

CHAPTER – 5

PANCHAYATI RAJ

Q. 1 What problem did the villagers in Hardas village face? What did they do to solve this problem?

Answer:

The water problem in Hardas had become very acute. The hand pump water had gone well below the point up to which the ground has been drilled. Women had to go to the Suru River which was 3 kilometres away, to get water.

As a short-term solution, people thought of deepening the wells and handpump. As a long-term solution, they agreed on conserving the water and recharging the wells.

Q. 2 What, in your opinion, is the importance of the Gram Sabha? Do you think all members should attend Gram Sabha meetings? Why?

Answer:

Gram Sabha means a body consisting of all persons whose names are included in the electoral rolls for the Panchayat at the village level. Gram Sabha is very crucial because it plays a key role in making the Gram Panchayat play its role and be responsible. It is a place where all plans of the Gram Panchayat are placed before the people. The Gram Sabha prevents the Panchayat from misusing the money or favoring certain people. It plays an important role in keeping an eye on the elected representatives and in making them responsible to the people who elected them.

Yes, I think all members should attend Gram Sabha meetings because they represent their ward in the Gram Panchayat. Gram Sabha gives an

opportunity to participate in the proceedings of several plans that are discussed in meetings. Gram Sabha is a forum where the local matters of villagers get resolved and therefore; every member should attend the proceedings.

Q. 3 What is the link between a Gram Sabha and a Gram Panchayat?

Answer:

The link between a Gram Sabha and a Gram Panchayat:

- a. Gram Sabha plays a significant role in the making of Gram Panchayat as they elect the members of the Gram Panchayat.
- b. The Panch and the Gram Panchayat are answerable to the members of Gram Sabha.
- c. Gram Sabha keeps an eye on the representatives of the Gram Panchayat and plays a responsible role.
- d. The Decisions of the Gram Panchayat are informed to people in Gram Sabhas.

Q. 4 Take an example of any one task done by a Panchayat in your area/nearby rural area and find out the following:

- a. Why it was taken up.
- b. Where the money came from.
- c. Whether or not the work has been completed.

Answer:

The Panchayat of our area decided to build a higher secondary school for girls in the village.

- a. This decision was taken as there was no school in the village and many people did not allow their daughters to travel to another village to attend school.
- b. A major part of the money came from the State Government and a minor part of the money came from the funds of Panchayat and also, the villagers contributed as it was for the welfare of the society.
- c. The work has been completed on time as everybody extended their support.

Q. 5 What is the difference between a Gram Sabha and a Gram Panchayat?

Answer:

Gram Sabha	Gram Panchayat
1. Members of Gram Sabha are not elected.	1. Members of Gram Panchayat are elected representative of Gram Sabha.
2. Any adult above the age of 18 or have the right to vote is a member of Gram Sabha.	2. Ward members, Panchs and Panchayat president are the members of a Gram Panchayat.
3. The members and the body are permanent.	3. The members and the body are elected after every 5 years.
4. They keep an eye on the works of Gram Panchayat.	4. They hear from the Gram Sabha and do the work.

Q. 6 Read the following news item.

Nimone is a village on the Chauphula-Shirur Road. Like many others, this village has also been facing a severe water shortage for the last few months and villagers depend on tankers for all their needs. Bhagavan Mahadeo Lad (35) of this village was beaten with sticks, iron rods and

axes by a group of seven men. The incident came to light when some villagers brought a badly injured Lad to the hospital for treatment. In the FIR recorded by the police Lad said that he was attacked when he insisted that the water in the tanker must be emptied into the storage tanks constructed as part of the water supply scheme by Nimone Gram Panchayat so that there would be an equal distribution of water. However, he alleged that the upper caste men were against this and told him that the tanker water was not meant for the lower castes. Adapted from Indian Express, May 1, 2004

a. Why was Bhagavan beaten?

b. Do you think that the above is a case of discrimination? Why?

Answer:

a. Bhagavan was beaten when he suggested that the water in the tanker must be emptied into the storage tanks constructed as a part of the water supply scheme by Nimone Gram Panchayat for the even distribution of water.

b. Yes, clearly it is a case of discrimination because the upper caste men did not allow even distribution of water for all. The water in the tanker was served only to people belonging to upper castes and while Bhagavan insisted that the water should be emptied in the tank constructed by the Panchayat, he was beaten badly.

Q. 7 Find out more about watershed development and how it benefits an area?

Answer:

Watershed Development Programme is an initiative taken by the government under which judicious use of water resources is advocated. The benefits of watershed development Programme in an area are given below:

- a. It makes the land fertile and supports the growth of trees, plants, and cultivation.
- b. Help in the preservation of water and its resources.
- c. Averts soil erosion.