

CHAPTER-16

LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT



After studying this chapter you learn :

- Know the importance of forming local self government.
- Explain the objectives and functions of local self government.
- Describe the formation, administration, responsibilities and duties of local government.

The concept of local self government in India is very old. Many ancient kingdoms of India gave importance to the growth of local self government. Local self government provided a link between the government and the masses. It helped the people of the locality to voice their problems. The local government helped to solve local problems at the local level with the co-operation and involvement of the people. The involvement of people in administration strengthened the democratic institution at the grassroot level. The people were vested with powers of electing representatives to local administrative bodies. The self governing bodies called local self government became the basis for the decentralization of power. Acts of 1919 and 1935 passed by the British provided more powers to local self governing institutions in India. After independence the government of India appointed many committees and passed Acts to realize the dream Grama swarajya of our father of the Nation.

In addition a direction was included in Indian Constitution which states that the state shall take steps to organise village panchayat and provide them with adequate powers and authority to function efficiently. 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments which came into effect in 1993 became the milestone in the history of Panchayat Raj system.

The local self governments functioned in Karnataka in the pre – independence period. In the post independence period many committees were appointed by our state government to establish and strengthen local bodies in our state. In 1983 the Panchayat Raj Act

was introduced and it came into effect in 1985. According to this Act Zilla Panchayat at district level, Taluk Panchayat at taluk level and Grama Panchayat at village level were created through direct elections. Later in 1993 the Panchayat Raj Act was amended to strengthen the Act of 1983. The Act also made provision for the creation of Grama Sabhas. To keep pace with the modern developments many amendments to Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act have been passed. The objectives of the local self government are :

- To involve the local people in solving the problems of their own locality.
- To provide the knowledge of administration to common people.
- To help in decentralizing powers and make the administration become more efficient.
- To train or develop leadership qualities among people at the grassroot level.

Functions of Local Self Governments: The functions of the local self governments like Grama Panchayats, Taluk Panchayats and Zilla Panchayats are varied. A few important functions are :

- To maintain and protect the panchayat property.
- To prepare the annual budget of the local body.
- To undertake health and family welfare programmes.
- To plan and undertake the developmental works like laying of roads, electrification, housing and supply of drinking water, etc.
- To encourage and implement the primary, secondary, adult and informal education programmes.
- To maintain cleanliness and sanitation of the area.
- To prevent all sorts of pollution and to provide better health facilities.
- To provide facilities for the distribution of essential commodities like food grains, kerosene etc.
- To ensure prompt registration and reporting of birth and deaths.
- To encourage agriculture, animal husbandry, khadi and handicraft industries.

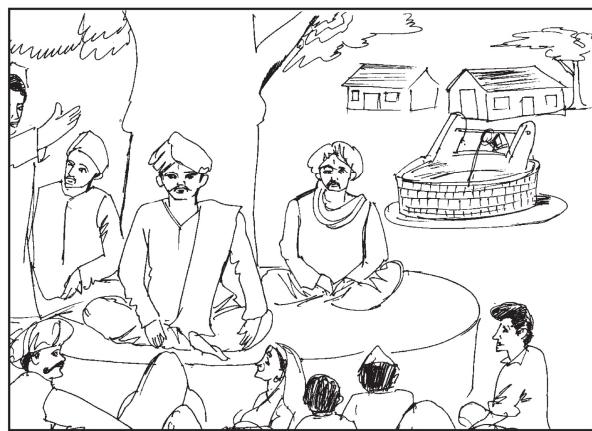
- To undertake the programmes for conservation of soil, water and forest.
- To execute the agricultural extension programmes to help the farmers.
- To plan and implement the welfare schemes for the benefit of SC, ST, weaker sections, women and children.
- To provide marketing facilities, street lighting facilities and reading room facilities.
- To collect taxes, fees and penalties.
- To identify the beneficiaries for the various projects and welfare programmes of the government.

Sources of Income : The local self governing bodies require funds to implement various plans and projects. The main sources of income for local bodies are

- Amount collected through water cess, health cess, education cess, library and reading room cess.
- Amount collected through building tax, vacant land tax, taxes on business establishments, markets, entertainment houses and advertising bodies.
- Taxes collected from the tourist spots.
- Rental and lease amount collected on their properties.
- Financial grants from the state government.

Composition of local self governing bodies

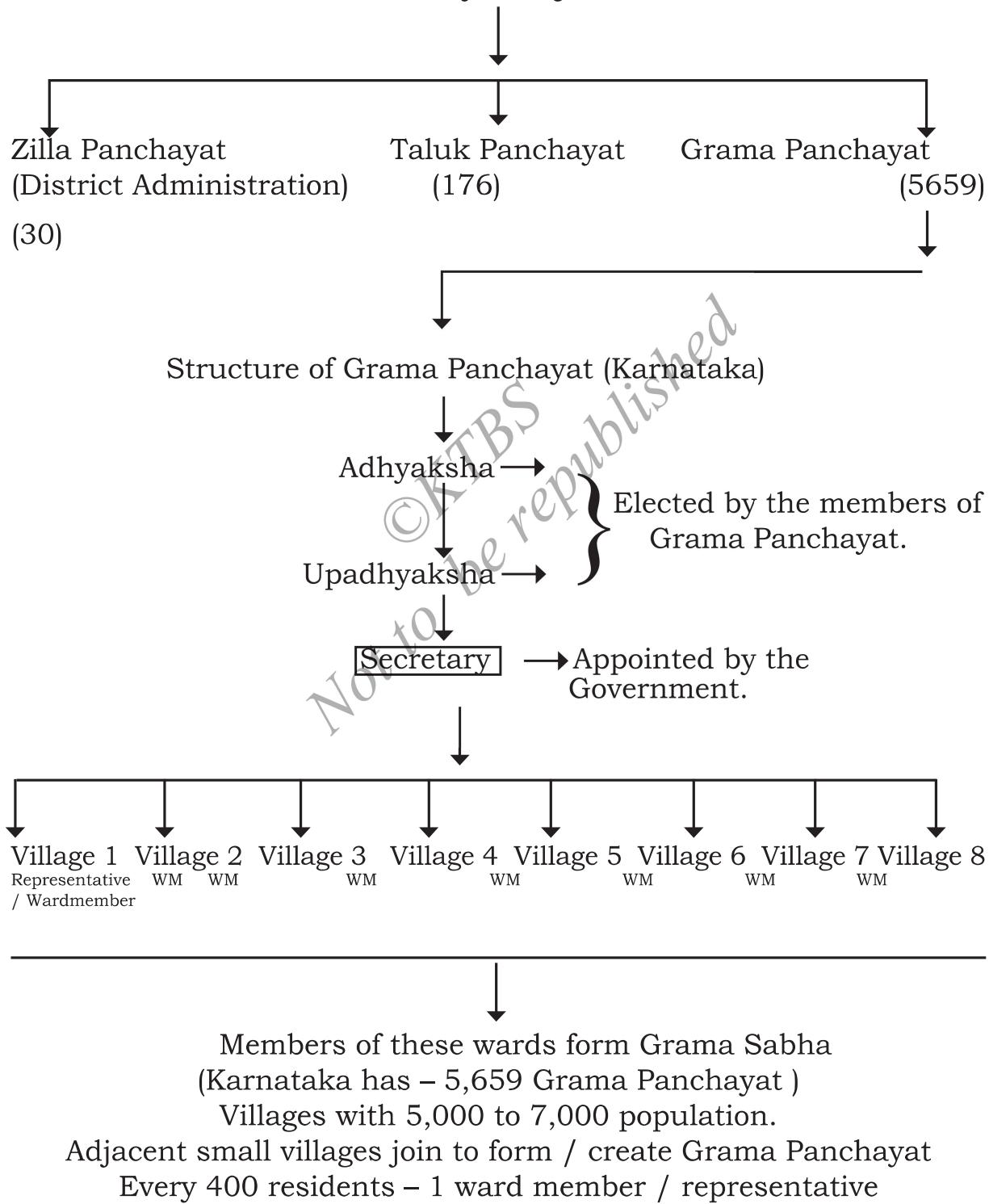
Grama Sabhas : Grama Sabha is a village council. There is no election procedure to Grama Sabha. All the members of Grama or village aged 18 and above can take part in Grama Sabha meetings. The president of Grama Panchayat presides and the members of Grama Panchayat attend the



Gramा Sabha

meetings. Grama sabha must meet at least once in six months. Grama sabha discusses the problems of their village and also the welfare measures undertaken for the progress and development of the village. It recommends the names of the beneficiaries to various governmental schemes.

Chart of Panchayat Raj in Karantaka



The term of Grama Panchayat is five years and the term begins from the date of the first meeting of Grama Panchayat.

Grama Panchayats: Grama Panchayats are formed on the basis of population. Village or group of villages with a population between 5,000 and 7,000 form Grama Panchayat. Regions of Uttar Kannada, Dakshina Kannada and Malnad regions form Grama Panchayat only with the population of 2,000. The members of the grama panchayat are elected by the adult population of the Panchayat area. One representative for 400 voters is elected. Reservation is provided to schedule caste, schedule tribe, backward classes and women.

As per second amendment of Panchayat Raj Act of 2000, a panchayat member must have a toilet in his house. If he does not have, he must arrange to have one within one year of getting elected.

Grama Panchayat meetings must be held at least once in two months. Minimum one third of the members of the Panchayat must be present to take decisions. All the members of the Grama Panchayat together elect Adhyaksha and Upadhyaksha for a term of 30 months. Adhyaksha presides over the meetings of Grama Panchayat and in his absence Upadhyaksha manages the deliberations. Reservation policy is applicable to the posts of Adhyaksha and Upadhyaksha. Standing Committees are formed for the efficient administration of Grama Panchayats.

A full time official called Secretary is appointed to look after the executive work of the Grama Panchayat. Recently provision is made to appoint one Panchayat Development Officer (PDO) through Karnataka State Public Service Commission. (KPSC).

Taluk Panchayats: Panchayat Raj Act of 1993 provides an opportunity for the creation of Taluk Panchayat at Taluk level. Taluk Panchayat comprises of the members directly elected by the eligible voters. The number of members in the Taluk Panchayat is based on population of the taluk. There is one elected representative for every 10,000 voters. Reservation is provided to SC, ST, backward communities and women. Besides, one fifth of the presidents of

Grama Panchayats serve as the members of Taluk Panchayat. The Presidents are chosen through lots (lottery system). They are nominated on rotation basis for a period of one year. The term of the Taluk Panchayat members is five years. They have the right to resign or can be removed by the Government. MLAs, MLCs and MPs of that jurisdiction can attend the Taluk Panchayat meetings.

The Taluk Panchayat meetings must be held at least once in two months. In case of utmost importance special meetings are conducted. The president of Taluk Panchayat presides over the meetings. In his absence vice president presides over the meetings. President and vice president are elected by the Taluk panchayat members for a term of 20 months. The standing committees are constituted to bring about efficiency in administration. The government appoints the executive officer to look after the executive work of Taluk Panchayat. In revenue matters his powers are equal to that of magistrates. Taluk Panchayats have certain functions to perform in addition to the functions of local bodies. They are,

- To consolidate the annual plan proposals of the Grama Panchayats and to submit those to Zilla Panchayat.
- To implement all the welfare programmes suggested or ordered by the Zilla Panchayat or state government.

Zilla Panchayat: Zilla Panchayats are constituted at district level to look after the administration. Earlier they were called district boards. The members of the Zilla Panchayat are directly elected by the people of the district. The total number of representatives vary from district to district based on the population. One representative for a population of 30,000 in Dakshina Kannada, one representative for a population of 18,000 in Kodagu (Coorg) and one representative for a population of 40,000 in other areas are elected. In addition the presidents of Taluk Panchayats, MLAs, MLCs and MPs of that district are the members of Zilla Panchayat. They can attend the meetings and vote. Reservation of seats are provided to SC, ST, backward classes and women. The term of the members is five years.

Zilla Panchayat meetings are to be held at least once in two months. One president and one vice president are elected for a term of

30 months. The President of Zilla Panchayat is called Zilla Adhyaksha. Zilla Adhyaksha presides over the meetings of Zilla Panchayat. In his absence vice president will preside over the meetings. The president has the powers to sanction one lakh rupees for relief measures during the period of calamities. Five standing committees are formed for efficient administration of Zilla Panchayat. Chief Executive Officer (CEO), equal to the rank of the District Commissioner is appointed by the State government to look after the executive work of the Zilla Panchayat. He takes part in Zilla Panchayat meetings and discussions, but has no right to vote.

Zilla Panchayat is like the district government. It has vast powers in the implementation of developmental programmes and welfare schemes in the district. All the developmental programmes and schemes of the government are routed through Zilla Panchayats. In addition it has the following functions :

- To create an atmosphere of mutual trust, confidence and co-operation between Grama Panchayats, Taluk Panchayats and Zilla Panchayat for successful implementation of government projects and programmes.
- To bring about co-ordination among all the departments for successful implementation of programmes and also to supervise such developmental work.
- To encourage and provide support for the establishment of co-operative societies, co-operative banks and such other co-operative institutions.
- To execute the work as directed by the state government.

A separate Election Commission is constituted at state level to conduct elections to local bodies as per Panchayat Raj Act 1993. The Election Commission so constituted conducts the elections to Grama Panchayats, Taluk Panchayats and Zilla Panchayats in Karnataka.

Urban Local Bodies

There are many towns and cities in the state. Towns and cities are categorised as urban areas. In urban areas people have better facilities of education, health, transport, drinking water, sanitation and entertainment. At the same time there are many problems in urban areas. In order to solve these problems and to provide good governance, the urban local self governments or urban local bodies are set up. There are three types in urban local bodies. They are :

- City Corporation (Mahanagara Palike) – Major cities
- Town Municipalities or Municipal Corporations – Towns and Cities
- Cantonment wards : under the control of Defence.

The state government has powers to declare a particular area as a city or a town on the basis of certain factors like population, income etc., These urban local bodies have many functions. They are :

- To prepare the budget and to get the approval of the council.
- To look after the overall administration of the town or city.
- To prepare a good town planning system and to implement it.
- To provide good roads, transportation, water supply, electricity, education, market and health facilities.
- To maintain cleanliness by providing good sewage system and disposal of urban waste.
- Granting permission to build structures, maintaining of local body buildings and properties.
- Registration of births and deaths.
- To provide parks, sports and entertainment facilities.
- To improve the living conditions in the slum areas by providing facilities.
- To establish orphanages, old age homes, beggar colonies, juvenile homes and child welfare centers.

- To undertake the construction of swimming pools, stadiums, museums, bus stations, reading room facilities, public libraries, veterinary hospitals, theatre for cultural programmes, whole sale market yards and crematoriums.
- To plan for rain harvesting.
- To encourage cultural activities.
- To undertake measures for the improvement or progress of backward classes and weaker sections.
- To encourage and to undertake such measures which can help to maintain greenery, cleanliness, and beauty of the town or the city.

Sources of Income

In order to bring about the development and progress of the area and also to implement various plans and projects, the urban local bodies require funds. The main sources of income are from the taxes levied and collected on buildings, vacant sites, shops and vending carts etc. In addition, they collect rent from the buildings of the local bodies rented out to offices, market yards, shops and town halls etc. Water cess, market cess and cess on entertainment houses yield revenue. The grants provided by the state government help the local bodies to undertake welfare measures.

Composition of urban local bodies

Town Municipalities or Municipal Corporations: An urban area is classified as a town or a city on the basis of the population. An area with a population between 20,000 and 50,000 is considered as a town. Town municipality is the governing body of that area. Similarly an area with a population between 50,000 and 3 lakhs is considered as city. The governing body of that area is called a City Municipality. The governing bodies of Town Municipalities and City Municipalities have elected representatives called Councillors. The Councillors are directly elected by the people of that town or city. The number of councillors vary from place to place depending on the population of that area. In Town Municipality the number of councillors are between

23 and 27 whereas in City Municipalities the number is between 31 and 37. Beside, the State Government nominates five members who have good experience and knowledge in municipal administration. These nominated members take part in debates and discussions of the council meeting but have no right to vote. The local MLAs, MLCs and MPs can also attend the council meetings and vote. SC, ST, backward classes and women are provided reservation as per the rule in these local bodies. The President and the Vice President are the heads of the local bodies. They are elected by the councillors. The President presides over the council meetings and helps in smooth functioning of the local body. In the absence of the President, the Vice -President looks after the functions. The term of the urban local bodies is five years. Under certain special circumstances the State Government has powers to extend the term. Four standing committees are constituted for the smooth and efficient administration of the local bodies. The Chief Officer is the Administrative Officer of the municipal body. He is appointed by the Government. He looks after the entire executive work of municipality besides providing the necessary information to the council.

City Corporation or Mahanagara Palike

City Corporation or Mahanagara palikes are constituted as per Karnataka Municipal Corporation Act of 1976. The City Corporation or Mahanagara Palikes are formed in the areas with more than two lakh population and an income of more than Rs. One crore. The members of the City Corporations are called Corporators. The number of Corporators in the corporation is decided on the basis of the population. The number of corporators should not generally be less than 30 and not more than 100. The state government decides the size of the corporation.

There are ten city corporations and one Bruhat Mahanagara Palike in Karnataka. Bangalore City Corporation is called Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP).

City is divided into smaller electoral divisions called wards. One corporator is elected from each ward. Corporators are directly

elected by the people of that city. Certain seats are reserved to SC, ST, backward classes and women. Besides these elected members, the state government nominates five members possessing good experience and knowledge in town planning, health, education and Municipal Administration. The five nominated members can take part in corporation council meetings but have no right to vote. The MLAs, MLCs and MPs representing that area can also attend the meetings of the corporation council and vote. The term of the corporators is five years and the term can be extended upto one year by the state government depending upon the circumstances.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor are the leaders of the corporation. They are elected by the corporators. Their term of office is one year. The Mayor Presides over the corporation meetings. He/She takes measures to implement the decisions of the council meetings. He/She establishes control over the executive work of the corporation. Standing Committees are set up to bring about efficiency in administration and also to assist the Mayor.

Karnataka Municipal Corporation Amendment Act is passed in 2011. The Act applies to eleven corporations of Karnataka including that of Bangalore. The Act provides opportunity for community participation in Municipal functions. According to this Act each corporation will have two more representative bodies namely the area sabhas and the ward committees. These two committees involve in the developmental schemes of the corporation.

The Commissioner is the real executive of the City Corporation. Generally he is of IAS (Indian Administrative Services) cadre. He is appointed by the State Government for a term of three years. He participates in the council meetings and provides the required information to the council. He implements the decisions of the council. He assists the Mayor in preparing the budget and also in the executive functions of the corporation.

EXERCISES

I Fill in the blanks with suitable words :

- 1 The Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act that is in force now was passed in the year _____ .
- 2 The body of the village council in which all the voters of the village can participate is _____ .
- 3 The President of Grama Panchayats are chosen to Taluk Panchayats on the basis of _____ system.
- 4 The officer appointed by the Government to look after the day to day executive work of Zilla Panchayat is called _____ .
- 5 The total number of City Corporations in Karnataka including Bangalore is _____ .

II Answer the following questions briefly :

- 6 What are the objectives of Local Self Government?
- 7 How is the local body of your area formed?
- 8 Mention the functions of your local body.
- 9 What are the sources of income of your local body?
- 10 List out the members who have right to vote and those who have no right to vote in the local bodies.
- 11 Mention the need for constituting standing committees in local bodies.
- 12 List out the group of members who have been provided reservation in the local bodies.
- 13 What should be the population to classify an area as town or city.
- 14 What are three tiers of Panchayat Raj in Karnataka ?

III Activities :

- 15 Invite the head or a member of the local body of your area to the school and discuss the problems of your area and also the programmes undertaken to solve such problems.
- 16 Supposing you are a member of local body of your area, what measures would you undertake to solve the problems of your area.
- 17 Conduct a mock local body meeting in your class room with the help of your teacher.
- 18 Discuss the need for providing reservation in local bodies.

IV Projects :

- 19 Study and collect information about the local bodies which functioned in ancient India.
- 20 Survey the area in which you live and collect the information about the problems of the area that needs to be attended.
- 21 Survey the area in which you live and prepare a report about the facilities provided by the Government and how the people of the area are benefited by these facilities.
- 22 Interview any five or six members of the local bodies and collect information about the measures taken by them to improve their wards and prepare a report.

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