaraj is that of a complete republic. The working of the day to day activities of the village will be conducted by the Panchayat of five persons, annually elected by elderly men villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. Panchayats will have all the power and authority required. He believed that strengthening of village Panchayats would help the process of effective de-centralisation.

Q2: Explain the role of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Panchayat Samiti.

Ans: Every Panchayat Samiti elects two of its members as Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Their tenure of office is for five years. They can be removed by the Panchayat Samiti members by passing a resolution supported by 2/3rd majority. Seats for the post of Chairman are reserved for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Q3: What in your opinion is the importance of the Gram Sabha? Do you think all members should attend Gram Sabha meetings and why?

Ans: The Gram Sabha is of great importance to all of us who are living in villages. In the Gram Sabha, all important issues regarding the development of a village are discussed and Gram Panchayat works according to the agenda laid down in and passed by the Gram Sabha. Yes, all the members should attend Gram Sabha meetings because this practice will automatically educate the participants and they would learn the procedure for calling the meeting.