

How the State Government Works

CBSE Class 7 Social Science (Political Science) Chapter 3 is all about the working schedule of the state governments in India. Since the organizational structure of India is federal, the state government plays a very crucial role in policymaking of a country. State Legislatures of India are of two types namely bicameral and unicameral. The elected members of State Legislatures are known as Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA). The council of ministers is formed by the MLAs of the majority party and the Chief Minister leads it. The Chief Minister is known as the real head of a state whereas the Governor is known as the nominal head of the state.

MLAs

- The Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) are elected by the people.
- After being elected by the people, they become the Members of Legislative Assembly and the government is also formed by them.
- For the above-mentioned reasons, it can be said that people are represented by the MLAs.

- Each and every state in India consists of a Legislative Assembly.
- All the states are classified by separate areas or constituencies. West Bengal, for example, consists of 294 constituencies.
- One MLA is elected from one constituency by the people.
- All the MLAs belong to various political parties. In fact, each and every MLA stands in the election from a particular political party.

Ministers and Chief Ministers

- The majority is defined if the number of constituencies won by the MLAs of a particular political party exceeds half the number of constituencies in that particular state.
- The political party that acquired the majority is termed as the ruling party of that particular state.
- Apart from the members of the ruling party, the other members are known as the opposition.
- The Chief Minister is elected by the MLAs of the ruling party. The leader of the ruling party is generally elected as the Chief Minister.

- The ministers of various ministries are selected by the Chief Minister of a particular state.
- All the ministers, including the Chief Minister, are known as the council of ministers. The Council of Ministers is headed by the Chief Minister himself/herself.
- Assigning a particular ministry to an elected MLA is known as the distribution of portfolio.
- The Chief Minister and other ministers are appointed by the Governor of the state.
- The different governmental departments and ministries are run by the Chief Minister and other ministers.
- Separate offices are provided for each and every minister including Chief Minister.
- The Chief Minister himself/herself can hold one or more than one ministries as per the situation prevails. He/she can also give the portfolios of more than one ministry to the other elected MLAs.
- All the MLAs of the ruling party and the opposition party meet to discuss different things in the Legislative Assembly.

- Sometimes an MLAs has to perform dual responsibilities; one is as an MLA and another as a minister.
- Debates and conflicts happen quite frequently in the Legislative Assembly. The Legislative Assembly is controlled by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly who is accompanied by a Deputy Speaker.
- All the MLAs are collectively responsible for the work of the Government.
- The term Government stands for various government departments and ministers who held them.
- The real head of the government is the Chief Minister and this part of the government is termed as the executive part.
- The legislature is identified by all the MLAs assembled in the Legislative Assembly.
- The main function of the Legislature is to authorise and supervise.

The Functioning of the State Government

- In the present era of print media, the Legislative Assembly is not the only place where views are

conveyed about the function of the government and action is demanded.

- The working of the government is discussed in newspapers, TV channels and other organisations every day.
- The opinions of people can be expressed in several ways in the democratic form of government and action may be taken accordingly also.
- It is the responsibility of the Chief Minister and the ministers to take actions as they are in power.
- The actions are taken through several departments of government such as the Public Works Department, the Agriculture Department, the Health Department, the Education Department, and the Irrigation Department etc.
- The questions that are asked in the Legislative Assembly have to be answered and the people have to be convinced by them by requiring the questions that appropriate steps are taken.
- The government also has to answer the questions asked by the reporters of newspapers and TV channels.
- The enacting of new laws for the state regarding sanitation and health facilities may also be

performed by the state government. It may make it mandatory for municipal corporations to guarantee that there are sufficient toilets all across the urban and rural areas.

- The appointment of health workers in all the villages may be made compulsory.
- The act of enacting laws on several issues is performed in the Legislative assembly of each state. The enacted laws are executed by various Government departments.
- In the case of the whole country, the laws are made in Parliament.
- The people have the major authority as the Members of Legislative assembly (MLAs) are elected only by the people. The ruling party members form the government and a few MLAs are appointed as the ministers. Different departments of the government are headed by different ministers. It is called the portfolio distribution. Each and every work done by any department of the government has to be approved by the MLAs of the Legislative assembly.

Composition of State Legislative Assembly

- The Lower House of the State Legislature is known as the Legislative Assembly.
- The maximum strength of the State Legislative assembly is 500 members and minimum strength is 60 members. But, in few State Legislative Assemblies in India the number of members is lower than 60.
- The members of the State Legislative Assembly are elected directly by the people of the particular state.
- The election is entirely based upon the Universal Adult Franchise.

Terms and Powers of State Legislative Assemblies

- Unless otherwise instructed by the Governor of the state, the standard tenure of the State Legislative Assembly is five years from the date of its first meeting after elections.
- The State Legislative Assembly of the state is known as the multi-functional institution.
- The finances of the state are controlled by the State Legislative Assembly. The reports submitted by the

State Public Service Commission, Auditor General and others are also considered by them.

- The elected MLAs can take part in the election of the President of India.

Important Questions and Answers

Q1. What is the composition of the State Legislative Council (SLC)?

Ans. As per the Constitution of India, the SLC of a particular state must consist of not more than one-third of the total members of the Legislative Assembly of that state and not less than 40 members. The selection of the members of SLC is done partially by-election and partially by nomination. Five-sixths of the total members are indirectly elected. The Governor of the state nominates the rest of the one-sixth portion. The members elected in the SLC through the proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote. The members are elected from various spheres such as Municipalities, teachers, graduates, Zilla Parishads etc.

Q2. What are the terms and powers of the State Legislative Council (SLC)?

Ans. The SLC is termed as the quasi-permanent body. Generally, the members of SLC are elected or nominated for the tenure of six years, one-third of the entire number of members superannuate in every second year. SLC is the weaker chamber compared to the State Legislative Assembly (SLA). The Government is not controlled by the SLC. The only role of the SLC is to ask questions from the ministers. A public Bill can be initiated in either House of the State Legislature, but the SLC has no control over Money Bill. SLC has a significant role in discussing the Constitutional Amendment Bill in connection with the federal provisions of the Constitution.

Q3. What is the composition of the Council of Ministers?

Ans. The Chief Minister determines the length of the Council of Ministers. The State Council of Ministers comprises three types of ministers which are Cabinet Ministers, Minister of State and Deputy Minister. The

significant departments of the State Government are led by the Cabinet Ministers. The meetings of cabinet ministers are attended by them and decisions are taken on different policies. The supreme governing authority of the state is the Cabinet. The Ministers of State can either be bestowed with the charge of independent departments or can be joined with Cabinet Ministers. The Deputy Ministers are not given the responsibilities of an independent ministry.

Q4. Discuss the duration, responsibility and oath of the Council of Ministers?

Ans. All the ministers including the Chief Minister hold office during the pleasure of the Governor. The ministers together are responsible to the Legislative Assembly similar to the Union Ministers are collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha. Before entering the office, each and every minister has to take an oath and affirmation which is administered by the Governor of the state. A person, who is not a member of the State Legislature, can also be appointed by the Governor as a Minister. But, in that, the appointed minister must

become a member of the Legislature within 6 months after entering his office.

Q5. What are the powers and functions of the Governor?

Ans. The Governor is the nominal executive of state and reservoir of various powers. Executive, legislative, financial, judicial and discretionary powers are exercised by the Governor. The Chief Minister of the state is appointed by the Governor. The other ministers are also appointed by him on the advice of the Chief Minister. The Advocate General of the state, Chairman and members of State PSC are also appointed by the Governor. No bill can become law without the assent of the Governor. The Governor has the power to dissolve the State Legislature. The ordinances may be promulgated by the Governor. Apart from that, the Governor also possesses some discretionary powers which can be exercised without the advice of the Council of Ministers.