



Rabindranath World School
W-10/3120, DLF Phase III, Gurgaon (HR).

CHAPTER5

PANCHAYATI RAJ

NOTES:

GRAM SABHA

The Gram Sabha-a meeting of all adults who live in the area covered by a Panchayat (could be only one village or a few villages). In some states, the village meeting is held for each village. Anyone who is 18 years old or more with the right to vote is a member of the Gram Sabha. The Gram Sabha meeting often begins with the Panchayat President (who is also called the Sarpanch) and the members of the Panchayat (the Panchs) presenting a plan. Every village Panchayat is divided into wards, i.e. smaller areas. Each ward elects a representative who is known as the Ward Member (Panch). All the members of the Gram Sabha also elect a Sarpanch who is the Panchayat President. The Ward Panchs and the Sarpanch form the Gram Panchayat, which is elected for 5 years. The Gram Panchayat has a Secretary who is also the Secretary of the Gram Sabha, who is not an elected person but is appointed by the government and is responsible for calling the meeting of the Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat and keeping a record of the proceedings.

The Gram Sabha makes the Gram Panchayat play its role and be responsible and it is where all plans for the work of the Gram Panchayat are placed before the people. The Gram Sabha prevents the Panchayat from doing wrong things like misusing money or favouring certain people and keeps an eye on the elected representatives and makes them responsible to the persons who elected them.

THE GRAM PANCHAYAT



The Gram Panchayat-meets regularly- implement development programmes for all villages that come under it- work of the Gram Panchayat has to be approved by the Gram Sabha- Gram Sabhas form committees like construction and development committees in some states- committees include some members of the Gram Sabha-some from the Gram Panchayat who work together to carry out specific tasks.

The work of a Gram Panchayat includes:

1. The construction and maintenance of water sources, roads, drainage, school buildings and other common property resources.
2. Levying and collecting local taxes.
3. Executing government schemes related to generating employment in the village.

Sources of funds for the Panchayat:

- 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.

THREE LEVELS OF PANCHAYATS

Panchayati Raj System is a process through which people participate in their own government. In rural areas, the Gram Panchayat- first tier or level of democratic government. The Panchs and the Gram Panchayat-answerable to the Gram Sabha-it is the members of the Gram Sabha who elected them. The idea of people's participation in the Panchayati Raj system extends to two other levels. One is the Block level, called the Janpad Panchayat or the Panchayat Samiti with many Gram Panchayats under it. Above the Panchayat Samiti is the District Panchayat or the Zila Parishad that actually makes developmental plans at the district level. With the help of Panchayat Samitis regulates the money distribution among all the Gram Panchayats. Each state in the country has its own laws with regard to Panchayats. The idea is to provide more and more space for people to participate and raise their voices.

