

## CIVICS

### Ch. 5

### Panchayati Raj

#### Points to Remember

- **3 Levels of Panchayati Raj in India:** (a) Gram Sabha which elects Gram Panchayat at village level (b) Panchayat Samiti at the block level (c) Zila Parishad at the district level
- **Gram Sabha:** It is the meeting of all adult citizens above 18 years, organized in every village. It consists of all the voters of the Gram Panchayat.
- **Gram Panchayat:** It is a council/ body consisting of several elected ward members, often called the Panch and a president or a Sarpanch.
- **Panchayat Samiti/ Block Panchayat:** A group of elected officials from every Gram Panchayat under one Block form the council of Block Panchayat/ Panchayat Samiti.
- **Zila Parishad:** Few members of all the Block Panchayats under one District are elected to be part of the council called the Zila Parishad. It coordinates the functions of the Block samitis.

#### Question-Answers

**Q1. What problem did the villagers in Hardas village face? What did they do to solve this problem?**

**Ans.** The problems faced by the villagers in Hardas village were as follows:

- (i) Acute water shortage.
- (ii) Hand pump water had gone way below the point, up to which the ground had been drilled.
- (iii) Women had to go to the Suru river which was 3 k.m. away to get water.

With the help of Gram Sabha, they found the following solutions to their problems:

- (i) Piping water from the river Suru and making an overhead tank in the village.
- (ii) Deepening the hand pumps and cleaning the wells for that season.
- (iii) Finally, they came with the permanent solution of conserving water or the watershed development.

**Q2. What, in your opinion, is the importance of the Gram Sabha? Do you think all members should attend Gram Sabha meetings? Why?**

**Ans.** Gram Sabha is very important in the Panchayati Raj due to the following reasons:

- (i) Gram Sabha elects the members of the Gram Panchayat.
- (ii) It can question Gram Panchayat and keep a watch on their work.
- (iii) Local problems of the villagers can be discussed in the meeting.
- (iv) They can recommend solutions to the problems.

Yes, I think all members should attend Gram Sabha meetings because they can raise the problems faced by them daily. They can also advise and become aware of the work done by the Gram Panchayat. It is the forum where they can discuss the welfare programmes of the village. This also helps them in participating in democracy.

**Q3. What is the link between a Gram Sabha and a Gram Panchayat?**

**Ans.** Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat are linked to each other in the following ways:

- (i) Gram Sabha elects the members of the Gram Panchayat.
- (ii) The Panch and the Gram Panchayat is answerable to the members of Gram Sabha.
- (iii) Gram Sabha keeps an eye on the elected representatives of the Gram Panchayat.

**Q4. Take an example of any one task done by a Panchayat in your area/nearby rural area and find out the following:**

- a. Why was it taken up?**
- b. Where the money came from?**
- c. Whether or not the work has been completed.**

**Ans.** (a) Panchayat needs to construct the building of a middle school.  
(b) Major part of the money came from the State Government and minor part of money came from the funds of Panchayat.  
(c) The work has been completed on time.

**Q5. What is the difference between a Gram Sabha and a Gram Panchayat?**

**Ans.**

	<b>Gram Sabha</b>	<b>Gram Panchayat</b>
1.	Members of Gram Sabha are not elected.	Members of Gram Panchayat are elected representatives by the Gram Sabha.
2.	All the adults who are above the age of 18 or have the right to vote are the members of Gram Sabha.	Ward members, Panchs and Panchayat President are the members of Gram Panchayat.
3.	The members and the body are permanent.	The members and the body are elected after every 5 years.
4.	They keep an eye on the works of Gram Panchayat.	They take advice from the Gram Sabha and do the work.

**Q6. Read the following news item.**

*Nimone is a village .....Adapted from Indian Express, May 1, 2004.*

**a. Why was Bhagvan beaten?**

**b. Do you think that the above is a case of discrimination? Why?**

**Ans.** (a) Bhagvan was beaten when he insisted that the water in the tanker must be emptied into the storage tanks constructed as part of the water supply scheme by Nimone Gram Panchayat so that there would be equal distribution of water.

(b) Yes, above is a case of discrimination because the distribution of water was not equal for all the people. The distribution of water from the tanker was only served to the upper caste people, not to the lower caste people. Moreover, it was not even emptied in the tank constructed by the Panchayat.

**Q7. Find out more about watershed development and how it benefits an area?**

**Ans.** Watershed development is the conservation, recharging and judicious use of the water resources like, underground water, rivers etc. and lands within the watershed area.

Benefits of watershed development in an area are:

- (i) It makes the land fertile and supports the growth of trees, plants and cultivation.
  - (ii) Helps in the preservation of water and its resources.
  - (iii) Prevents soil erosion.
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