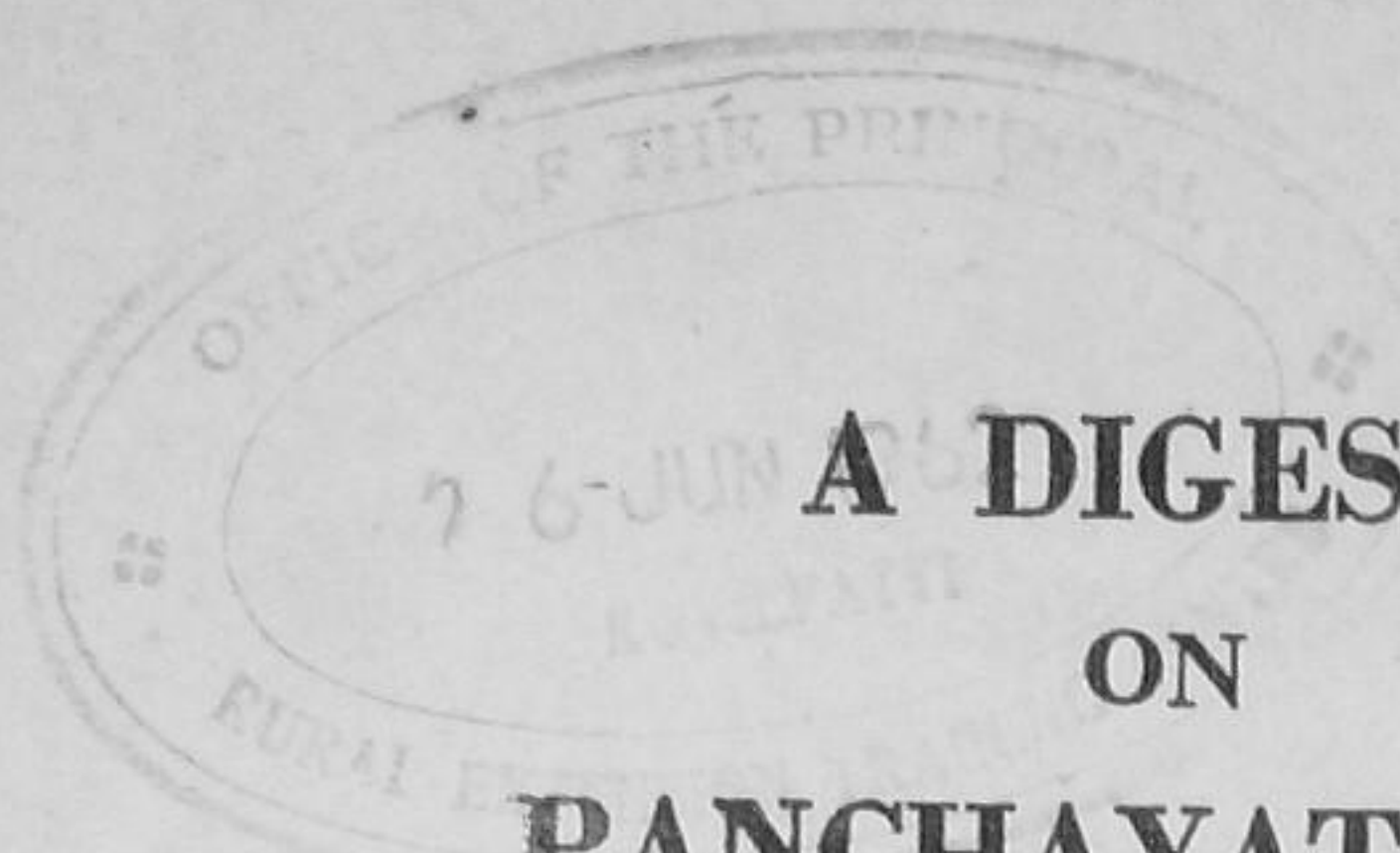


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**A DIGEST
ON
PANCHAYATI RAJ**

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Preface

On 12th January 1958 the National Development Council endorsed the recommendations made by the Balwantrai Mehta Committee on Democratic Decentralisation. The Central Council of Local Self-Government in its fifth meeting at Hyderabad in 1959, took stock of the action taken by the States to implement the decision of the National Development Council and recommended that :—

“While the broad pattern and the fundamentals may be uniform, there should not be any rigidity in the pattern. In fact, the country is so large and Panchayati Raj (Democratic Decentralisation) is so complex a subject with far-reaching consequences, that there is the fullest scope of trying out various patterns and alternatives. What is most important is the genuine transfer of power to the people. If this is ensured, form and pattern may necessarily vary according to conditions prevailing in different States.

This recommendation has largely determined the policy of the Government of India in the matter. Accordingly there has been no insistence on the States to follow a given or prescribed pattern. Only certain fundamentals or basic principles of Panchayati Raj have been emphasised. The important ones are :—

- (a) It should be a three-tier structure of local self-governing bodies from the village to the District, the bodies being organically linked up.
- (b) There should be genuine transfer of power and responsibility to them.
- (c) Adequate resources should be transferred to the new bodies to enable them to discharge these responsibilities.
- (d) All developmental programmes at these levels should be channelled through these bodies.
- (e) The system evolved should be such as will facilitate further devolution and dispersal of power and responsibilities in the future.

2. States have evolved patterns of Panchayati Raj suitable to local conditions in the light of these principles. Panchayati Raj has revolutionised administration and called for new codes of administrative relationships and behaviour. Each State stands to benefit from the experience of the other and can add, alter or change its own system in order to improve its working. The entire approach is pragmatic as Panchayati Raj is a growing concept and there is no finality or rigidity about the pattern or system evolved at any time.

3. Panchayati Raj is under implementation in eight States *viz.* Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Madras, Mysore, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Legislation has been passed in four States *viz.* Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Drafting of legislation is in progress in West Bengal. Jammu & Kashmir and Kerala are yet to take necessary steps for legislation.

4. In this "Digest" an attempt has been made to give very briefly the main features of the legislation in different States, the powers, functions and resources of the Panchayati Raj bodies at the village, Block/Taluk and District levels. Part 'A' deals with States where Panchayati Raj is under implementation. Part 'B' contains information in respect of States which have passed the legislation. Part 'C' deals with States which have either taken up the drafting of legislation or are yet to take steps for the same. Part 'D' deals with Union Territories.

Part A

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Andhra Pradesh

The Set-up

Panchayats have been functioning in this State under the Madras Panchayat Act, 1950 in the ex-Madras area and under the Hyderabad Village Panchayats Act, 1956, in the rest of the State. A new Panchayat Bill for the entire State is before the State Legislature.

Andhra Pradesh has established a three-tier structure under the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads Act, 1959. It introduced Panchayati Raj on 1st November, 1959 by setting up 235 Panchayat Samitis and 20 Zila Parishads. Earlier a start had been made on an experimental basis by establishing one *ad hoc* Panchayat Samiti in a block in each district, through an ordinance. Panchayat Samitis are being established on a phased basis corresponding to the opening of new blocks. At present, there are 293 Block Panchayat Samitis.

The three bodies i.e., the Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad, are organically linked up, the Panchayat being directly elected and the others indirectly elected from it. Provision has been made in the new Panchayat Bill for the statutory recognition of the Gram Sabha. Seats are reserved for women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in all the three bodies. M.L.As and M.L.Cs are members of the Panchayat Samitis without power to vote, and the M.L.As and M.Ps are full members of the Zila Parishads. Elections are by secret ballot and the reserved seats are filled up by cooption by the main body.

The Collector is a member of the Zila Parishad and is the Chairman of all its Standing Committees. Such District Officers as are specified by the Government are members of the Parishad without any right to vote. The B.D.O. with his extension staff at the block level is placed squarely under the administrative control of the Panchayat Samiti, with himself working as its Chief Executive Officer.

Powers and Functions

Responsibility for all developmental activities at the village level has been given to the Panchayat. Functions of the Panchayat include promotion and development of elementary education, cottage industries, promotion of agriculture, organisation of collective farming and co-operative management of lands, establishment and maintenance of maternity and child welfare centres, watch and ward assisting implementation of land reform measures and framing programmes of production for the village.

Development programmes of all Departments of Government including maintenance of minor irrigation sources and functions

relating to backward classes have been transferred to the Panchayat Samitis. Powers, functions, funds, assets and liabilities of the erstwhile District Boards have also been transferred to the Samitis and Parishads. Elementary schools have been brought under the control of the Panchayat Samiti and the Secondary Schools under the Zila Parishad.

The Zila Parishad is a co-ordinating, planning and supervisory body. It examines and approves the budgets of Panchayat Samitis and distributes to Panchayats, funds allotted to it by the State and Central Government. It also performs the functions of Panchayat Samiti in respect of non-Samiti Blocks. Besides, the Zila Parishad is entrusted with executive functions in establishing, maintaining or expanding secondary, vocational and industrial schools.

Resources

The main sources of income of the Panchayats are grants from the Government, share of land cess, house tax and profession tax which they impose and duty leviable on certain transfers of property. The Panchayat has also got authority to impose a number of other taxes at its discretion. Besides, it gets income from the property owned by it.

The Community Development funds as also the funds of the various Development Departments at the Block level and assistance from the All-India Boards are placed at the disposal of the Panchayat Samitis. Panchayat Samitis have powers to levy and collect taxes hitherto being levied and collected by the District Board. A share of land revenue is also given to Panchayat Samitis.

The State Government has built up a Panchayat Equalisation Fund by contribution from the State resources at the rate of 25 nP. per capita. This fund is utilised for assisting Panchayats in developing capital remunerative assets, such as pastures, forests, orchards, etc. The assistance is given partly as loan and partly as grant-in-aid.

General

As regards the budget, the Panchayat budget is examined by the Panchayat Samiti which forwards its suggestions, within a prescribed time limit, to the prescribed authority for due consideration. The Panchayat Samiti budget is approved by the Zila Parishad with necessary modifications.

The State Government have reconstituted the services and have classified them into three cadres: State, District and Block. Recruitment at the district level is done by a District Selection Committee.

The State Government have appointed a Commissioner of Panchayati Raj assisted by a Joint Commissioner and three Deputy Commissioners to carry out the executive functions of the Planning and Local Administration Department and the supervisory work relating to Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads. The Commissioner will also be a member of the Board of Revenue though he

will refer all matters relating to Panchayati Raj direct to Government.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population (in thousands)	.. .. .	25,822
2. Number of Panchayats	.. .. .	14,559
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats..		100
4. Number of villages covered	.. .. .	26,450
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	.. .. .	100
6. Average population per Panchayat	.. .. .	1,760
7. Number of Panchayat Samitis	.. .. .	310
8. Number of Zila Parishads	.. .. .	20

Assam

The Set-up

Assam used to have Panchayats under the Assam Rural Panchayat Act, 1948. Under the new "Assam Panchayat Act, 1959", the State has adopted a three-tier structure of local self-governing institutions with the Gaon Panchayats at the village level, Anchalik Panchayats at the Block level, and Mohkuma Parishads at the Sub-Division level. The State Government considered the Sub-Division rather than the District, as a suitable level to locate the apex body.

The Gaon Sabha, comprising the entire village electorate, is recognised and has the power to review the progress of work of the Panchayats and draw up the village plans. The Panchayat is elected by the Gaon Sabha. Each Panchayat consists of 11—15 members elected from amongst the members of the Gaon Sabha. Election is by a system according to which voters are to form groups round the candidate or his authorised agent. One woman member, one scheduled caste and one scheduled tribe member are to be coopted, if not elected) by the Panchayat.

Elections to the Anchalik Panchayats are also held in the same manner and are direct but the member so elected to the Anchalik Panchayat is made ex-officio member of the Gaon Panchayat. Thus an organic link is established between the two bodies. All local M.L.As are ex-officio members of the Anchalik Panchayat but have no right to vote. In the case of the Mohkuma Parishad, all the local M.Ps and M.L.As are made members of the Parishad with the right to vote. In addition to these, the Mohkuma Parishad consists of Presidents of all Anchalik Panchayats, Chairmen of Municipalities, Town Committees and School Boards. One member of scheduled caste/tribe is to be coopted by the Parishad if no such member is elected.

The Collector is kept out of the three-tier system. Such other officers as Government specify are made members of the Anchalik Panchayat and the Mohkuma Parishad but with no right to vote. The B.D.O. is placed under the Anchalik Panchayat as its ex-officio Secretary.

Powers and Functions

The Gaon Panchayat is to provide for the requirements of its area in the sphere of sanitation, health, education, village watch and ward, agriculture, preservation of forests, breeding and protecting cattle etc. Among the other functions given to it are the management of community lands, grazing lands and other community property, maintenance of minor irrigation works (if such concerns one Gram Sabha), spread of education up to Middle English and Middle Vernacular standards, watch and ward of the village and welfare of backward classes.

The Anchalik Panchayat is to provide for all development works within its jurisdiction excepting those functions specifically assigned to Gaon Panchayats and, in particular, it has to provide for the requirements of the area such as medical relief including establishment and maintenance of hospitals and dispensaries, construction and maintenance of minor irrigation works (which concern more than one Gram Sabha), spread of education above the Middle English Standard, developing agriculture and horticulture, taking measures for soil conservation, land reclamation, improvement of cattle and such others. It has been given the responsibility for execution of all development works. It has the power to approve the Panchayat budgets and supervise their works. The Mohkuma Parishad has similarly powers to approve the budgets of the Anchalik Panchayats, coordinate and supervise their work. The Mohkuma Parishad advises the Government on distribution and allocation of funds to the Anchalik Panchayats and in drawing up of district plans.

Resources

The Gaon Panchayat and the Anchalik Panchayat each get a share from land revenue. The statute provides for not less than 15 per cent of land revenue for Gaon Panchayats and not less than 10 per cent of land revenue for Anchalik Panchayats. Both these bodies have also got powers to levy taxes and fees. Besides, funds for various development programmes are also placed at their disposal, routed through the sub-divisional Rural Development Fund from out of the State Rural Development Fund.

General

Budget of the Gaon Panchayat is approved by the Anchalik Panchayat and that of the Anchalik Panchayat by the Mohkuma Parishad within a prescribed time limit.

The "tea-growing areas" of the State have, for the present, been excluded from the operation of the Assam Panchayat Act, 1959, but the State Government are considering its extension with suitable modification to these areas, soon.

Panchayats in 8 Blocks have taken up Rural Insurance work.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population (in thousands)	8,629
2. Number of Gaon Panchayats (in plains area only) ..	2,570
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats..	100*
4. Number of villages covered	17,717
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	100
6. Average population per Panchayat	2,646
7. Number of Anchalik Panchayats	120
8. Number of Mohkuma Parishads	16

*Villages in the Reserve Forest and Tea Garden areas excluded.

Madras

The Set-up

The Madras Panchayats Act, 1958, enforced on 1st January, 1960, provides for Panchayats at village/town level, and Panchayat Union Councils at the Block level. The Madras Panchayat Act, 1950, formerly in force in the State, provided only for Panchayats at the village level. The third-tier in the structure of the Panchayati Raj scheme in Madras is the District Development Council, at the Development District level, constituted under the Madras District Councils Act, 1958, enforced on 1st December, 1959.

A village Panchayat under the Panchayat Act, will have a population of not less than 500 and a Town Panchayat, a population of not less than 5,000 and an annual income of not less than Rs. 10,000. Gram Sabha has not been recognised under the Act.

Election to the Panchayats is by secret ballot. Seats are reserved for scheduled castes and tribes having regard to their population. One woman is coopted by the Panchayat, if no woman is elected. The Panchayats are directly elected.

The Panchayat Union Council comprises one representative from every Panchayat elected by its members, M.L.As in the area and three women and three Scheduled Caste members, coopted by the Panchayat Union Council, if not elected (if some are already elected, only such number will be coopted so as to make their total three each). M.L.As have no right to vote.

The 12 Revenue Districts have been delimited into 21 Development Districts with a Development Council in each. The Development Council consists of the District Collector (Chairman), local M.Ps. and M.L.As., Chairmen of the Panchayat Union Councils, Presidents of Cooperative Central Banks and such officers connected with planning and development as may be nominated by Government, with no right to vote. The local M.Ps. and M.L.As., who are members of the District Development Councils, have the right to vote.

Powers and Functions

Panchayats have been made responsible for all development and welfare programmes at the village level. Among their functions are included construction and maintenance of all village roads, drains, improvement of sanitation, sinking and repairing of wells, repair and maintenance of ponds and tanks, protection of water for drinking purposes, construction of works for public utility. Government have transferred Porambores, waste lands, and kudimarammat to Panchayats. All unreserved forests in the village vest in the Panchayat and are administered by it.

The Panchayat Union Councils are made responsible for construction and maintenance of roads, establishment and maintenance of dispensaries, maternity and child welfare centres, elementary

schools, promotion of agriculture, cottage industries and provision of veterinary relief. Maintenance of minor irrigation works have been vested in Panchayat Union Councils. They are also entrusted with the execution of C.D. Programme.

The Development Council advises Government on all matters concerning the activities of Panchayats, Panchayat Union Councils and Municipal Councils in the district; on matters relating to development of economic resources of the district and the services maintained therein; on all development schemes undertaken by all local authorities and those government agencies in the district relating to the departments of Food and Agriculture, Industries, Labour and Cooperation, Public Health, Education and Local Administration; classifies markets, roads and the like as village and Panchayat Union Markets, roads etc.

Resources

The Government have decided to pay annually to every Panchayat Union Council a land revenue assignment at the rate of Re. 1 per capita out of the total land revenue (including water cess) collected in the State during the year; a local Education Grant and a local cess matching grant. Besides, every Panchayat is paid a House Tax matching grant at the rate of Re. 1 per capita of House Tax collected. Other resources of the Panchayat consist of taxes on buildings, land, professions etc. and income from Panchayat property.

General

Panchayat Union Councils were constituted in 75 blocks on 2nd October, 1960. In the second phase of the programme, 131 Panchayat Union Councils were set up on the 14th April, 1961. With the launching of 169 more Panchayat Unions on the 2nd October, 1961, the entire State with the exception of Municipalities and Townships has been covered by Panchayat Union Councils. The B.D.O. functions as the Commissioner of the Panchayat Union Council. The services of the Extension staff and other trained staff are made available to the Panchayat Union Councils and Panchayats.

Financial resources which would be available to the Panchayat Union Councils and the constituent Panchayats for various purposes during the Third Plan have been indicated to them. Every Block is to frame its own budget. The Panchayat Development Schematic Budget brings together, for the first time, funds available under C.D. Schematic Budget, local development programmes, State Rural Water Supply Comprehensive Scheme and other similar programmes into a single consolidated Block grant for village works.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	226.60 lakhs
2. Number of Panchayats	12,555
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats ..	98
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats ..	17,513
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	99
6. Average population per Panchayat	1,799
7. Number of Panchayat Union Councils	375
8. Number of District Development Councils	21

Mysore

The Set-up

The Mysore Village Panchayats and Local Boards Act, 1959, envisages a three-tier system with Panchayat at village level, Taluk Board at Taluk level and Development Council at District level. Prior to this, only Panchayats existed, but under 5 different pieces of legislation applying to 5 different areas which constitute the new State. These were: The Mysore Village Panchayat and District Board Act, 1952, for the old Mysore area, the Madras Village Panchayat Act, 1950 for the Madras-Karnatak areas, the Bombay Village Panchayat Act, 1933, for Bombay-Karnatak areas, the Hyderabad Gram Panchayat Act, 1956 for Hyderabad-Karnatak areas and the Coorg Panchayat Raj Act, 1956 for Coorg area. The new Act has brought the whole State uniformly under one legislation.

Both the Panchayats and Taluk Boards are directly elected and the District Development Councils are constituted indirectly from the Taluk Boards. Seats are reserved for women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in both the Board and the Council. All M.L.As are members of the Board and Council, and M.Ps. are members of only the Council. They have the right to vote. The Act recognises the Gram Sabha constituted of all adult residents in the village which can discuss statement of accounts and annual reports. Elections to Panchayat and Taluk Development Board are to be by secret ballot.

The Collector (Deputy Commissioner) is the President of the District Development Council. The B.D.O. or the Tehsildar (in non-Block area) is the Chief Executive Officer of the Taluk Board. Such officers as are nominated by Government are to be members of the District Council.

Powers and Functions

The Gram Panchayat is made responsible for construction and maintenance of village roads, drains, wells, tanks, sanitation, improvement of cattle, promotion of cottage industries, development of co-operation, welfare of Scheduled Castes, promotion of agriculture and such other development programmes at the village level. Functions like construction and maintenance of roads, minor irrigation works, promotion of agriculture, co-operation, community development and other development programmes have been entrusted to the Taluk Board. The Board also supervises the work of the Panchayats. The District Development Council approves the budget of the Taluk Boards, co-ordinates and reviews their work. The Taluk Boards are to contribute towards the establishment and running of primary and secondary educational institutions.

Resources

Every Panchayat is required to constitute a fund called "Panchayat Fund" which is made up of amounts allotted by the Government, proceeds of taxes imposed by the Panchayat, sums contributed by the Taluk Board and income from the property held by the Panchayat. The Panchayat can impose a tax on buildings, professions and trades. It has a discretion to levy a number of taxes such as on festivals, vehicles, markets, etc. 30 per cent of the Land Revenue is statutorily assigned to Panchayats. The resources of the Taluk Board are mainly rates on cesses, fees and taxes levied by the Taluk Board, grants from the Government and income from the properties held by the Board. The Taluk Board is further empowered to levy a duty on immovable property and a tax on animals brought for sale in the markets in its jurisdiction. Government can levy a local cess at the rate of 12 nP per rupee of the land revenue for the Taluk Board. 20 per cent of the land revenue is also statutorily assigned to the Taluk Board.

General

The Panchayat budget is approved by the Chief Executive Officer of the Taluk Board within a prescribed time limit. The budget of the Taluk Board is approved by the District Development Council within a prescribed time limit.

A separate service known as "Mysore Local Government Service" is envisaged for personnel and staff working under the Taluk Boards and District Councils.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	..	..	..	..	..	..	149.45 lakhs
2. Number of Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	..	7,450
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	..	100
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	..	25,880
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	..	100
6. Average population per Panchayat	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,002
7. Number of Taluk Boards	..	..	..	..	..	..	179
8. Number of District Development Councils	..	..	..	..	..	..	19

Orissa

The Set-up

Under the Orissa Gram Panchayat Act, 1947, Panchayats have been in existence in the State covering nearly 97 per cent of the rural population. This Act, which applies to the Gram Panchayats in the State, gives recognition to what is known as Palli Sabha for every village in the Panchayat area instead of one Gram Sabha for the entire Panchayat area. The Palli Sabha has authority to discuss at annual meetings, the development programmes for the coming years.

The State introduced a three-tier system of Panchayati Raj under the Orissa Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads Act, 1959, with Panchayats at the base, Panchayat Samitis at the Block level and Zila Parishads at the district level. The Act has been given effect to by constituting Panchayat Samitis all over the State on 26th January, 1961. Subsequently, the State Government have passed an Amendment Act in December, 1961 to remedy certain defects in the principal Act. Panchayat Samitis consists of the Sarpanches of Panchayats as ex-officio members, and a member, who is not a Panch, elected by each of the Panchayats. Chairmen of Municipalities and Notified Area Councils with a population not exceeding 20,000 are also made members of Panchayat Samitis. Besides, seats are reserved for one woman and one member each from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, if their population is not less than 5 per cent of total population. M.Ps and M.L.As have not been made members of the Panchayat Samitis. M.L.As are, however, entitled to notice of and shall have a right to take part in the proceedings of Samiti meetings but shall not have a right to vote. Officers from each Development Department are made ex-officio members of Panchayat Samiti. The B.D.O. is the Chief Executive Officer of the Samiti.

The Zila Parishad is composed of the Chairmen of the Panchayat Samitis, the Chairmen of Municipalities and Notified Area Councils with a population exceeding 20,000, and Presidents of the Central Co-operative Banks in the District. One seat is reserved for woman, if the non-official members do not include a woman. The Collector and the District level officers of the Technical Development Departments and also the Sub-Divisional Officers are made members without right to vote. M.Ps and M.L.As have not been made members, but they are entitled to participate in the Parishad meetings without voting right.

Elections to these bodies are by secret ballot and the reserved seats are filled up through election by the elected members of the parent bodies.

Powers and Functions

All development and welfare programmes at the village level have been entrusted to the Gram Panchayats. Among other functions

given to the Gram Panchayat are management of common grazing grounds, community lands, maintenance of village forests, removal of encroachment on roads, development of cooperatives, maternity and child welfare, adult education and promotion of cottage industries. Planning and execution of development work in the Block and management of primary education are the main functions given to the Panchayat Samiti. It has also the authority to sanction the Panchayat budget. The Zila Parishad, similarly, approves the budgets of the Samitis and coordinates and consolidates the Block plans.

Resources

The Gram Panchayat has got authority to levy taxes, fees, etc., which are to be supplemented by grants-in-aid, income from fisheries, ferries etc. The main sources from which the Panchayat Samiti derives its income are, funds relating to C.D. Programme and other schemes transferred by Government, share of land revenue, income from properties under its control, grants etc. from Government and other local bodies. In the case of the Zila Parishad, its income accrues from contributions made by Government and share in other State taxes, fees and cesses.

General

The Panchayat budget is approved by the Panchayat Samiti and that of the Panchayat Samiti by the Zila Parishad within a prescribed time limit.

The Government have decided to organise an annual prize competition among the Gram Panchayats. Every 200 Gram Panchayats will be taken as a unit and for every unit two prizes will be awarded. The first prize will consist of a cash award of Rs. 10,000 and a grant of Rs. 50,000 for establishing a rural industrial unit. The 2nd prize will consist of a cash award of Rs. 5,000 and a grant of Rs. 25,000 for a rural industrial unit. The performance will be assessed by a district level committee consisting of the Chairman of the Zila Parishad, the District Collector and a nominee of the Development Commissioner.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	..	..	..	..	..	..	140.52 lakhs
2. Number of Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,342
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	..	97
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	..	47,939
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	..	94
6. Average population per Panchayat	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,807
7. Number of Panchayat Samitis	..	..	..	..	..	..	307
8. Number of Zila Parishads	..	..	..	..	..	..	13

Punjab

The Set-up

Two legislations on Panchayats, viz., Punjab Gram Panchayat Act, 1952, and the PEPSU Panchayat Raj Act (for PEPSU area) were in force. The Punjab Gram Panchayat (Amendment) Act, 1959, repealed the PEPSU Panchayat Raj Act, and extended the Punjab Act, with modifications, to the entire State. The Gram Panchayat is constituted by direct election from adult voters of the village. Gram Sabha is recognised. It has the authority to consider the budget and the report of work and also to draw up development plans.

The Punjab Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads Act, 1960, contemplates Panchayat Samitis at the Block/Tehsil level and Zila Parishads at the District level. Panchayati Raj was introduced in the State on 2nd October, 1961.

A Panchayat Samiti is to be constituted mainly with 16 primary members elected by Panches and Sarpanches in the Block from amongst themselves. Two women and 4 members from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are to be coopted by the primary members. Local M.L.As M.L.Cs are to be associate members with no right to vote or to be elected as Chairmen or Vice-Chairmen. S.D.O./B.D.Os. are ex-officio members with no right to vote. The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are elected by the Samiti from among the primary and coopted members.

The Zila Parishad consists of 5 members from every Panchayat Samiti in the district (if the Samiti is for a Tehsil) or 2 members (if it is for a Block) elected by the primary members of every Samiti; Chairmen of the Samitis and local M.Ps. and M.L.As. (with no right to vote), 2 women. Such number of women and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes members are to be coopted (if not elected) so as to make their total strength 2 and 5 respectively. Similarly, 2 persons with experience in administration and public life are to be coopted. The Deputy Commissioner is a member with no right to vote. The Chairman of the Parishad is elected by non-official members (excluding M.Ps. and M.L.As.) from amongst themselves.

Powers and Functions

Panchayats are made responsible for all development works at the village level. Their functions, *inter alia*, include development of agriculture and village industries, cattle improvement, improvement of public health and sanitation, organization of young farmers' clubs and Mahila Mandals, Village Volunteer Force, promotion of pisciculture, starting grain fund for cultivators, establishment and management of maternity and child welfare centres. Matters relating to promotion of agriculture, health and sanitation, communica-

tion, cooperation, cottage and small industries, etc. fall under the functions of Panchayat Samitis. The Samiti shall be the agent of Government for the formulation and execution of C.D. Programme.

The Zila Parishad is mainly to be a supervisory and advisory body. It coordinates Samiti plans and approves the Samiti budgets.

Resources

Resources of the Panchayats consist of taxes like the house tax, profession tax, share from land revenue, duty on transfer of property, etc.

Panchayats are undertaking revenue earning, commercial schemes with financial assistance from Government. These include construction of tube-wells to supply water for irrigation on payment, small industrial units, construction of residential houses for renting them out and such others. The Panchayat Samiti fund is to consist of a local rate on land at 25 nP per rupee of its annual value and other fees, taxes etc. that may be levied and Government grants and contributions for the various development programmes including the C.D. Programme. The Parishad fund consists of Central or State grants and contributions and share from land cess taxes, etc.

General

The B.D.O. is the Executive Officer of the Samiti. The Government may place at the disposal of the Samiti such of its officers as are required for the implementation of the schemes connected therewith and they will be under the administrative control of the Executive Officer.

The State Government have a prize scheme for encouraging unanimity in elections to Panchayats. The entire land revenue of one year is to be handed over to Panchayats where elections were completely unanimous; and one-third of land revenue of one year to such others in which either the Sarpanch or the Panches were elected unanimously.

The State Government have recently set up a Directorate of Guidance and Supervision for Panchayati Raj.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	..	..	..	..	..	130.68 lakhs
2. Number of Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	13,461
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	100
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	20,855
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	100
6. Average population per Panchayat	..	..	..	..	..	975
7. Number of Panchayat Samitis	..	..	..	..	..	266
8. Number of Zila Parishads	..	..	..	..	..	18

Rajasthan

The Set-up

Rajasthan was the first State to introduce Panchayati Raj by giving effect to the Rajasthan Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads Act, 1959, on the 2nd October, 1959. It has a three-tier system with the Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad. The Gram Panchayat is directly elected, whereas the higher two bodies are constituted indirectly from the lower body. The Sarpanches of all Panchayats within the Samiti area are its ex-officio members. Similarly, all Pradhans of the Samitis within the Parishad area are its ex-officio members. Local M.L.As. are members of the Panchayat Samiti without right to vote, whereas all M.Ps. and M.L.As. are full members of the Zila Parishad. To the Panchayat Samiti are coopted two women and one member each from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, if there are no such members already, two persons with experience in administration and one from the Managing Committee of the Co-operative Societies. Similarly, to the Zila Parishad two women, one Scheduled Caste member, one Scheduled Tribe member and two persons with experience in administration are coopted. The President of the Central Co-operative Bank is the ex-officio member of the Parishad. Elections to Gram Panchayat are through secret ballot.

There is provision for the meeting of all adult residents residing within the jurisdiction of the Panchayat for discussing the programmes and works undertaken by the Panchayat.

A Panchayat appoints a Secretary for its work. The B.D.O. is the Executive Officer of the Panchayat Samiti and is called Vikas Adhikari. Government has deputed an officer to be a Secretary of each Parishad. The District Development Officer is the ex-officio member of the Parishad. No other officer has been made member of the two local bodies, but the legislation provides that officers of the Development Departments are entitled to attend meetings and participate in the discussions. Both the Zila Parishad and Panchayat Samiti have non-official Chairmen.

Powers and Functions

The Panchayat is made responsible for the improvement of agriculture and cattle, preservation and improvement of public health, maternity and child welfare, construction and maintenance of village roads, markets, warehouses, bridges, drains, spread of education, watch and ward and such others. They are also asked to organise cooperatives and voluntary labour and to assist in implementation of land reforms. The Panchayat Samiti is made responsible for the execution of all development programmes, promotion of agriculture, co-operation, cottage industries etc., and primary education. The Zila Parishad on the other hand supervises the activities of the

Panchayat Samitis, examines the Samiti budget, coordinates the programme for the district and advises Government on matters relating to Panchayats and Panchayat Samitis. The Zila Parishad does not have any executive functions.

Resources

Panchayats have been empowered to impose taxes, such as vehicle tax, building tax and also fees. They receive grants from the Government and all sums realised from fines by the Nyaya Panchayat and court fees go to them. Panchayats can also levy a special tax on adult male members for construction of any public work of general utility. The main sources of income of the Panchayat Samitis are annual grants by the State Government, a share of land revenue, proceeds from taxes and fees and grants for schemes transferred by the State Government. The Zila Parishad gets contributions from the State Government and from Panchayat Samitis.

The State Government communicates, in advance, to the Panchayat Samitis the quantum of funds that they are likely to get from the various Departments. This helps them to formulate plans of work according to the available resources.

In the Third Five Year Plan, a provision of Rs. 2.25 crores in the form of Free Fund and a provision of Rs. 1.5 crores in the form of grant to Panchayats for capital investments have been provided for. For schemes to be undertaken by the Samitis under the Free Fund Scheme, Government will give 40 per cent of the expenditure out of the Free Fund as grants and the remaining 60 per cent will be met by the Samitis through contributions. Free Fund will be distributed among Samitis on basis of population. The Panchayat Samitis will be given funds to give grants to Panchayats for schemes which provide for permanent capital investment. 40 per cent of the expenditure will be met from the funds provided by Government and 60 per cent will be made available by the Samitis from their own resources.

Some selected Panchayats in the State have taken up Rural Life Insurance work, with satisfactory results. The State Government has also taken a decision to give the Panchayats and Panchayat Samitis a fixed percentage of collections of small savings made by them in the form of loan.

General

Though the Panchayats and Panchayat Samitis sanction their own budgets, they are to be approved by the Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad respectively within a prescribed time limit.

The State Government undertook an extensive educational programme on a mass scale covering all categories of people, as a step preparatory to the introduction of Panchayati Raj.

As an incentive to the Panchayat Samitis to make special efforts for implementing the programmes, the State has introduced a prize scheme under which Samitis with outstanding performances in selected fields are given substantial cash awards.

The State Government have introduced a scheme to give a special annual grant of 25 nP. per head of population to every Panchayat, for the full term of three years of its life, where the Sarpanch (who is directly elected by the Gram Sabha) and 80 per cent of the total number of Panches are elected unanimously. The criterion of unanimity is that there should be no rival candidate set up. Uncontested elections due to rejection of nomination of the rival candidates on some technical grounds are not considered unanimous.

The State Government has constituted a Rajasthan Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads Service with different categories and grades. A District Selection Committee has been constituted with the Pramukh and two other members—one of whom is to be a Government servant either in service or retired. They have also promulgated the Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads Service Rules.

The State Government have issued instructions making it the duty of the District level Technical Officers to attend quarterly meetings of the Sub-Committees of the Zila Parishad.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	..	..	..	..	..	130.15 lakhs
2. Number of Panchayats	..	..	..	..	..	7,392
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats	..					100
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats	..	..				34,441
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	..	..				100
6. Average population per Panchayat	..	..	..			1,772
7. Number of Panchayat Samitis	..	..	..	..		232
8. Number of Zila Parishads	..	..	..	..	..	26

PT 63

Uttar Pradesh

The Set-up

Gaon Panchayats have been constituted under the U.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1947, as amended from time to time. The Panchayat with 16—31 members is a directly elected body. Election is by show of hands. Seats are reserved for Scheduled Castes proportionate to their population. The Panchayat has a term of 5 years. Gram Sabha has been recognised, with power to sanction the Panchayat budget.

Formerly, District Boards were constituted under the U.P. District Boards Act, 1922. These District Boards were replaced by the Antarim Zila Parishads constituted under the U.P. Antarim Zila Parishad Act, 1958. Subsequently, the State Government have enacted the U.P. Kshetra Samitis and Zila Parishads Act, 1961, which envisages constitution of Kshetra Samitis at Block (Khand) level and Zila Parishads at District level. Both the bodies will be indirectly elected and local M.Ps. and M.L.As. are members in both cases. Provision also exists for cooption of women and Scheduled Caste members to both the bodies. All Pradhans of Gaon Sabhas are members of Kshetra Samitis. Similarly, all Pramukhs of Kshetra Samitis are members of Zila Parishads. Also prescribed number of persons are chosen as members of Zila Parishad by each Samiti out of its members. Besides, each Khand or group of Khands elects to the Zila Parishad prescribed number of members on the basis of adult franchise. The Chief Executive Officer of the Samiti will be the Block Development Officer and the Chief Executive Officer of the Parishad is called Mukhya Karya Adhikari.

Powers and Functions

The main functions of the Panchayats are sanitation and conservancy, construction and maintenance of public streets, wells etc., assisting and advising agriculturists in the obtaining and distribution among them of Government loans; development of agriculture and cooperation and establishment of improved seed and implement stores; establishment and maintenance of libraries, establishing primary schools, maternity and child welfare centres, etc.

The main functions of the Kshetra Samiti are establishment and maintenance of primary health centres, maternity and child welfare centres, primary schools, drainage works, minor irrigation works etc., development of agriculture, cooperation, cottage industries etc. and supervision and coordination of Panchayat work and examination of Panchayat budgets.

The main functions of the Zila Parishad are general supervision of Panchayats and Samitis, construction and maintenance of roads, hospitals, schools above primary and up to Junior High School stage, preparation of District plans and distribution of grants allotted by Government or other bodies.

Resources

Panchayats have been empowered to levy taxes and fees on profession, vehicles, sale of goods, etc. They also receive grants from the Government. The main resources of Kshetra Samitis are fees, tolls etc. that may be levied, grants, loans, contributions, etc. from Government for the various development programmes including the C.D. Programme. The main resources of Zila Parishads are tax on circumstances and property, other taxes which the Legislature may authorise the Parishad to levy; tolls, fees etc. that may be levied; grants, loans etc. from Government for various development programmes.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	.. .. .	545.90 lakhs
2. Number of Panchayats	.. .. .	72,333
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats	..	100
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats	.. ..	1,11,722
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	.. ..	100
6. Average population per Panchayat	.. .. .	755

Part B

Bihar

The Set-up

Gram Panchayat (corresponding to the Gram/Gaon Sabha in other States) and its Executive Committee (corresponding to Gram Panchayat/Panchayat in other States) exist under the Bihar Panchayat Raj Act, 1947, as amended by the Bihar Panchayat Raj (Amendment and Validating) Act, 1959. The Bihar Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads Bill, 1961, which has been passed by the State Legislature in December, 1961, envisages Panchayat Samitis at the Block level and Zila Parishads at the District level.

The Panchayat Samiti mainly comprises the Mukhyas of Gram Panchayats, Chairmen of Municipalities and Vice-Chairmen of Notified Area Committees, 2 representatives of Co-operative Societies and one of the members of the managing committee of the Central Co-operative Bank. Also 2 women and 2 persons having experience in administration, public life or rural development are coopted. Besides, one or two persons from each of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and persons other than of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are also coopted to the Panchayat Samiti. Local M.Ps., M.L.As. and M.L.Cs. have been made associate members without voting right or power to hold office.

The Zila Parishad is composed of Pramukhs of Panchayat Samitis, local M.L.As., M.L.Cs. and M.Ps., 3 persons elected by an electoral college of Commissioners of Municipalities and Notified Area Committees and 2 persons elected by an electoral college of members of the managing committees of all the Central Co-operative Banks from among themselves. Also, 2 women and one person each from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes when their population exceeds 5 per cent of the total population, are copted. Besides, one person is nominated by the Bihar State Panchayat Parishad.

Powers and Functions

The Panchayat has been given the responsibility for development of agriculture, maintenance of village roads, streets, water supply, medical relief, rural development, etc.

Panchayat Samitis are made responsible for execution and supervision of all programmes under Community Development and also programmes concerning agriculture, animal husbandry, irrigation co-operation, education, social education, public health and rural sanitation, cottage industries, inter-village communications, collection of statistics and any other programme for economic and social welfare. The Zila Parishad will function mainly as a supervisory and co-ordinating body. It co-ordinates Samiti plans, advises Government on matters relating to development activities in the district and approves the Samiti plans.

Resources

The main sources of income of the Panchayat are contribution from Government, a share of the land revenue and proceeds from taxes and fees that may be levied.

The sources of income of a Panchayat Samiti consist of grants and aids received from the Government, aids received from All India bodies and institutions, *ad hoc* grants received from Zila Parishad, grants and funds for schemes and institutions transferred by State Government, share of cess and land revenue, donations and contributions received from Gram Panchayats, Municipalities, proceeds from taxes, surcharge and fees leviable by Panchayat Samiti, income arising from leases granted by the Panchayat Samiti of public ferries, fairs, hats, etc. The resources of Zila Parishad are mainly the Central or State Government funds allotted to the Zila Parishad, grants from All India bodies and institutions, donations and contributions from Panchayat Samitis, land cess and such share of land revenue as may be allowed by State Government, proceeds from taxes or fees leviable by a Zila Parishad, income from endowments and trusts administered by the Zila Parishad, etc.

General

There is a well organised Village Volunteer Force in the villages who help the Panchayat in many of its activities.

The Block Development Officer will be the Chief Executive Officer of the Panchayat Samiti. He will be responsible for implementing the resolutions of the Panchayat Samiti and of its Standing Committees. He will also exercise such powers and perform such other functions as may be entrusted by the Government. The District Development Officer will function as the Secretary of Zila Parishad and his powers and functions as the Secretary of Zila Parishad will *mutatis mutandis* be similar to those of Chief Executive Officer of Block Panchayat Samiti.

Provision exists in the Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads Act for the establishment of Bihar State Panchayati Raj Board. This Board comprises two Adhyakshas (Chairmen of Zila Parishads) from each of the divisions by rotation, seven M.L.As., three M.L.Cs., one person to be nominated by the State Government from amongst social workers having experience of Gram Panchayat Administration and one representative each from the Bihar State Co-operative Federation and the State Panchayat Parishad. The main function of the Board is to advise the State Government on major questions of policy and major schemes concerning Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads. A Board to be called the Bihar State Gram Panchayat Board is constituted on similar lines for Gram Panchayats.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	.. .. .	361.58
2. Number of Panchayats	.. .. .	lakhs
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats	.. .. .	10,617
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats	.. .. .	95
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	.. .. .	67,258
6. Average population per Panchayat	.. .. .	99
		3,240

Gujarat

The Set-up

An integrated Panchayat Act, viz., the Gujarat Panchayats Act, 1961, has recently been passed for the establishment of Gram Panchayats, Nagar Panchayats, Taluka Panchayats and District Panchayats. A village (or villages) with a population not exceeding 10,000 will form a Gram and will have a Gram Sabha, consisting of all the voters of the Gram. The Gram Sabha will discuss annual statements of accounts, annual administration report, programmes of work etc., at its meetings (2 meetings in a year or more if necessary). The Gram Sabha elects the Gram Panchayat consisting of 9 to 15 members. A village (or group of villages) with a population between 10,000 and 30,000 will elect a Nagar Panchayat consisting of 15 to 31 members. In both, two seats are reserved for women and seats are also reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, having regard to their population.

The Taluka Panchayat is an indirectly elected body, consisting of the Sarpanches of the Gram Panchayats and Chairmen of the Nagar Panchayats (in their absence, Up-Sarpanches and Vice-Chairmen respectively). The Chairmen of the Co-operative Societies in the Taluka elect from amongst themselves such number of members as may be as nearly as 1/10 of the total number of Sarpanches and Chairmen. Local M.L.As., Presidents of Municipalities, local members of District Panchayats and the *Mamlatdar* or *Mahalkari*, as the case may be, are associate members. 2 women interested in welfare activities of women and children, 2 representatives each of Scheduled Castes and Tribes and 2 social workers having experience in rural development are coopted to the body. The Taluka Development Officer as Secretary, can attend the meetings.

The District Panchayat is a partly indirectly elected and partly directly elected body. The Presidents (or in their absence the Vice-Presidents) of the Taluka Panchayats become ex-officio members of the District Panchayat. Further, one member is elected by each Taluka Panchayat from amongst themselves. Such number of seats not exceeding the total of the indirectly elected members from Taluka Panchayats and the Presidents of the Taluka Panchayats, is filled in by direct elections. Two persons with experience in education, are coopted. Local M.Ps. and M.L.As., Presidents of Municipalities and the District Collector are made associate members. 2 seats for women and one or more seats for Scheduled Castes and Tribes, having regard to their population, are reserved at the time of the direct election.

There will be a Secretary for every Gram/Nagar Panchayat. The Taluka Development Officer shall be ex-officio Secretary of the Taluka Panchayat, who will be entitled to attend the meetings of the Taluka Panchayat or any of its committees. The District Development Officer who shall be borne on the cadre of the Indian Administrative

Service (Senior Time Scale) shall be ex-officio Secretary of the District Panchayat who will be entitled to attend meetings of the District Panchayat and any of its Committees.

Powers and Functions

All the three bodies have been given wide powers regarding the various development programmes, particularly in the fields of public health and sanitation, agriculture, animal husbandry, village industries, education, public works, social welfare, etc., within their respective jurisdictions.

One of the distinguishing features of the system of Panchayati Raj envisaged in Gujarat, is that the district local body is not merely an advisory and co-ordinating body with very limited executive powers, as is the case in many other States, but is a body with wide executive powers.

Resources

The Gram and Nagar Panchayats are empowered to levy taxes on buildings and land not subject to payment of agricultural assessment, octroi, pilgrim tax, tax on fairs and festivals and entertainment, profession tax, sanitary cess, water rate, fees on markets, cart-stands, grazing lands etc. and a cess not exceeding 25 nP on every rupee of land revenue. The Taluka and District Panchayats may also levy any of the taxes or fees leviable by a Gram/Nagar Panchayat not exceeding 15 per cent and 10 per cent respectively of the rate levied (or leviable) by the Gram/Nagar Panchayat. The Taluka and District Panchayats may also apply to Government by a resolution to that effect passed by the respective bodies, to increase the rate of stamp duty levied under the Stamp Act, up to 15 per cent and 10 per cent respectively and the proceeds from the increased rate will be given as grant-in-aid to the Taluka and District Panchayats concerned. Further, the Taluka Panchayat can levy an education cess and the District Panchayats can impose a cess at the rate of 20 nP on every rupee of land revenue, which will be collected by the Government and paid to the District Panchayat.

A sum equivalent to the average of the land revenue collected or recovered during the three preceding revenue years in the State shall be set apart for making grants to the Panchayats each year, after due appropriation made by State Legislature. Out of this sum such percentage as may be prescribed shall be set apart for meeting expenditure on salaries of Secretaries of Gram/Nagar Panchayats and of village accountants (Talatis) and on their training. 5 per cent of the sum shall form the State Equalisation Fund, which shall be utilised for making special grants to backward districts so as to minimise social and economic inequalities between districts. Out of the balance of the sum, 50 per cent shall be distributed among Gram and Nagar Panchayats, 25 per cent among Taluka Panchayats and 10 per cent among District Panchayats, in proportion to the average collection and recovery of land revenue from the respective Gram, Nagar, Taluka and District Panchayats, in the 3 years immediately preceding. 7½ per cent will go to make the District Equalisation Fund and 7½ per cent to make the District Gram Encouragement Fund. The District Equalisation Fund shall be utilised by the District Panchayat

for making special grants to backward Panchayats subordinate to it, so as to minimise social and economic inequalities. The District Gram Encouragement Fund shall be utilised for making incentive grants to Gram Panchayats to encourage them to raise their income by levying taxes and fees leviable by them.

Every Gram and Nagar Panchayat shall contribute every year to the District Panchayat, a sum equal to such percentage not exceeding 10 per cent of its income from such sources as may be prescribed, which will constitute the District Development Fund. This Fund shall be utilised for granting loans to Gram and Nagar Panchayats and for payment of interest on contributions made by those Panchayats.

An amount equal to 2 per cent of the forest revenue collected in the revenue year immediately preceding, within the District, is paid to every District Panchayat by the Government, after due appropriation made by the State Legislature in this behalf. Where any Gram is in a forest area and is not assessed under the Land Revenue Code, the State Government shall, in lieu of a grant of land revenue, pay to the Gram Panchayat such amount out of the forest revenue of the Gram, as it may fix, but the amount so fixed shall not be less than Rs. 500.

General

The budget estimate of the Gram/Nagar Panchayat is first referred to the Taluka Panchayat for scrutiny and observations. The Taluka Panchayat sends it back to the Gram/Nagar Panchayat within two months and thereupon the Gram/Nagar Panchayat approves the budget with such modifications as it may think fit. Similarly the Taluka Panchayat budget is forwarded to the District Panchayat for its scrutiny, but finally approved by the Taluka Panchayat itself. The District Panchayat budget is approved by the District Panchayat, itself, but a copy of the approved budget is forwarded to the competent authority.

For purpose of bringing about uniformity in scales of pay and conditions of service for persons employed in the discharge of functions and duties of Panchayats, there shall be a Panchayat Service (distinct from the State Service), consisting of such classes, cadres and posts as the State Government may from time to time determine. There shall be a Gujarat Panchayat Service Selection Board, consisting of three members (including the Chairman), of whom at least one shall be a member of the State Service either in service or retired. There shall be a District Panchayat Service Selection Committee in each district, consisting of one member of the State Panchayat Service Selection Board, nominated by the Chairman of the Board, the President of the District Panchayat of the District and one officer nominated by Government. The Rules to be made by the Government, shall specify the posts to which recruitment shall be made by State Selection Board and the District Selection Committee.

In addition, for the recruitment of primary teachers and other staff in connection with primary education, there shall be a District Primary Education Staff Selection Committee.

Two or more Panchayats or/and any other local bodies may jointly appoint out of their respective bodies a joint committee for any purpose in which they are jointly interested.

There shall be a State Council for Panchayats with the State Minister incharge of Panchayats as Chairman and Deputy Minister for Panchayats as Vice-Chairman (if there is no such Deputy Minister, the Vice-Chairman shall be elected by the Council from amongst themselves). The Presidents of the District Panchayats, will be the members of this Council, besides seven members nominated by Government from amongst persons taking interest in development of Panchayats and three officers, also to be nominated by Government and 3 members elected by the members of the State Assembly from amongst themselves. The main functions of the Council are to advise Government on all general questions relating to Panchayats, to review administration of Panchayats and to suggest ways and means for their improvement.

The Government may delegate to the District and Taluka Panchayats, such powers and functions of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies as may be prescribed.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Total number of villages	.. .. .	17,844
2. Total number of Panchayats	.. .. .	11,208
3. Total number of villages covered by Panchayats	.. .. .	17,760
4. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	.. .. .	99
5. Percentage of Rural population covered	.. .. .	98
6. Average population per Panchayat	.. .. .	1,070

Madhya Pradesh

The Set-up

In the five different regions of the State, five different Panchayat Acts are in force, *viz.* the Bhopal State Panchayat Act, 1952, in Bhopal area, the C.P. and Berar Panchayat Act, 1946, in Mahakosal area, the Madhya Bharat Panchayat Act, 1953, in Madhya Bharat area, the Vindhya Pradesh Gram Panchayat Act, 1955, in the Vindhya Pradesh area and the Rajasthan Panchayat Act, 1953, in the Sironj Sub-Division. An integrated Bill, *viz.* the Madhya Pradesh Panchayats Bill, 1960, has been passed by the State Legislature, which is awaiting President's assent.

Under the new Bill, Gram Sabha has been recognised as a statutory body, which shall meet at least twice in a year to consider the programme of work and the Panchayat budget.

The Gram Panchayat consists of members elected by the Gram Sabha. 10 members are elected if population does not exceed 1,000 and if population exceeds 1,000, one additional member is elected for every additional unit of 250 persons or part thereof exceeding 125 persons. Seats are reserved for scheduled castes and tribes proportionate to their population. Two women are coopted by the Panchayat, if no woman is elected. (If one woman is already elected, only one to be coopted). If there are co-operative societies and if elected members do not include a Chairman of such society, a Chairman is coopted by the Panchayat.

The Janapada Panchayat, to be constituted at the Block level, consists of such number of members elected by the Panches of the Block from amongst themselves as may be prescribed (the Block is divided into constituencies and the number from each constituency is fixed by Government for this purpose), one member representing the Co-operative Marketing Society or a Co-operative Union within the Block, one Councillor representing each Municipal Corporation or Council or Notified Area Committee in the Block, elected by the Councillors of such body from amongst themselves. Local M.L.As are associate members with no right to vote. Two women and one member from scheduled castes or/and scheduled tribes are coopted, if elected members do not include such members.

The Zila Panchayat consists of Presidents of Janapada Panchayats, local M.Ps. and M.L.As. and District officers representing Public Health, Education, Agriculture and other Development Departments. The Zila Panchayat may coopt a woman, a member each of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and a representative of Co-operative Society, if there are no such members already in the Zila Panchayat. The official members have no right to vote.

Every Panchayat with an annual income of Rs. 5,000 shall have a full-time Secretary. (Other Panchayats may have a part-time

or full-time Secretary or two or more such Panchayats may have a common Secretary). The Janapada Panchayat shall have a Chief Executive Officer, appointed by Government. The District Panchayat Officer or any other gazetted officer as State Government may appoint shall act as Secretary of the Zila Panchayat.

Powers and Functions

The main functions of the Gram Panchayat are promotion of agriculture, co-operation, cottage industries etc., sanitation and conservancy, minor irrigation works, water supply, organising collective farming and credit societies. The functions of the Janapada Panchayat include the execution of C.D. programme, maintenance of primary and basic schools, primary health centres etc., promotion of agriculture, fisheries, co-operation, cottage industries etc., and supervision and assistance to Panchayats. The Zila Panchayat is to supervise, guide and co-ordinate activities of Gram and Janapada Panchayats, advise Government on development matters and distribute funds given by Government among Janapada Panchayats.

Resources

The Panchayat Fund consists of a land cess at the rate of 10 nP. per rupee or part thereof exceeding 50 nP. on the land revenue or rent, compulsory taxes like tax on buildings, tax for cleaning private latrines, lighting tax, profession tax, fees for sale of goods and animals in Panchayat markets, optional taxes like tolls on vehicles and pack animals, tax on cycles, rickshas etc., water rate, sanitary cess etc.

The Janapada Panchayat Fund consists of sums allotted for C.D. programme, share from land revenue or other taxes of Government, contributions from Government or other bodies, besides a toll on new bridges, an entertainment tax, fees for licence and extra duty (half per centum on value of property) realised under the Stamp Act.

The Zila Panchayat Fund consists of funds and contributions from Government or other bodies, share from land revenue, forest revenue or other taxes.

General

A copy of the Gram Panchayat budget after it is approved is forwarded to the Janapada Panchayat, for information. The budget of the Janapada Panchayat is approved by the Zila Panchayat. The Zila Panchayat approves its own budget.

Special provision has been made for constitution of Adivasi Panchayats and Pargana Panchayats in the areas where majority of the inhabitants are members of the scheduled tribes. An Adivasi Panchayat, constituted for any village or group of villages, shall consist of such number of elected Panches as may be fixed by Government and a Sarpanch nominated by Government from amongst the Panches. A Pargana Panchayat, constituted for a group of Adivasi Panchayats, consists of a Sarpanch and 4 Panches, all nominated by Government. The State Government may entrust to the Adivasi

and Pargana Panchayats any of the powers and functions usually carried out by the Gram and Janapada Panchayats.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	.. .. .	229.39 lakhs
2. Number of Panchayats	.. .. .	21,498
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats	..	69
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats	.. ..	45,679
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	.. ..	64
6. Average population per Panchayat	.. .. .	1,163

Maharashtra

The Set-up

Gram Panchayats are functioning in Maharashtra under the Bombay Panchayat Act, 1958, which has been in force in the erstwhile bilingual Bombay State. (Prior to 1958, the Bombay Village Panchayat Act, 1933 and the Central Provinces and Berar Panchayats Act, 1946, were operative in the different regions).

Gram Sabha with authority to discuss Panchayat budget, statement of accounts etc. is recognised.

A Gram Panchayat can have 7 to 15 members, elected by secret ballot for a period of 4 years. Seats for women and scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are reserved.

The Maharashtra Zila Parishads and Panchayat Samitis Act has just been passed. Under the new Act, the Panchayat Samiti consists of the directly elected and coopted (if any) local members of the Zila Parishad and Sarpanches elected by the Panches—each electoral division in a block is divided into two electoral colleges of Panches and each electoral college elects one Sarpanch from amongst the Sarpanches of the Panchayats included in the college. The Chairmen of such local Agricultural Cooperative Societies, as Government may specify, besides those the Panchayat Samiti may coopt, are also members of the Samiti. One woman and one representative from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are coopted if there is no such member otherwise.

The Zila Parishad is a partly directly elected and partly indirectly elected body. The Chairmen of Panchayat Samitis become ex-officio members. 40 to 60 members are directly elected from electoral divisions in the district—as far as practicable, one member for every 35,000 population. If elected members do not include a woman, one woman is coopted by the Parishad. Seats may be reserved for Scheduled Castes and Tribes having regard to their population. Chairmen of Federal Co-operative Societies, five in number, being societies dealing with credit, land development, marketing, industrial co-operatives and co-operative training or education, as Government may specify, are made associate members.

The B.D.O. functions as the Executive Officer of the Panchayat Samiti. A Chief Executive Officer and a Deputy Chief Executive Officer are appointed by Government for every Zila Parishad.

Powers and Functions

The Gram Panchayat is made responsible for improvement of agriculture, village industry, communications, sanitation, spread of education, medical relief, etc.

The main functions of the Panchayat Samitis are to prepare an overall plan of works and development schemes to be undertaken

in the block, to sanction, execute, supervise and administer any works or schemes from the block grants, or of the Zila Parishad and to perform such functions of the Zila Parishad as are delegated to it.

The main functions of the Zila Parishad are planning and execution of all development programmes, establishment and maintenance of agricultural, primary, basic and secondary schools, distribution of fertilisers, agricultural implements, improved seeds etc.; improvement of livestock and veterinary aid, educational and economic development of backward classes, maintenance of dispensaries, hospitals, primary health centres, maternity and child welfare centres, construction and maintenance of roads, parks, light railways, tramways, telephone lines, etc., promotion of local industries and arts and cooperatives, water supply, drainage, rural housing, social education, etc. Thus the Zila Parishad is a strong unit with wide powers and responsibilities including powers of taxation.

Resources

The main sources of income of Panchayats are contributions from Government, share of land revenue and local taxes. The District Panchayat Mandal supervises and controls the activities of Panchayats and approves their budgets.

The Zila Parishad is empowered to levy taxes like water tax, entertainment tax, pilgrim tax, a special tax on lands or buildings, licence fees on brokers, commission agents, etc., fees on sale of goods and animals in the markets. The State Government is to levy a cess at the rate of 20 nP. (or more not exceeding 100 nP., if so requested by the Zila Parishad by a resolution) on every rupee of land revenue and a cess not exceeding 19 nP. on every rupee of water rate under the Irrigation Act, levied by Government and credited to Zila Parishad fund after deducting cost of collections and share from areas under Municipalities, Cantonments, etc. A grant-in-aid approximately equal to 50 per cent of the stamp duty on transfer of immovable property within the jurisdiction of Zila Parishad is also given to the Zila Parishad. The Panchayat Samiti is given grants from State Government through the Zila Parishad.

General

Every Panchayat Samiti prepares annually a budget estimate of the income and expenditure of the Samiti for the next year relating to the works and development schemes to be undertaken or continued or executed from block grants. After its approval by the Samiti, it is forwarded to the Zila Parishad, for the inclusion thereof in the budget estimate of the Zila Parishad. (The budget estimate forwarded by every Samiti in the District shall form part of the budget of the Zila Parishad). The budget of the Zila Parishad is approved by itself; but if it fails to approve the budget on or before the prescribed date, the Chief Executive Officer shall forward it to the State Government and the Government shall approve it with or without modification.

The State Government shall constitute :—

1. a District Technical Service (Class III);
2. a District Service (Class III); and
3. a District Service (Class IV)

for each Zila Parishad. For the purpose of selection of personnel to the Services, the State Government shall constitute Divisional Selection Boards and District Selection Boards. The members of the Boards shall be appointed by the State Government and the Boards shall consist of such number of members as the Government may determine. It shall be the duty of the Divisional Board to select candidates for posts in each grade and each category of the District Technical Service (Class III) and it shall be the duty of the District Selection Board to select candidates for appointment to posts in the District Service (Class III and Class IV).

Registration of Cooperative Societies (whose working capital does not exceed Rs. 5 lakhs and whose jurisdiction is less than a district) approval of bye-laws of such societies and administrative supervision over Co-operative Societies have been included as functions of the Zila Parishad. These functions will be carried out by the Assistant Registrar working under the Zila Parishad.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Total number of villages	.. .. .	38,949
2. Total number of Panchayats	.. .. .	19,151
3. Total number of villages covered by Panchayats	.. .. .	37,668
4. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	.. .. .	98
5. Percentage of rural population covered	.. .. .	99
6. Average population per Panchayat	.. .. .	1,258

Part C

Jammu & Kashmir

The Jammu & Kashmir Village Panchayat Act, 1958, envisages Gram Panchayats at the village level and Block Panchayat Boards at the Block level. It also recognises a Gram Sabha constituted of all voters in the village, with powers to discuss budget and programme of work. The Gram Panchayat which is to have 7—11 members is constituted partly of members nominated by Government and partly elected members, provided that Government will determine the number to be nominated. The majority will be the elected members. Election to the Gram Panchayat is by the voters standing up when the candidate's name is announced. There is provision for secret ballot for a fresh election where violence is feared. The Block Panchayat Board is constituted with one representative from each Panchayat in the Block, and such persons as may be nominated by Government. One seat to be filled up by cooption by the Board, is reserved for women.

The Gram Panchayat is made responsible for construction and maintenance of roads, bunds, bridges, elementary education, promotion of agriculture, village industries, sanitation etc. Its main sources of income are contribution by Government, proceeds from local taxes and funds available for C.D. Programme. The Block Panchayat Board has no independent sources of income. It is chiefly advisory in character.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	.. .. .	40.00 lakhs
2. Number of Panchayats	.. .. .	936
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats	..	100
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats	.. ..	6,956
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	.. ..	100
6. Average population per Panchayat	.. .. .	3,098

Kerala

Panchayats existed but did not cover the entire State. Two Acts were in force in the State (The Madras Panchayat Act, 1950, in the former Malabar District, and the Travancore-Cochin Panchayats Act, 1950, in the former Travancore-Cochin area). The Kerala Panchayats Act, 1960 (enacted in December, 1960), has brought the whole State under a uniform legislation on Panchayats. The State Government propose to hold the elections to Panchayats under the new Act after the general elections in 1962.

Constitution of higher level bodies such as Panchayat Simitis and Zila Parishads is expected to be taken up only after the Panchayats have functioned for some time in the State.

Panchayats are directly elected by secret ballot. One seat is reserved for Scheduled Castes and Tribes and one woman is coopted by the Panchayat, if not elected.

Panchayats are responsible for construction and maintenance of public roads, drains, wells, ponds, petty irrigation works, etc. and promotion of agriculture, co-operative farming, animal husbandry, social welfare, public health, cottage industries, etc.

Besides taxes and fees collected by Panchayats such as vehicle tax, profession tax, building tax etc., under the new Act, Government will pay annually the entire basic tax collected in the State to the Panchayats as grants.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	.. .. .	117.69
2. Number of Panchayats	.. .. .	lakhs
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats..	.. .. .	923
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats	.. .. .	91
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	.. .. .	1,202
6- Average population per Panchayat	.. .. .	76
		11,996

West Bengal

West Bengal did not have Panchayats, but these are now being constituted according to a phased programme. A higher body called Anchal Panchayat has also been constituted, for a group of contiguous Gram Sabhas. The Panchayat is directly elected by secret ballot for a term of four years. Gram Sabha is also recognised.

The Anchal Panchayat is an indirectly elected body for as many contiguous Gram Sabha areas as may be fixed (on an average 5 or 6) and is below the Block level. It maintains a Secretary and an establishment for collection of taxes, etc. The Gram Sabha considers the Panchayat budget and programme of work at the annual meeting. Sanitation and conservancy, construction and maintenance of public streets, supply of water, primary education, etc. are the main functions of the Gram Panchayat. The Anchal Panchayat collects and imposes taxes, fees, etc., constitutes and administers Nyaya Panchayats and maintains and recruits village officers like Dafadars and Chowkidars.

The Gram Panchayat does not have powers of taxation. Its fund consists of allotments from Anchal Panchayat and income from endowments, trusts, etc., under the Panchayats.

The Anchal Panchayat Fund consists of taxes on buildings, profession, vehicles, etc., water rate, conservancy rate, etc., and annual grants by Government.

The State Government have taken up drafting of legislation for the constitution of Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	200.21 lakhs
2. Number of Panchayats	4,556
3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats	28
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats	11,691
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	30
6. Average population per Panchayat	1,229
7. Number of Anchal Panchayats	469

Part D

Union Territories

Village Panchayats have been established in the Union Territories of Delhi and Himachal Pradesh and are being established in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Manipur and Tripura. In Himachal Pradesh, the Tehsil Panchayats, and in the other Territories, Block Development Committees look after the development programmes at the block level. Territorial Councils with specified functions and powers are also functioning in Himachal Pradesh, Manipur and Tripura.

It has been agreed that Village Panchayats should be established in all the Union Territories as early as possible and steps are being taken in this direction. The details of the Panchayati Raj system that should be introduced in the Union Territories are being examined by the Government of India. A policy decision has been taken that as far as possible, all the developmental functions should be transferred to the Territorial Councils where they exist. An official committee is going into the details of this question.

DELHI

Gaon Panchayats have been established in the Union Territory of Delhi. All the voters in the village constitute the Gram Sabha which elects through ballot the members of the Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat, which has 5 to 11 members including reserved seats for women and Scheduled Castes, is responsible for the promotion of agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperative farming, fisheries, cottage industries, etc. Receipts from lands, fisheries, forests, hats and bazars are vested in the Panchayats. The Panchayats also receive contributions from the Administration.

For groups of about 8 constituent Gram Sabhas, there is another body known as the Circle Panchayat. Each Gram Sabha elects a representative to the Circle Panchayat. The Circle Panchayat supervises the functioning of the constituent Panchayats and acts as the Adalti (Nyaya) Panchayats.

Many of the developmental and welfare activities at the village level are undertaken by the Delhi Municipal Corporation directly.

The Block Development Committees in Delhi have been reconstituted and are now designated as Panchayat Samitis. Additional financial powers have also been delegated to these Samitis. A proposal for delegating some of the civic and developmental functions which are now discharged by the Delhi Municipal Corporation, to the Village Panchayats and Samitis, is also under consideration.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	.. .. .	3.07 lakhs
2. Number of Panchayats	.. .. .	205

3. Percentage of rural population covered by Panchayats ..	100
4. Number of villages covered by Panchayats	303
5. Percentage of villages covered by Panchayats	100
6. Average population per Panchayat	976
7. Number of Panchayat Samitis	5

HIMACHAL PRADESH

The Gram Sabhas consisting of the adults ordinarily residing within the Gram Sabha areas elect members of the Gram Panchayat by show of hands. The Gram Panchayat has 9 to 27 members; seats are reserved for women and also for Scheduled Castes. The Panchayat is responsible for the construction and maintenance of roads, wells, bridges, maintenance of primary schools, maternity and child welfare, promotion of agriculture, industries, etc. Besides the income raised through taxes, fees, etc., the Panchayat also receives contributions from the Administration. At present there are 518 Panchayats fully covering the rural population in the Territory. The Administration proposes to reorganise the Panchayats, reducing the population coverage and increasing the number of Panchayats to about 600.

Every Tehsil or a Sub-Tehsil has a Tehsil Panchayat consisting of 10 to 40 members. Each Panchayat, Municipal Committee and Notified Area Committee returns one member to the Tehsil Panchayat and the Administration nominates some members, not exceeding 25 per cent of the total strength. The main functions of the Tehsil Panchayat are: holding Panchayat Conferences, arranging for adult education, establishment and maintenance of libraries, reading rooms etc. and organising training centres for Panches.

There is a Territorial Council in Himachal Pradesh which is an elected body. Its functions include superintendence and control of and giving grants to Panchayats, establishment and maintenance of primary and secondary schools, construction and repair of buildings, public health and sanitation, animal husbandry, cattle ponds, hospitals and dispensaries, markets, fairs, rest houses, supply of water for agricultural purposes, etc. The Himachal Pradesh Administration have introduced Panchayati Raj within the framework of the existing legislation, with effect from the 26th January, 1962. Under the new system, the Tehsil Panchayats will discharge the functions corresponding to Panchayat Samitis in other States and the District Development Committees of the Zila Parishads.

STATISTICAL DATA

1. Rural population	11.09 lakhs
2. Number of Panchayats	518
3. Number of villages covered	11,393
4. Percentage of villages covered	100
5. Percentage of rural population covered	100
6. Average population per Panchayat	2,124

MANIPUR AND TRIPURA

The U.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1947, has been extended to both the Territories. In Manipur 218 Gram Sabhas have been established and the Administration is taking steps for holding Panchayat elections by March, 1962. In Tripura 27 Gram Sabha Circles have been constituted and preliminary steps for holding elections are being taken.

ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS

The Andaman & Nicobar Islands Gram Panchayats Regulation, 1961, provides for the establishment of Gram Panchayats and Nyaya Panchayats in this Territory. 30 Panchayats in the South, Middle and North Andaman Tehsils are expected to be constituted on the 26th of January, 1962.

PONDICHERRY

As the Territory is under the French pattern of administration, no Panchayats are functioning in this area.

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