

Panchayati Raj

- The subject of 'Local Government' is mentioned in the State List under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.
- Panchayati Raj was constitutionalized through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992.
- This bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on 22 December, 1992, and by the Rajya Sabha on 23 December, 1992. Later it was approved by the 17 state assemblies and received the assent of the President on April 23, 1993.
- This act has added a new Part-IX to the Constitution. This part is entitled as 'The Panchayats'. It consists of provisions from Articles 243 to 243 O.
- Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution contains 29 functional items of the panchayats. It deals with Article 243-G.
- Three tier system of Panchayats (Part IX of the Constitution)
 - ❖ Panchayat at the village level;
 - ❖ The District Panchayat at the district level;
 - ❖ The Intermediate Panchayat in States where the population is above 20 lakhs.
- All the seats in a Panchayat is filled by direct election.
- The electorate is named 'Gram Sabha'.
- **Gram Sabha** is a village assembly consisting of all the registered voters in the area of a panchayat.
- The members of panchayats at the village, intermediate and district levels shall be elected directly by the people.
- The chairperson of panchayats at the intermediate and district levels (Zila Parishad) shall be elected indirectly by and from amongst the elected members.
- The Chairperson of a Panchayat at village level is elected according to the law passed by a State.
- Seats are reserved in Panchayat for Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population (Art. 243D).

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➤ Out of the reserved seats, 1/3 is reserved for women belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. 1/3 of the total seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat is reserved for women.

➤ All persons **above 21 years** of age and qualified to be a member of the State Legislature are qualified as a member of a Panchayat (Art. 243F).

➤ A State can authorise a Panchayat to levy, collect and appropriate taxes, duties, tolls etc.

➤ After the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution (24 April 1993). every 5 years the States appoint a Finance Commission to review the financial position of the Panchayats and make recommendations.

➤ The Community Development Programme was launched on Oct. 2, 1952.

➤ The Panchayati Raj was introduced for the first time on Oct. 2, 1959 in Nagaur District of Rajasthan by the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

➤ Rajasthan is the first state in India, where Panchayati Raj was implemented in the whole state. Rajasthan was followed by Andhra Pradesh, which also adopted the system in 1959.

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Important Committees:

COMMITTEES RELATED TO PANCHAYATI RAJ			
Sl.	Committees	Date of Appointment	Date of Report
1.	Balwant Ray Mehta Committee	Jan, 1957	24 - 11 - 1957
2.	Ashok Mehta Committee (On working of Panchayats)	12 - 12 - 1977	21 - 08 - 1978
3.	Hanumantha Rao Committee (Direct Level Planning)	Sept., 1982	May, 1984
4.	G. V. K Rao Committee - (On administrative aspects of rural development)	25 - 03 - 1985	Dec., 1985
5.	L. M. Singhvi Committee -(On Constitutional status of Panchayats)	-	27 - 11 - 1986
6.	P. K. Thungon Committee -(To consider constitutional amendment)	1988	
7.	V. N. Gadgil Committee -(How best Panchayat Raj Institution Could be made effective)	1988	