



Knowledge. Voice. Democracy.

PRIA

Compilation of Gram Sabha Related Provisions in Different State Acts and State Policies

Content

1. Provisions in Andhra Pradesh State Act
2. Provisions in Assam State Act
3. Provisions in Bihar State Act
4. Provisions in Goa State Act
5. Provisions in Haryana State Act
6. Provisions in Himachal Pradesh State Act
7. Note on Gram Sabha in Himachal Pradesh
8. Provisions in Karnataka State Act
9. Provisions in Kerala State Act
10. Functioning of Gram Sabhas in Kerala: An Analysis by Oommen, John
11. Provisions in Madhya Pradesh State Act
12. The Bombay Village Panchayat Act
13. Provisions in Maharashtra State Act
14. Provisions in Manipur State Act
15. Provisions in Orissa State Act
16. Provisions in Punjab State Act
17. Provisions in Rajasthan State Act
18. Provisions in Uttar Pradesh State Act
19. The West Bengal Panchayat Act: Recent Amendments
20. The Nagaland Tribal Area, Range and Village Council Act
21. Provisions in Sikkim State Act
22. Provisions in Tamil Nadu State Act
23. Tamil Nadu: Rules Related to Gram Sabha
24. Provisions in Tripura State Act
25. The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension of the Scheduled Area) Act
26. Guidelines for the Conduct of Gram Sabhas in Karnataka

PROVISIONS RELATING TO GRAM SABHA

The Andhra Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act

Gram Sabha

1. There shall come into existing a gram Sabha for every village
2. A gram Sabha shall consist of all persons whose names are included in the electoral roll for the gram Panchayat and such persons shall be deemed to be the members of the gram Sabha
3. The gram Sabha shall meet at least twice in every year. The following matters which shall be placed before it by the gram Panchayat namely
 - (i) Annual statement of accounts and audit report
 - (ii) Report on the administration of the preceding year
 - (iii) Proposals for fresh taxation or for enhancement of existing taxes
 - (iv) Selection of schemes, beneficiaries and locations; and
4. Every meeting of the gram Sabha shall be convened by the Executive Officer and shall be presided over by the Sarpanch or in his absence by the Up-Sarpanch of the gram Panchayat.

Gaon Sabha

Subject to the General Orders of the Government

1. The Gaon Sabha shall consist of persons registered in electoral rolls relating to a village or a group of villages comprised within the area of the Gaon Panchayat;

2. The Gaon Sabha shall consider the following matters and may make recommendations and suggestions to the Gaon Panchayats;

a) The report in respect of development programme of the Gaon relating to the preceding year and development programme proposed undertaken during the current year.

b) The promotion of unity and harmony among all sections of society in the villages.

c) Such other matters as may be prescribed

3. Quorum: The quorum for a meeting of the Gaon Sabha shall be one-tenth of the total members or one hundred number of voters of the village/villages whichever is less.

The Bihar Panchayat Act

Functions

The Gram Sabha shall perform the following functions:

- a) Rendering assistance in the implementation of developmental schemes pertaining to the village
- b) Identification of beneficiaries for the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the village;
- c) Procuring voluntary labour and contributions, in kind or in cash or both, for community welfare programmes
- d) Programmes of adult education and family welfare within the village
- e) Seeking clarifications from the Mukhia and members of the Gram Panchayat about any particular activity, scheme, income and expenditure; and
- f) Reports of the Vigilance Committee.

Vigilance Committee

The Gram Sabha may also form one or more vigilance committee(s) consisting of persons who are not members of the Gram Panchayat, to supervise the Gram Panchayat works, schemes and other activities relating to that village and to put up reports related to them in its meeting.

Gram Sabha

Period of Meetings

The Gram Sabha shall meet from time to time but not more than three months shall intervene in between any two meetings.

Convening of Meetings

1. A notice of the meeting shall be pasted in the office of the Gram Panchayat and the same shall be brought to the notice of the Public by a beat of drum.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the Mukhia to convene the meeting of the Gram Sabha at regular intervals as specified under the Act. In case he fails to convene the meeting the Executive Officer of the Panchayat Samiti shall convene such meeting.

Quorum

- I. The Quorum for a meeting shall be one-tenth of the total members of the Gram Sabha.

Presiding Officer

Every meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be presided over by the Mukhia of the concerned Gram Panchayat and in his absence by the Up-Mukhia.

Matters for Consideration

The Gram Sabha shall consider the following matters:

- a) The annual statement of accounts of the Gram Panchayat,
- b) The budget of the Gram Panchayat for the next financial year,
- c) The report in respect of development programmes of the Gram Panchayat relating to the preceding year and development programmes proposed to be undertaken during the current year; and
- d) Reports of the Vigilance Committee.

The Goa Panchayat Rai Act

Gram Sabha-Constitution of Panchayats

Declaration of Panchayat areas and establishment of Panchayats

After making such inquiry as may be necessary, the government may, by notification, declare a local area, comprising of a village or a group of villages or any part or parts thereof or a combination of any two or more of them to be a Panchayat area for the purposes of this Act and also specify its headquarters.

Gram Sabha

All persons whose names are for the time being entered as electors in the electoral roll for a Panchayat shall be deemed to constitute the Gram Sabha for that Panchayat.

Meeting of the Gram Sabha

1. There shall be a meeting of Gram Sabha called by the Sarpanch or in his absence or in default by the Chief Executive Officer once in six months on such date and at such time and place as may be prescribed.

2. One-tenth of the total number of members of the Gram Sabha shall form the quorum for the meeting.

3. An officer nominated by the Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Panchayat shall attend the Gram Sabha Meeting

Work at General Meeting

1. The Panchayat shall place before the Gram Sabha:

- a) the annual statements of accounts;
- b) The report on the administration of the preceding financial year;
- c) the development and other programmes of work proposed for the current financial year;
- d) the last audit report and replies made; and
- e) proposals for fresh taxation or enhanced taxation under any new programme not covered by clauses (a) and (c).

2. A Gram Sabha may constitute one or more Vigilance Committees, as may be necessary to supervise Panchayat works, schemes and other activities which shall submit its report to the Gram Sabha in its meetings.

Gram Sabha

Haryana Panchayat Raj Act
(Amendments in 1999)

Sabha Area. Establishment and Constitution of Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayats

Demarcation of Sabha Area

The Government may declare any village or part of the village or group of contiguous village with a population of not less than five hundred to constitute one or more Sabha area.

Meeting and Quorum of Gram Sabha

1. Every Gram Panchayat Sabha shall hold two general meetings in each year, one during the period commencing on the 1st day of May and ending with the 30th day of June (hereinafter called the Hari meeting) and the other during the period commencing on the 1st day of November and ending with the 31st day of December (hereinafter called the Sawani meeting) on such dates as may be fixed by the Gram Panchayat.
2. For any meeting of the Gram Sabha One-tenth of the total number of its members shall form a quorum.
3. The Block Development and Panchayat Officer and the Gram Sachiv, as the case may be, of a Gram Panchayat shall attend every general meeting of the Gram Sabha.

Powers and Functions of Gram Sabha

Gram Sabha consider as a strong body to plan, execute and monitor the development and social justice plans of the Gram Panchayat.

Gram Sabha have been entrusted to consider the budget, future development plan and programmes and audit reports, to review the general progress of the development plan, consider the actual income and expenditure of the Gram Panchayat, scrutinise the existing schemes as well as completed works, and the maintenance of a complete register for all development works, and the maintenance of a complete register for all development works undertaken by the Gram Panchayat or by any other government department.

Gram Sabha can revise the budget of the Gram Panchayat or direct the Gram Panchayat to reconsider its audits report and the progress reports, the latter is not obliged to act according to its directions.

Gram Sabha shall maintain a complete register for a11 development works undertaken or any other government department specifying the costs, date of completion of work and name of assets, etc. But the Act does not provide the Gram Sabha with a mechanism to maintain these records.

- (i) It shall consider the budget prepared by the Gram Panchayat and the future development programmes and the plans for the Sabha area at its Sawani meeting.

The Gram Sabha at its Hari meeting shall review the general progress of the development plan.

(ii) It will consider the actual income and expenditure of the Panchayat concerning last financial year.

(iii) It will consider and scrutinise the existing schemes and all kinds of activities of Panchayats.

(iv) It will scrutinise the completed works and all kinds of activities of the Gram Panchayat

Provision Related to Gram Sabha

According to the Haryana Panchayati Raj Amendment Bill 1999

Amendment of Section 11 of Haryana Act 11 of 1994 In Section II of the Principal Act:

"Every Gram Sabha shall hold two general meetings one on 13th April and other on 2nd October each year at a time fixed by the Block Development and Panchayat Officer concerned"

"Save in the circumstances beyond human control, every Panch shall attend the Gram Sabha Meetings."

The meeting of a Gram Panchayat shall be public and shall be held atleast twice a month at a public place within the Sabha area for which it is established, whenever called by the Sarpanch or during the vacancy of his office by Gram Sachiv:

Provided that the Sarpanch, when required in writing by majority of the Panches to call a meeting, shall do so within three days, failing which panches shall, with the previous approval of the prescribed authority, be entitled to call a meeting after giving a week's notice to the Sarpanch and other Panches. Save as otherwise provided by or under this Act, at every meeting of Gram Panchayat, the Sarpanch shall preside over the meeting or in his absence the members present shall choose one from amongst themselves to preside over the meeting."

The Himachal Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act

Gram Sabha

Declaration of Sabha Area:

The government may, by notification, declare any village or group of contiguous villages with a population of not less than one thousand to constitute one or more Sabha areas.

Provided further that after having due regard of the geographical location, lack of means of transport and communication and administrative convenience, the government may, declare an area comprising a village or group of contiguous villages having a population either less than one thousand or more than five thousand to constitute a Sabha area. Establishment of Gram Sabha

1. The government may, by order, establish a Gram Sabha by name in every Sabha Area.

2. Every person who is qualified to be registered in the Legislative Assembly roll relating to the Sabha Area or whose name is entered herein and is ordinarily resident within the Gram Sabha Area shall be entitled to be registered in the list of voters of that Sabha Area.

No person shall be entitled to be registered in the list of voters of that Sabha area.

Meetings and Quorum of Sabha

1. Every Sabha shall hold two general meetings in each year, one in the summer and the other in the winter and it shall be the responsibility of the Pradhan to convene such meetings.

Provided that not eight months shall intervene between the two general meetings unless a relaxation is allowed by the Chairperson of the Panchayat Samiti within whose jurisdiction the GP is located.

2. for any general meeting of the Gram Sabha, one-fifth of the total number of its members shall form a quorum and decisions will be taken by a majority of members present and voting.

3. Every meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be held at the headquarters of Gram Panchayat and shall be presided over by the Pradhan or in his/her absence by the Up- Pradhan. If both the Pradhan and Up-Pradhan are absent, then such members of the Gram Sabha shall preside over the meeting as may be elected by the members present in that meeting.

Functions of Gram Sabha

1. The Gram Sabha shall perform the following functions, namely;

a) Mobilise voluntary labour and contribution in kind and cash for the Community Welfare Programmes;

b) Identification of beneficiaries for the implementation of developmental schemes pertaining to the village;

- c) Rendering Assistance in the implementation of developmental schemes pertaining to the village;
- d) Promotion of unity and harmony among all sections of society in the Sabha Area;
- e) Seek clarifications from the Pradhan, Up-Pradhan and members of the Gram Panchayat about any particular activity, scheme, income and expenditure; and
- f) Such other matters as may be prescribed.

2. The Gram Sabha shall consider the following matters, and make recommendations and suggestions to the Gram Panchayat, namely;

- a) The annual statement of accounts of the Gram Panchayat, the report of the administration of the preceding financial year and the last audit note and replies, if any;
- b) The report in respect of development programmes of the Gram Panchayats proposed to be undertaken during the current year;
- c) The promotion of unity and harmony among all section of society in the village;
- d) Other programme of adult education within the village; and
- e) Any other matter which the Panchayat Samiti, Zilla Parishad, the Deputy Commissioner or any other officer authorised in this behalf may require to be placed before the Gram Sabha.

2.1. The Gram Sabha at its (both) meeting shall consider the following:

- a) Confirmation of the proceedings of the last meeting of the Gram Sabha
- b) A six monthly report of the business submitted by the Gram Panchayat
- c) Item-wise income and expenditure incurred by the Gram Panchayat during past six months
- d) Income and expenditure statement of the ongoing development works being executed by Gram Panchayat In its Winter Meeting
- e) Shall consider and pass the budget for the following financial year
In its Summer Meeting
- t) Shall consider the accounts of the preceding financial year g) Annual Audit Note replies
- h) The report of administration of preceding financial year.
- l) Gram Sabha shall finalise the selection of beneficiaries in the order of priority under various programmes of the government

3. The Gram Panchayat shall give due consideration to the recommendations and suggestion of the Gram Sabha.

4. Copy of the proceedings to be sent to Block Development Officer:

An attested copy of every meeting of Gram Sabha shall be sent to the office of the Block Development Officer (BDO) within a fortnight of the holding of the meeting by the Panchayat Secretary.

Government of Himachal Pradesh

Gram Sabhas are established for the area comprising of any village or group of contiguous villages with a population of not less than 1,000 and not more than 5,000 in this State under the provisions of Section 3 of the Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1994. The Government can also relax these limits of population keeping in view the geographical location, lack of means of transport and communication and administrative convenience for constituting a Gram Sabha.

Under the provisions of Section 8 of the Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1994, an executive body of the Gram Sabha, i.e., the Gram Panchayat is required to be constituted for every Gram Sabha.

Two general meetings of Gram Sabha are required to be held in each year, one in summer and the other in winter. Besides this special or extra ordinary general meetings of the Gram Sabha can also be held.

Quorum for any general meeting of the Gram Sabha is required to be one-fifth of the total number of the total number of its members and one-tenth for the meeting which is adjourned for want of quorum.

Gram Sabha can pass a vote of no-confidence motion against the Pradhan or the Up-Pradhan or both by a resolution passed by majority of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting at its general or special meeting and the quorum of such meeting is required to be one-half of the total number of members of the Gram Sabha.

Following functions have been assigned to Gram Sabhas to this State:-

1. Mobilise voluntary labour and contribution in kind and cash for the community welfare programmes;
2. Identification of beneficiaries for the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the village, such as IRDP, IAY, GKY
3. Rendering assistance in the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the village;
4. Promotion of unity and harmony among all sections of society in the Sabha area;
5. Seek clarifications from the Pradhan, Up-Pradhan and members of the Gram Panchayat about any particular activity, scheme, income and expenditure;
6. To form vigilance committee consisting of members who are not members of Gram Panchayat, to supervise the works/schemes executed by the Gram Panchayat.

•Gram Sabhas have also been empowered to consider the following matters, and to make recommendations and suggestions to the Gram Panchayats:

1. Identification of beneficiaries for the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the village, such as IRDP, IAY, GKY
2. Rendering assistance in the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the village;
3. Promotion of unity and harmony among all sections of society in the Sabha area;
4. Seek clarifications from the Pradhan, Up-Pradhan and members of the Gram Panchayat about any particular activity, scheme, income and expenditure;
5. To form vigilance committee consisting of members who are not members of Gram Panchayat, to supervise the works/schemes executed by the Gram Panchayat.

• Gram Sabhas have also been empowered to consider the following matters, and to make recommendations and suggestions to the Gram Panchayats:

1. The annual statement of account of the Gram Panchayat, the report of the administration of the preceding financial year and the last audit note and replies, if any, made thereto;
2. The report in respect of development programmes of the Gram Panchayat relating to the preceding year and development programmes proposed to be undertaken during the current year;
3. The promotion of unity and harmony among all sections of society in the village;
4. The programme of adult education within the village;
5. Any other matter which the Panchayat Samiti, Zilla Parishad, the deputy Commissioner or any other officer authorised may required to be placed before the Gram Sabha.

The Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act

Gram Sabha

1. Subject to the general orders of the Government, the Gram Sabha shall meet from time to time but six months shall not intervene between any two meetings. If the Gram Panchayat fails to convene Gram Sabha, the Executive Officer shall convene the Gram Sabha.

2. The Gram Sabha shall consider the following matters and may make recommendations and suggestions to the Gram Panchayat.

a) The annual statement of the Gram Panchayat, the report of administration of the preceding financial year and the last audit note and replies if any;

b) The promotion of unity and harmony among all sections of society in village;

c) Programme of adult education within the village; and d) Such other matters as may be prescribed.

3. The Gram Panchayat shall give due consideration to the recommendations and

suggestions of the Gram Sabha.

4. Every meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be presided over by the Adhyaksha of the concerned Gram Panchayat and in his absence the Upadhyaksha or any member of the Gram Panchayat.

5. The Gram Sabha shall perform the following functions, namely:

a) Mobilising voluntary labour and contributions in kind and cash for the community welfare programme.

b) Identification of beneficiaries for the implementation of developmental schemes pertaining to the village.

c) Rendering assistance in the implementation of developmental schemes pertaining to the village.

The Kerala Panchayat Raj Act

Gram Sabha

1. For the purpose of this chapter, each constituency of a village Panchayat may be specified as a village under clause (g) of article 243.

2. All persons whose names are included in the electoral rolls relating to a village comprised within the area of a village Panchayat shall be deemed to be constituted as Gram Sabha of such village.

3. Gram Sabha shall meet at least twice a year at a place to be decided by the village Panchayat.

4. The member of a village Panchayat representing the constituency comprised in the area of a village shall be the convener of that Gram Sabha; however due to any reason, physical or otherwise, the convener is unable to perform his functions as such, the President may appoint a member representing any adjacent constituency as the convener.

5. Every meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be presided over by the President of the village Panchayat or in his absence, the Vice-President or in the absence of both of them by the convener of Gram Sabha.

6. The village Panchayat shall place before the Gram Sabha a report relating to the developmental programmes relating to the constituency during the previous year and those that are proposed to be undertaken during the current year, and the expenditure, therefore the annual statement of accounts and the administration report of the preceding year.

7. The village panchayats, the block panchayats and the district panchayats shall give due consideration to the recommendation and suggestion, if any, of the Gram Sabha.

8. The Gram Sabha shall perform the following functions, namely;

a) rendering assistance in the preparation and promotion of the developmental scheme of the village: supervising the implementation thereof;

b) promoting harmony and unity among the various groups of people in the Panchayat;

c) mobilisation of voluntary labour and contributions in kind and cash for the community welfare programmes;

d) rendering assistance in the implementation of developmental schemes pertaining to the village; and

e) rendering assistance for the identification of beneficiaries for the implementation of developmental and welfare schemes pertaining to the village.

9. The quorum of a Grama Sabha shall not be less than 50.

Functioning of Gram Sabhas in Kerala : An Analysis

-Oommen, John

Constitution of Gram Sabha

According to the Kerala Panchayat Raj Act, 1994, the Gram Sabha is constituted for each constituency or ward of the Gram Panchayat. The meetings are held every three months and the elected representative of the Ward is the convenor of the Gram Sabha. The members of the Block Panchayat and the District Panchayat representing the area of the Gram Sabha are invited to attend its meeting by the president of the Gram Panchayats concerned. The meetings are presided over the President of the Gram Panchayat. In his absence, the Vice-President or the convenor can preside over its meetings. The quorum for the meetings is fixed at one tenth of the total strength of the Gram Sabha. But for any subsequent meeting arising from lack of quorum, the strength need be only SO. In the first meeting of the Gram Sabha every year, a report on the development activities of the preceding year and the development plan for the current year and a statement of accounts should be presented before it. The President will have to give an explanation for not implementing the previous decisions if any of the Gram Sabha.

Powers and Functions of the Gram Sabha

1. Collection and compilation of details for formulation of development plans.
2. To plan and prioritise the projects which are to be implemented in the area.
3. To prepare list of eligible beneficiaries in the order of priority on the basis of prescribed criteria and submit the list to the Gram Panchayat.
4. Help in the implementation of the projects by providing facilities locally required.
5. To provide and mobilise voluntary labour and contributions in cash and kind for the development programme.
6. To suggest the location of streetlights, street or community water taps, public wells, public sanitation units, minor irrigation facilities etc. pertaining to that ward.
7. To create awareness on matters of public interest like cleanliness, preservation of environment, prevention of pollution etc.
8. To eradicate social evils such as corruption, fraud etc. from public life.
9. To promote cultural activities and cultivate harmony and unity among the various groups of people in the panchayat.
10. To monitor and help the beneficiaries committees which have taken up various projects for implementation.
11. To verify the eligibility of beneficiaries of various pension and subsidy schemes.
12. To know the detailed estimates of the works proposed to be taken up in that ward.
13. To know the action plan for the next three months as far as various development programme are concerned.
14. To know the detailed item-wise accounts of every expenditure incurred within the area of the Gram Sabha.
15. To know the rationale of every decision of the panchayats concerning that area.
16. To know the follow up action taken on the decision of the Gram Sabha and to know the detailed reasons for not implementing any of the decisions.
17. To discuss reports of statutory audit and performance audit.

Responsibilities of the Gram Sabha

1. Dissemination of information on development and welfare programmes.
2. Canvassing participation in health, literacy and similar development campaign.

3. Collecting essential socio-economic data.
4. Providing feedback on the performance of development programmes.
5. Resorting to moral persuasion to pay taxes, repay loans, promote environmental cleanliness, maintain social harmony, etc.
6. Mobilising local resources to augment panchayats resources.
7. Supervising development works as volunteer teams.
8. Creating arrangements to report quickly incidence of epidemics, natural calamities etc.

With this background, let us now look at the functioning of Gram Sabha. As an Institution at the grass root or cutting edge level, its functioning can be studied in relation to three areas:

Institution of Planning

Article 243 (G) of the 73rd Amendment Act endows the Panchayats with powers to enable them to function as institutions of self-government with respect to the preparation of plans for economic development and social justice ... In order to give a fillip to this constitutional mandate, the Government of Kerala introduced the People's Campaign for the Ninth Plan during August 1996. Under this process, the people are mobilised through the local bodies in all stages of development planning from formulation, implementation to maintenance. According to the Planning Board, "It is an attempt at ensuring genuine participatory planning from below, wherein people's involvement is sought to be maximised first in plan formulation and thereafter in implementation".

The Gram Sabha has an important role in the whole process of Decentralised Planning. As this body is at the grass roots, it is easier to know the felt needs and aspirations of the people provided the people are given a chance to highlight them. Their knowledge of local conditions can also be utilised for solving some of the problems facing them. The campaign began with the convening of Gram Sabhas for the identification of the felt needs of the people and to identify gaps in local development. On the basis of the gaps identified by the people in the Gram Sabhas, projects were prepared and vetted by the expert committees before approval by the District Planning Committee. In order to ensure maximum participation of people, the meetings of the Gram Sabhas were held on holidays. Volunteers moved from house and cultural troupes were brought in to motivate people to attend these meetings. In the first meeting after the onset of People's planning process, but for the inaugural and valedictory sessions, the entire deliberations were held sector wise and to small groups of 25-50 participants so as to ensure their participation in the deliberations. The aims of the group discussion are three fold: Firstly, certain qualitative and to a certain extent, quantitative information with respect to that particular sector of the ward is elicited. Secondly, development problems of the ward with reference to the sector are listed. The group may also prioritise the needs. Thirdly, the people are also guided to analyse these problems on the basis of experience and, to the extent possible make suggestions of solutions. This procedure has been followed for the finalisation of the plan for each year.

The major gains that flowed from this were that for the first time, a forum was used to know the felt needs of the people and they did come forward to list their felt needs and the problems being faced by them. This itself was a marked departure from the previous experience where outsiders decided the likely needs and solutions to the problems faced by them. It also generated awareness among the people about the decentralisation process and the role of the local bodies in the task of development. Another significant achievement was the tremendous impact it has on the level of

participation of the people. They came forward to contribute their share both in terms of cash and kind. The net result was that it brought about a sense of attachment and possessiveness to the assets created.

Institution for the identification of beneficiaries

In order to ensure people's participation and transparency in the identification and selection of beneficiaries, the Gram Sabha has been given this power for most of the schemes implemented by the three tiers of Panchayati Raj.

Special Gram Sabhas were called for the purpose of selecting beneficiaries for the various development programme.

Institution for Social Audit

There can be no better forum to undertake the social audit than the Gram Sabha. The Kerala Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 stipulated that the expenditure, the annual statement of accounts etc. should be tabled before the Gram Sabhas for its approval. The transparency, which is the sine qua non of Gram Sabha, ensures a check in arbitrariness in decision-making and fine tune the administration of the Gram Panchayats to the needs of the community at large.

The Madhya Pradesh Panchayat Raj Adhiniyam (Recent Amendments)

Gram Sabha

Meeting of Gram Sabha

1. There shall be held at least one meeting of a Gram Sabha in every three months.
2. For any meeting of the Gram one tenth of the total number of members of the Gram Sabha shall form the quorum.
3. The meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be convened by the Secretary of the Gram Panchayat constituted for the Gram Sabha in the prescribed manner.
4. The meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be presided over by Sarpanch or in absence of Sarpanch by Up-Sarpanch, In the event of both Sarpanch and Up-Sarpanch being absent, the meeting of Gram Sabha shall be presided over by a member of the Gram Sabha to be elected for the purpose by the majority of members present in the meeting.

Powers and Functions and Annual Meeting of Gram Sabha

1. Subject to the rules which the State Government may make in this behalf and subject to the general or special orders, as may be issued by the State Government from time to time, the Gram Sabha shall have the following powers and functions, namely:

- (a) To lay down the principles for identification of schemes and their priority for economic development of the village;
- (b) To approve all plans including Annual Plans, programmes and projects for social and economic development before such plans, programmes and projects are taken up for implementation by the Gram Panchayat;

- (c) To consider the Annual Budget of the Gram Panchayat and make recommendations thereon;
- (d) To Consider the report of audit and accounts of the Gram Panchayat;
- (e) To ascertain and certify the proper utilisation by the Gram Panchayat of the funds of plans, programmes and projects referred to in clause (b);
- (f) To identify and select persons as beneficiaries under the poverty alleviation and other programmes;
- (g) To ensure proper utilisation and disbursement of funds or assets to the beneficiaries;
- (h) To mobilise people for community welfare programmes;
- (i) To ensure active participation of people in implementation, maintenance and equitable distribution of benefits of development schemes in the village;
- (j) To promote general awareness amongst the people; and
- (k) To exercise and perform such other powers and functions as the State Government may confer on or entrust to under this Act or any other law for the time being in force in the State

1. The annual meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be held not less than three months prior to the commencement of the next financial year and the Gram Panchayat shall place before such meeting:

- (a) The annual statement of the accounts;
- (b) The report of administration of the preceding financial year;
- (c) The development and other programme of the works proposed for the next financial year;
- (d) The last audit note and replies, if any, made thereto; and
- (e) Any other matter which the Janpad Panchayat, the Zila Panchayat, the Collector or any officer authorised in this behalf may require to be placed before such meeting.

1. The Gram Panchayat shall carry out the recommendations, if any, made by the Gram Sabha in regard to the matters before it.

Special Provisions for Panchayats in the Scheduled Areas

Constitution of Village and Gram Sabha

1. Provided that if the members of the Gram Sabha so desire, more than one Gram Sabha may be constituted in a village, in such manner as may be prescribed, and each such Gram Sabha may consist of a habitation or a group of habitations or a hamlet or a group of hamlets comprising a community and managing its affairs in accordance with traditions and customs.

2. Not less than one-third of total number of members of the "Gram Sabha" shall form a quorum for meeting of the Gram Sabha, out of which not less than one-third shall be women members.

3. The meeting of "Gram Sabha" shall be presided over by a member of the Gram Sabha belonging to the Scheduled Tribes not being the Sarpanch or the Up-Sarpanch or any member of the Panchayat, to be elected for the purpose by the majority of the members present in that meeting. Powers and functions of Gram Sabha

In addition to the powers and functions contained in Section 7, the Gram Sabha in Scheduled Areas shall also have the following powers and functions:

1. To safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people, their cultural identity and community resources and the customary mode of dispute resolution;

2. To exercise control over institutions and functionaries in all social sectors transferred to the Gram Panchayat through that Panchayat;
3. To manage natural resources including land, water and forests within the area of the village in accordance with its tradition and in harmony with the provisions of the Constitution and with due regard to the spirit of other relevant laws for the time being in force.
4. To advise the Gram panchayat in the regulation and use of minor water bodies;
5. To manage markets and melas including cattle fairs, by whatever name called, through the Gram panchayat;
6. To control local plans, resources and expenditure for such plans including tribal sub-plans, and
7. To exercise and perform such other powers and functions as the State Government may confer on or entrust under any law for the time being in force.

The Bombay Village Panchayats Act (Recent Amendment)

Gram Sabha

All persons whose names are included in the list of voters referred to in Section 12 shall be deemed to constitute a Gram Sabha for the village.

Meeting of Gram Sabha

There shall be held at least two meetings of the Gram Sabha every year. Panchayat to place statements of accounts, etc. before Gram Sabha

1. The first meeting of the Gram Sabha in every year shall be held within two months from the commencement of that year and the Panchayat shall place before such meets:

- a) the annual statement of accounts;
- b) the report of the administration of the preceding financial year;
- c) the development and other programme of work proposed for the current financial year; and
- d) the last audit note and replies.

2. It shall be open to the Gram Sabha to discuss any or all of the matters placed before it and the Panchayat shall consider suggestions, if any made by the Gram Sabha.

Gram Sabha in Maharashtra: Status And Prospects

-Ravindra Thipse

In 1933 Bombay village Panchayat Act had clearly stated "A panchayat shall convene, in a manner and at a time prescribed a meeting of all adult residents of the village and the statement of accounts together with a report on the administration for the preceding year and the programme of the work proposed for the year following shall be read out and explained at such meeting".

Though, power was not given to Gram Sabha it was made compulsory to keep well informing the Gram Sabha regarding past and future activities.

Recently Maharashtra Government has published Government resolution (GR No. Gram Sabha- 1098/Pra, Kra. 140/21A) dated 15th April 1999 regarding functions of Gram Sabha giving the details of publicity for Gram Sabha, organisation of Gram Sabha, Village Education Committee, Vigilance Committee, Selection of beneficiaries, Review of the work done, co-ordination with Gram Sabha.

The salient features of this resolution are as follows: Publicity to Gram Sabha

1. In order to ensure large attendance of villagers especially women members, wide publicity should be given to Gram Sabha using loud speaker.
2. Also written notice regarding Gram Sabha should be delivered to people visiting house to house with the help of staff working under or for Gram Panchayat.
3. Vast publicity should be given to the agenda of meeting of Gram Sabha.

Convene the Gram Sabha

It is responsibility of Sarpanch or Up-sarpanch to hold the meeting of the Gram Sabha and to preside over the meeting. Following points should be considered while arranging Gram Sabha.

1. It is required to hold at least two meetings in a financial year. If the Sarpanch or in his absence the Upasarpanch fails to hold such meeting he/she is disqualified to hold the office of the panches or the Upasarpanch.
2. To hold the meeting of the Gram Sabha in the month of November to discuss regarding the developmental programmes for the ensuing year.
3. Beneficiaries of various developmental programmes are to be selected by the Gram Sabha in the meeting which will be held in the month of November.
4. Most of the farmers and women are working in the field between 8 am and 7 p.m. every day hence they could not attend the meeting as the time was not suitable. Therefore suitable time according to their particular Panchayat (preferably 8 p.m.) should be fixed for the meeting of Gram Sabha for the convenience of the people especially women to ensure the maximum attendance.

Village Education Committee

Every Gram Panchayat should constitute Village Education Committee comprising of maximum 5 to 1 members from following categories.

- (1) Parents
- (2) Gram Panchayat
- (3) Teacher
- (4) Teacher at NFE and AE
- (5) Co-operative Societies
- (6) Women
- (7) SC/ST Community
- (8) Minorities
- (9) Gram Sevak
- (10) Youth
- (11) Parents of handicapped

- Members of the committee should be selected by Gram Sabha.

-Members should be women

-The members of committee should have completed 18 years of age and should have passed 4th standard at least.

- Gram Sabha should select new members against vacancy if any, from time to time

-Headmaster of primary school will be ex-officio Member-secretary of the committee.

-Tenure of the committee will be 5 years and it will be continued till the new committee is constituted.

-Village Education Committee should submit progress report to the Gram Sabha.

Vigilance Committee

Gram Sabha should appoint vigilance committee. Vigilance Committee should have maximum 5 members constituting a women member and one member from SC/ST/OBC community. Headmaster also may be included in this committee. No member can be selected for a tenure of continuous 2 years. Committee should submit evaluation report on the basis of its observation.

Committee should keep a watch on quality of work as well as allocation and actual expenditure of sanctioned work Committee should also keep a watch on purchase of items as per the expenditure incurred.

Selection of Beneficiaries

The Gram Sabha is required to identify beneficiaries under the various development programmes such as:

Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)

Development Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWACRA)

Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM) Revised Tool kit Programme (RTP) Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) Million Wells Scheme (MWS) before commencing new financial year. Special Gram Sabha may be convened if necessary.

Gram Savak should submit detailed information regarding target of each programme, selection criteria of beneficiaries,

Beneficiaries of previous years,

list of people those who falls under BPL,

list of people those who have not benefited at any time.

The Manipur Panchayati Raj Bill

Gram Sabha

Membership of Gram Sabha and Disqualification

1. A Gram Sabha shall consist of all persons whose names are included in Electoral Rolls within the area of the Gram Sabha.
2. A person shall be disqualified for being a member of the Gram Sabha if:
 - a) he is not a citizen of India; or
 - b) he is of unsound mind and stands so declared by a competent court; or
 - c) he is for the time being disqualified from voting under the provision of any law relating to corrupt practices and other offences in connection with election to state legislature.

Periodicity of meetings

The Gram Sabha shall meet from time to time but six months shall not intervene between any two meetings.

Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be one-tenth of its total membership.

Agenda

The Gram Panchayat shall prepare the agenda for discussion of the Gram Sabha, such matters shall relate to the following namely:

- a) The annual statement of accounts of the Gram Panchayat, the report of administration of the preceding financial year and the last audit note and replies if any, made thereto;
- b) The budget of the Gram Panchayat for the next financial year; and
- c) The report in respect of development programmes of the Gram Panchayat relating to the preceding year and the development programmes proposed to be undertaken during the current year.

Functions of Gram Sabha

A Gram Sabha shall exercise the following functions, namely:

- a) Rendering assistance in the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the village;
- b) Identification of beneficiaries for the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the village;

c) Mobilising voluntary labour and contributions in kind or cash or both for the community welfare programmes

Vigilance Committee

The Gram Sabha may also form one or more Vigilance Committees consisting of persons, who are not members of the Gram Panchayat to supervise the Gram Panchayat works, schemes and other activities and to put up reports concerning them in its meeting.

The Orissa Gram Panchayat Act (Including Recent Amendments)

Constitution and Incorporation of Gram Sasan

For a Gram there shall be a Gram Sasan which shall be composed of all persons registered by virtue of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

Gram Sabha and its Functions

1. There shall be at least two meetings one in February and the other in June every year of the members of the Gram Sasan,

2. The quorum for the meetings of the Gram Sasan shall be one-tenth of the members of the Gram Sasan.

3. Subject to the other provisions of this Act, it shall be the duty of the Gram Sasan to consider;

a) at the Gram Sabha held in February each year the programme and works to be undertaken by the Gram Panchayat for the ensuing year and the annual budget for the Gram for that year.

b) at the Gram Sabha held during the month of June each year, the the programmes and works undertaken by the Gram Panchayat progress during the preceding year.

c) at any Gram Sabha, proposals for levy of taxes, rates, rents and the enhancement of rates thereof fees and Palli Sabha and its Functions

i) For every village within the Gram there shall be constituted by the State Government a Palli Sabha

ii) Each Palli Sabha shall consist of all persons registered by virtue of the representation of the People Act, 1950.

iii) The Palli Sabha shall meet annually in February every year and may also meet at other times.

iv) It shall be the duty of the Palli Sabha at its annual meeting in February each year to give its recommendations to the Gram Panchayat in respect of the following matters:

a) the development works and programme that may be taken up; and b) the annual budget estimate submitted by the Gram Panchayat.

The Punjab Panchayati Raj Act

Establishment of Grant Sabha areas

The State Government may declare any village or group of contiguous villages with a population of not less than two hundred to constitute a Gram Sabha area.

Constitution of Gram Sabhas

The State Government may, by notification, establish a Gram Sabha by name for every area declared as Gram Sabha.

Meeting and Quorum of Gram Sabha

1. Every Gram Sabha shall hold two general meetings in each year, one in the month of December after the harvesting of the Sawni Crop (hereinafter called the Hari meeting) on such dates may be fixed by the Sarpanch.

2. For any meeting of the Gram Sabha, one-fifth of the total number of its members shall form a quorum

Presiding Officer

Every meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be presided over by the Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat and in his absence by any Panch to be elected at the time of the meeting. Budget and Annual Report of Gram Sabha.

The Gram Panchayat shall prepare and lay for approval before the Gram Sabha:

a) at its Sawani meeting budget estimates of its income and expenditure and a plan of development programme for the year commencing on the first day of April, next following; and

b) at its Hari meeting an annual statement of account and an annual report of progress of preceding financial year and development programme proposed to be undertaken during the current year.

Functions of Gram Sabha

The Gram Sabha shall perform the following functions; namely:

a) to approve annual budget and plan of development programme;

b) to render assistance in the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the village;

c) to identify beneficiaries for the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the village.

d) to mobilise voluntary labour and contributions in kind or cash or both for the community welfare programmes; and

e) to promote programme of adult education and family welfare within the village.

The Rajasthan Panchayati Rai Act

Gram Sabha

Gram Sabha and its Meetings:

1. There shall be a Gram Sabha for each Panchayat circle consisting of the persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to the village or the group of villages comprised within the area of the Panchayat.

2. There shall be at least two meetings of the Gram Sabha every year; one in the first and the other in the last quarter of the financial year.

3. In the meeting held in the first quarter of the financial year, the Panchayat shall place before the Gram Sabha:

- a) the annual statement of accounts of the preceding year;
- b) a report of the administration of the preceding financial year as required to be submitted under the provisions of this Act;
- c) the development and other programmes proposed for the financial year; and
- d) the last audit report and replies made thereto. Presiding Officer

The meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be convened by the Sarpanch of the Panchayat or, in his absence by the Up-Sarpanch of such Panchayat. The meetings shall be presided over by the Sarpanch and the Up-Sarpanch being absent, a meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be presided over by a member of the Gram Sabha to be elected for the purpose by a majority of the members present in the meeting.

Functions

The Gram Sabha shall perform the following functions:

1. Rendering assistance in the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the Panchayat areas;

2. Identification of beneficiaries for the implementation of development schemes pertaining to such areas; provided that in case the Gram Sabha fails to identify the beneficiaries within a reasonable time, the Panchayat shall identify the beneficiaries;

3. Mobilising voluntary labour and contributions in kind or cash or both for the community welfare programmes;

4. Promoting adult education and family welfare within such area; and

5. Promotion of unity and harmony among all sections of the society in such area.

The Uttar Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act

Gram Sabha

Meeting and Functions of Gram Sabha

1. Every Gram Sabha shall hold two general meetings in each year, one soon after harvesting of the kharif crop and the other soon after harvesting of the rabi crop.

2. For any meeting of the Gram Sabha one-fifth of the number of members shall form the quorum, provided that no quorum shall be necessary for a meeting adjourned for want of quorum.

3. The Gram Sabha shall consider the following matters and may make recommendations and suggestions to the Gram Panchayat:

a) The annual statement of accounts of the Gram Panchayat; the report of administration of the preceding financial year and the latest audit note and replies;

b) The report in respect of development programmes of the Gram Panchayat relating to the preceding year and the development proposed to be undertaken during the current financial year;

c) The promotion of unity and harmony among all sections of the society in the village;

d) Programmes of adult education within the village; and e) Such other matters as may be prescribed.

4. The Gram Panchayat shall give due consideration to the recommendations of the Gram Sabha.

5. The Gram Sabha shall perform the following functions:

a) Mobilising voluntary labour and contributions for the community welfare programmes;

b) Identification of beneficiaries for the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the village; and

c) Rendering assistance in the implementation of development schemes pertaining to the village.

The West Bengal Panchayat Act
Recent Amendments

Meeting of the Gram Sansad

1. Every constituency (ward) of a Gram Panchayat shall have a Gram Sansad consisting of persons whose names are included in the electoral roll.

2. Every Gram Panchayat shall hold within the local limits of the Gram an annual and a half-yearly meeting for each Gram Sansad fixed by the Gram Panchayat:

The annual meeting of the Gram Sansad shall be held ordinarily in the month of May and the half-yearly meeting of the Gram Sansad shall be held ordinarily in the month of November every year:

Provided further that a Gram Panchayat may, in addition to the annual and the half-yearly meeting, hold extraordinary meeting of a Gram Sansad at any time if the situation so warrants or if the State Government, by order, so directs and for the purpose of holding such extraordinary meeting, provisions of this section shall apply.

3. The Gram Panchayat shall, at least seven days before the date of holding the meetings, give public notice of such meetings by beat of drums as widely as possible, announcing the agenda, place, date and hour of the meeting, a notice of such meeting shall also be hung up in the office of the Gram Panchayat.

4. Every meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be presided over by the Pradhan and, in his absence, by the Ups-Pradhan and in the absence of both, the member or one of the members, as the case may be, elected from the constituency comprising the Gram Sabha or, in the absence of such member or members, any other member of the Gram Panchayat shall preside over the meeting:

Provided that when two members are elected from the constituency, the member senior in age shall have priority in presiding over the meeting: ,

Provided further that every member elected from the constituency shall attend each meeting of the Gram Sansad.

4 One-tenth of the total number of members shall form a quorum for a meeting of a Gram Sansad:

Provided that no quorum shall be necessary for an adjourned meeting which shall be held at the same time and place after seven days.

5. The attendance of the members of the Gram Sabha in the annual and the half yearly meeting and the proceedings of such meetings shall be recorded by such officer or employee of the Gram Panchayat or, in the absence of the officers and employees of the Gram Panchayat, by such member of the Gram Panchayat as may be authorised by the presiding member in this behalf. Such proceedings shall be read out before the meeting is concluded and the presiding member shall then sign it. (It is being done)

6. A Gram Sansad shall guide and advise the Gram Panchayat in regard to the schemes for economic development and social justice undertaken or proposed to be undertaken in its area and may, without prejudice to the generality of such guidance and advice,-

- (a) identify, or lay down principles for identification of, the schemes which are required to be taken on priority basis for economic development of the village,
- (b) identify, or lay down principles for identification of, the beneficiaries for various poverty alleviation programmes,
- (c) constitute one or more beneficiary committees comprising not more than nine persons, who are not members of the Gram Panchayat, for ensuring active participation of the people in implementation, maintenance and equitable distribution of benefits of one or more schemes in its area,
- (d) mobilise mass participation for community welfare programmes and programmes for adult education, family welfare and child welfare,
- (e) Promote solidarity and harmony among all sections of the people irrespective of religion, faith, caste, creed or race,
- (f) record its objection to any action of the Pradhan or any other member of the Gram Panchayat for failure to implement any development scheme properly or without active participation of the people of that area.

Public Meeting of the Gram Sabha (Constituency of Gram Panchayat)

1. Every Gram shall have a Gram Sabha consisting of persons registered in the electoral roll pertaining to the area of the Gram.

2. Every Gram Panchayat shall hold within the local limits of the Gram an annual meeting, ordinarily in the month of December every year, of the Gram Sabha after completion of the half-yearly meeting of the Gram Sansads.

3. One-twentieth of the total number of members shall form a quorum for a

meeting of a Gram Sabha

Provided that no quorum shall be necessary for an adjourned meeting which shall be held at the same time and place after seven days.

4. The Gram Panchayat shall, at least seven days before the date of holding the meeting, give public notice of such meetings by beat of drums as widely as possible, announcing the agenda, place, date and hour of the meeting. A notice of such meeting shall also be hung up in the office of the Gram Panchayat. Similar publicity shall also be given in the case of an adjourned meeting.

5. A meeting of the Gram Sabha be presided over by the Pradhan of the concerned Gram Panchayat or, in his absence, by the Upa-Pradhan.

6. All questions coming before a Gram Sabha shall be discussed and points raised there shall be referred to the Gram Panchayat for its consideration.

Provided that constitution of a Beneficiary Committee by a Gram Sansad of section shall not be questioned in any meeting of the Gram Sabha.

The Nagaland Tribal Area, Range and Village Council Act

1. Short Title and Commencement

2. This Act may be called the Nagaland Tribal, Area, Range and Village Councils Act, 1966.

3. Constitution of Tribal, Area, Range and Village Councils

With effect from such date as the State Government of Nagaland may by notification, in this behalf specify, there shall be established:

- a) a Tribal Council for each tribe;
- b) a Area Council for the Dimapur and Kohima district;
- c) a Range Council wherever there may be a recognised range, in the district of Kohima and Mokokchung; and
- d) a village council for one or more villages in the districts of Kohima and Mokokchung, as may be deemed necessary by the Deputy Commissioner of these districts.

4. Duties and Functions

A Tribal Council, an Area Council, a Range Council and a Village Council shall discuss and recommend schemes relating to Welfare and Community Development at the Tribal, Area, Range or Village level, as the case may be, and shall also assist the local authorities in matter relating to all development and other works and settlement of disputes as may be prescribed and allotted to it, from time to time by the State Government.

5. Power to Make Rules

The State Government may by, notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for the constitution of Tribal, Area, Range and Village Councils in consultation with the existing Tribal Councils or other representative tribal organisations and such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters:

- a) The composition of the Tribal, Area, Range or Village Councils and the allocation of seats therein and the manner in which the members of the councils shall be elected.
- b) Dissolution of a Tribal, Area, Range or Village Councils and its recomposition.
- c) The delimitation of the territorial constituencies for purpose of elections to these councils.
- d) The qualification for voting at such an election and preparation of Electoral rolls therefore.
- e) The qualification for being elected at such election as member of such councils
- f) The term of office of, and salaries and allowances if any, to be paid to members of such councils.
- g) Any other matter relating or connected with election or nomination to such councils.
- h) The procedure and conduct of business in the councils.
- i) The appointment of officers and staff of the councils and their condition of service.
- j) The powers exercisable by the said councils in disputes involving customary laws.
- k) Any other matter in respect of which it is necessary to make rules for the constitution and proper functioning of the councils.

2) Every rule made under this section shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before the Nagaland Legislative Assembly while it is in session for a total period of seven days, which may be comprised in one session or in two successive sessions.

The Sikkim Panchayat Act

Chapter II

Constitution of Gram and Gram Sabha

3. Constitution of Gram, its Name and Jurisdiction

1) Subject to the consideration of local conditions, the State Government by notification, declare for the purpose of this Act any village or part of a village or a group of adjoining villages or parts thereof to be a Gram.

6. Meetings of Gram Sabha

Subject to the general orders of the State Government the Gram Sabha shall meet at least twice in a year and where the Gram Panchayats fails to convene Gram Sabha, the prescribed authority shall with the approval of the State Government and after giving notice to the Gram Panchayat concerned, convene it.

8. Quorum for the Meeting and Resolution

Quorum for the Meeting of a Gram Sabha shall be one-tenth of the total members of the Gram Sabha.

9. Presiding Officer

Every meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be presided over by the Sabhapati of the concerned Gram Panchayat.

10. Matters for consideration of Gram Sabha

- a) the annual statement of accounts of the Gram Panchayat,
- b) the report in respect of development programmes proposed to be undertaken during the current year;
- c) the promotion of unity and harmony among all sections of society in the village;
- d) programme of adult education within the village; and
- e) such other matters as the State Government may, by general or special order, specify.

11. Functions of Gram Sabha

- a) mobilising voluntary labour and contributions in kind and cash for the community welfare programme;
- b) identification of beneficiaries for implementation of developmental schemes pertaining to the village; and
- c) rendering assistance in the implementation of developmental schemes.

The Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act

Gram Sabha

1) There shall be a Gram Sabha for every village Panchayat consisting of persons registered in the electoral roll relating to the Panchayat village, comprised within the area of the said village Panchayat.

2) Subject to the general orders of the Government, the Gram Sabha shall meet at least thrice in a year but six months shall not intervene between any two meetings. If the village Panchayat fails to convene the Gram Sabha, the Inspector shall convene the Gram Sabha.

3) The Gram Sabha shall:

- i) approve the village plan;
- ii) approve the village budget for the year; and
- iii) review the progress of the implementation of all schemes entrusted to the village Panchayat.

4) The village Panchayat shall give the consideration to the recommendations and suggestions of the Gram Sabha

5) The quorum for a meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be one-third of the total number of the members of the Gram Sabha.

Tamil Nadu, Rules related to Gram Sabha

Notification Dated 17th July, 1998

In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (5) of section 3 read with sub-section (I) of section 242 of the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act, 1994 (Tamil Nadu Act 21 of 1994), the Governor of Tamil Nadu hereby makes the following Rules:- Rules

1. Short title- These rules may be called the Tamil Nadu Gram Sabha (Quorum and procedure for convening and conducting of meetings) Rules, 1998.

2. Venue and day of the meeting- The Gram Sabha in every village Panchayat shall meet at a public place within the limits of the village Panchayat. Meeting shall be held on official working day. No meeting shall be held on public holiday, unless specially notified by the inspector, or by the Government.

3. Notice- For holding meeting of the Gram Sabha not less than seven clear days notice prior to the date and time of the meeting and of the subjects to be deliberated shall be given in the manner specified below:

(a) by beat of drum in all the habitations of the village panchayat announcing the place, date, hour and agenda of the meeting;

(b) by a written intimation of the meeting to be displayed by affixture in the office of the village panchayat and in a few other conspicuous public places such as school building, noon meal centre, television room, village temple., over-head tank and so on, and

(c) A copy of the notice and the agenda shall be sent to the inspector not less than seven clear days before the date of the meeting.

4. Quorum for Meeting- No subject shall be taken up for deliberation at a meeting of the Gram Sabha unless there be present one tenth of the total number of the members of the Gram Sabha.

5. Adjournment of the meeting- If within half an hour after the time appointed for the meeting, the requisite quorum is not available. The meeting shall stand adjourned to a date and time to be notified to the members by the preceding officer.

6. Agenda- The agenda for the meeting shall be prepared by the president in consultation with the village panchayat. It shall include a report on the action taken on the decisions of the previous meeting of the Gram Sabha.

7. Presiding officer to preserve the orders in the meeting- The Presiding officer of the meeting of the Gram Sabha shall preserve order at the meeting and decide all points of order arising at or in connection with the meeting. There shall be no discussion on any point of order if decided by the presiding officer and his decision shall be final.

8. Observer of the meeting- Where the meeting of the Gram Sabha has been convened by the inspector, the inspector shall have right to send an officer not below the rank of Block Development Officer as observer who shall submit a report to inspector within seventy two hours of the completion of the Gram Sabha meeting.

9. Attendance register- The attendance of the members of the Gram Sabha shall cause to be recorded in a register maintained for this purpose by the presiding officer of the meeting.

10. Minutes:- The minutes if the meeting shall be recorded in the same register by the presiding officer and it shall be read out before the conclusion of the meeting and the presiding officer shall then sign it. The minutes of the Gram Sabha meeting shall be placed before the village Panchayat at its next meeting for consideration and further action.

11. Submission of the minutes-A copy of the minutes of the meeting shall submitted to the inspector within three days of the date of the meeting.

Notification dated 10th July, 1998 (G.O. No. 151)

In exercise if the powers conferred by clause (b) of sub-section (3) of section (3) of the Tamil Nadu Panchayat Act, 1994 (Tamil Nadu Act 21 of 1994), the Governor of Tamil Nadu hereby entrusts the following other functions to the Gram Sabha:-

(1) Approval of the beneficiaries selected and location of instructions and community facilities identified by the Village Panchayat;

(2) Review of the completed works executed in the previous year by Village Panchayat or by any Government Department and agency;

(3)Promotion of communal and social harmony among the various groups people in the village Panchayat;of

(4) Mobilisation of voluntary labour, contribution in cash and kind for community welfare and development programmes; and

(5)Examining annual statement of accounts and audit report of the Village Panchayat.

The Tripura Panchayats Act

Gram

1. Constitution of Gram

a) The State Government may, by notification, published in the official gazette, declare for the purpose of this Act, any revenue Mouavza or part of a revenue Mouavza or groups of revenue Mouavza or parts thereof to be a Gram.

2. Composition of the Gram Sabha

A Gram Sabha shall be a body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to an area comprised within the area of Gram.

3. Convening of Meeting

1) The procedure of convening and conducting the meetings of the Gram Sabha shall be such as may be prescribed.

2. It shall be the responsibility of the Pradhan to convene the meeting of the Gram Sabha annually in such manner as specified under the Act.

4. Vigilance Committee

There shall be constituted a vigilance committee - for each Gram Sabha with such number of persons and by such authority as may be prescribed to supervise the Gram Panchayat works, schemes and the activities to put up reports concerning them in its meeting.

5. Presiding Officer

Every meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be presided over by the Pradhan of the concerned Gram panchayat and in his absence by the Upa-Pradhan .

6. Matters for Consideration

The Gram Sabha shall consider the following matters

- a) The annual statement of accounts of the Gram Panchayat, the report of administration of the preceding financial year and the last audit note and replies.
- b) The budget of the Gram Panchayat for the next financial year.
- c) The report in respect of development programmes of the Gram Panchayat relating to the preceding year and development programmes proposed to be undertaken during the current year.

The Provisions of the Panchayats
(Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act

Exceptions and Modifications to Part IX of the Constitution

Notwithstanding anything contained under Part IX of the Constitution, the Legislature of a State shall not make any law under that Part which is inconsistent with any of the following features, namely:

- (a) A State legislation on the Panchayats that may be made shall be in consonance with the customary law, social and religious practices and traditional management practices of community resources;
- (b) A village shall ordinarily consist of a habitation or a group of habitations or a hamlet or a group of hamlets comprising a community and managing its affair in accordance with traditions and customs;
- (c) Every village shall have a Gram Sabha consisting of persons whose names are including in the electoral rolls for the Panchayat at the village level;
- (d) Every Gram Sabha shall be competent to safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people, their culture identify, community resources and the customary mode of dispute resolution:
- (e) Every Gram Sabha shall:
 - (i) Approve the plans, programmes and projects for social and economic development before such plans, programmes and projects are taken up for implementation by the Panchayat at the village level;
 - (ii) Be responsible for the identification or selection of persons as beneficiaries under the poverty alleviation and other programmes;
 - (a) Every Panchayat at the village level shall be required to obtain from the Gram Sabha a certification of utilisation of funds by that Panchayat for the plans, programmes and projects referred to in clause (e);
 - (b) The reservation of seats in the Scheduled Areas at every Panchayat shall be in

proportion to the population of the communities in the Panchayat for whom reservation is sought to be given under Part IX of the Constitution:

Provided that the reservation for the Scheduled Tribes shall not be less than one-half of the total number of seats:

Provided further that all seats of chairperson of Panchayats at all levels shall be reserved for the Scheduled Tribes;

(c) The State Government may nominate persons belonging to such Scheduled Tribes as have no representation in the Panchayat at the intermediate level or the Panchayat at the district level:

Provided that such nomination shall not exceed one-tenth of the total members to be elected in that Panchayat;

(d) The Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be consulted before making the acquisition of land in the Scheduled Areas for development projects and before resetting or rehabilitating persons affected by such projects in the Scheduled Areas; the actual planning and implementation of the Projects in the Scheduled Areas shall be co-ordinated at the State level;

(e) Planning and management of minor water bodies in the Scheduled Areas shall be entrusted to Panchayats at the appropriate level;

(f) The recommendations of the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be made mandatory prior to grant of prospecting licence or mining lease for minor minerals in the Scheduled Areas;

(g) The prior recommendation of the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be made mandatory for grant of concession for the exploitation of minor minerals by auction;

(h) While endowing Panchayats in the Scheduled Areas with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government, a State Legislature shall ensure that the Panchayats at the appropriate level and the Gram Sabha are endowed specially with-----

(i) The power to enforce prohibition or to regulate or restrict the sale and consumption of any intoxicant;

(ii) The ownership of minor product produce;

(iii) The power to prevent alienation of land in the Scheduled Areas and to take appropriate action to restore any unlawfully alienated land of a Scheduled Tribe;

(iv) The power to manage village markets by whatever name called;

(v) The power to exercise control over money lending to the Scheduled Tribes;

(vi) The power to exercise control over institutions and functionaries in all social sectors;

(vii) The power to control over local plans and resources for such plans including tribal sub-plans;

(a) The State legislation that may endow Panchayats with powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self government shall contain safeguards to ensure that Panchayats at the higher level do not assume the powers and authority of any Panchayat at the lower level or the Gram Sabha;

(b) The State Legislature shall endeavour to maintain the pattern of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution while designing the administrative arrangements in the Panchayats at district level in the Scheduled Areas.

Guidelines for the conduct of Gram Sabhas, Karnataka

The Government of India declared the year 1999-2000 A.D. as the Year of the Gram Sabha. Karnataka is one of the first State to recognise the significant role of the Gram Sabha in the implementation of development programmes and in the scheme of local self-government. Section 3 of the Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act 1993 makes it mandatory for the Gram Panchayat to convene a Gram Sabha in every village atleast twice a year. The Government is keen on strengthening the Gram Sabha so that it becomes an effective forum for participation of the rural people in the planning and implementation of different development programmes of the local bodies. The Government therefore directs that the Zilla Panchayats and the Taluk Panchayats shall consider the recommendations of the Gram Sabha and the felt needs expressed through the Gram Sabha, while formulating their action plans. With the above objectives in view, the following guidelines are stipulated for the conduct of Gram Sabha in the State:

- The Gram Sabha shall be convened atleast twice a year, once in the month of April/May and later in the month of October/November. However in order to ensure that Gram Sabhas are held in a fruitful and regular manner, the Executive Officer of the Taluk Panchayat shall publish, with the concurrence of Presidents of Gram Panchayats, a detailed schedule for holding Gram Sabha in all the village in the Taluk over a period of one week to ten days, specified for the purpose during the months of April/May and October/November of every year. This schedule must be published by the Executive Officer at least two weeks before the commencement of the week in question. The schedule shall contain the dated and timings of Gram Sabhas in every village in the Taluk. As far as possible, the Gram Sabha shall be held in the late afternoon hours when most of the villagers are available in the village.
 - The Executive Officer of taluk Panchayat shall designate a Taluk level officer from one of the development departments of Zilla Panchayat or Taluk Panchayat as Moderator for every Gram Sabha. The names of the officers appointed as Moderators shall be shown in the Schedule of the Gram Sabha. It would be of help to appoint a Co-moderator or an Assistance Moderator to assist the Moderator, wherever it is feasible. Appointment of two or more Moderators may be imperative in villages with a large population.
 - The Moderator shall facilitate discussion on the programmes of the Zilla Panchayat and the Taluk Panchayat in the Gram Sabha in addition to assisting in the orderly conduct of the Gram Sabha. It shall be the function of the Moderator to record a brief summary of resolutions and recommendations of Gram Sabha, on the functioning of the different Departments under the Zilla Panchayat and Taluk Panchayat and convey the same to the concerned Department and the Zilla or the Taluk Panchayat. The Moderator shall be conversant with the development programmes of the Taluk Panchayat and the Zilla Panchayat being implemented in the village concerned so that he is in a position to answer any queries raised in the Grama Sabha.
- The schedule of the Grama Sabbas shall be published in all Taluk Level Offices, Gram Panchayat Offices and in the Panchayat Vartha Patra. The schedule shall also be announced in the local newspapers and the All India Radio.
- The Secretary, Gram Panchayat shall announce the schedule of the Gram Sabha by the beat of tom-tom atleast one week prior to the date fixed for the Gram Sabha. The tom-tom may be repeated two or three times till a day prior to the date of the Gram Sabha.

- The Gram Panchayat shall try to ensure that a majority of the members of the Gram Sabha gather at the appointed time and the date of Gram Sabha. The representation of women and weaker sections of the society in large numbers shall be ensured. Adequate seating arrangements shall be made in the front rows for the women and persons belonging to the weaker sections to facilitate their participation.
- If the attendance in the Gram Sabha is less than 10% of the total electorate of the village, the Gram Sabha may be adjourned to a later date, which shall not in any case be later than week.
- The Moderator shall be present at the venue of Gram Sabha at least two hour prior to the time fixes for the commencement of the Gram Sabha. The Moderator should satisfy himself that the Secretary of Gram Panchayat has taken adequate measures including advance publicity for the proper conduct of the Gram Sabha.
- The Secretary, Gram Panchayat shall prepare detailed notes on the items in the agenda for the Gram Sabha and obtain the approval of Gram Panchayat atleast ten days in advance. He shall prepare at least 100 copies of the agenda notes, which among other matters shall include a report on the activities of the Gram Panchayat in the preceding year; The activities proposed during the year in question and also summary of the latest audited statement of accounts. These copies shall be made available to the public at a nominal price of Rs 1 per copy. Copies shall also be available for sale at the Gram Sabha itself.
- Gram Sabha shall be conducted with enthusiasm and to some extent in the manner of a public function. The Gram Panchayat can make arrangements for shamiana, public address system etc., either with the help of the villagers or by itself.
- The Gram Sabha shall be presided over by the Adhyaksha or the Upadhyaksha of the Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat may also invite Important persons, experts or specialists for offering their suggestions or guidance. The following persons shall be invariably invited to the Gram Sabha:
 - The Headmasters of schools situated in the village and the Chairman as well as the Members of the Village Education Committee.
 - * The Medical Officer of the concerned Primary Health Centre and the Veterinary Doctor or Assistant of the concerned veterinary dispensary.
 - * Manager of the concerned Commercial Bank of Regional Rural Bank.
 - * Concerned Agriculture Assistant or the Assistance Agriculture Officer.
 - * Concerned Village Accountant and the Revenue Inspector
 - .
 - The Anganwadi Workers of the village
 - * Chairman of the Neeru Panchayat or the Village Water and Sanitation Committee.
- The following subjects shall be discussed without fail in the Gram Sabha and record prepared of the discussions:
 - A report on the activities of the Gram Panchayat since the previous Gram Sabha. This should include the action taken on the decisions/ recommendations of the previous Gram Sabha.

- The details of the Taxes collected by the Gram Sabha and the outstanding balances during the last one year. The details of demand, collection and balance of the water rate shall be given separately. The details pertaining to the village in which Gram Sabha is being held should be furnished separately.
- The Village Accountant shall notify the births and the deaths recorded in the village during the last one year and update his records in case some births and deaths have not been registered,
- Discussion of the functioning of the public distribution system in the village and the implementation of the old age pension, pension for the physically handicapped etc.
- Enrolment and attendance of children in the schools and issues concerning the development of the schools.
- Discussion on the functioning of Health Centres and the veterinary Dispensaries and the preventive measures to be taken in respect of common diseases.
- The funds received by the Gram Panchayat under different programmes during the last one year and the expenditure incurred.
- The measures taken and the expenditure incurred by the Gram Panchayat/Neeru Panchayat towards the maintenance of water supply schemes.
- Details of the number of latrines built in the village and the amount of subsidy disbursed.
- Discussion on the functioning of the Anganwadi centres in the village.
- Identification and selection of individuals/families to be assisted under different schemes.
- Discussion on the schemes/ programmes proposed to be taken up by the Panchayat during the succeeding year.
- Any other subject suggested by the Gram Panchayat or subjects taken up with the permission of the Chairman of the Grama Sabha.
- The Gram Sabhas that are convened in the month of October/November shall be used for shortlisting the works that are proposed to be taken up on priority in the next financial year out of the resources of the Gram Panchayat, the Taluk Panchayat and the Zilla Panchayat. These works shall be community works, which will benefit the entire village.
- The head-master of the pre-primary/primary/high school situated in the village should give details of the number of children enrolled in the school, number of children who have dropped out, with particular reference to the enrolment and drop-out rate of girl children, and the condition of the school including repairs, infrastructure required, if any, etc. to the Gram Sabha.
- The Medical Officer of the concerned PHC or PHU shall give details of number of children yet to be immunised in the village. He shall educate the Grama Sabha about the preventive measures to be taken by the community against common diseases

like Malaria etc., and also inform them about the facilities provided by the health centre to the village.

- The Adhyaksha of the Neeru Panchayat shall give a brief report on the maintenance of water supply schemes, the quality and availability of water and the demand and collection of water tariff.

- The Grama Sabha can discuss the schemes and programmes of the Taluk Panchayat and the Zilla Panchayat in addition to the functions of the Gram Panchayat like maintenance of water supply, collection of water taxes etc. For example, issues concerning the Primary School/High School in the village; issues concerning the health centre/veterinary centre; works/programmes to be taken up by the Zilla Panchayat and the Taluk Panchayat for the development of the village etc., could also be discussed in the Gram Sabha. The Gram Panchayat shall consider such proposals/recommendations of the Gram Sabha in detail and convey its opinion/recommendation on such issues to the Executive Officer of the Taluk Panchayat Samithi within ten days.

- The Secretary, Gram Panchayat shall identify the works that could be taken up out of the Grams Panchayat grants and take action to include such works in the action plan of the Gram Panchayat and obtain the approval of the Gram Panchayat.

- The Executive Officer of the Taluk Panchayat shall consider the works proposed by the Gram Sabhas of all the villages in the Taluk at the time of the finalisation of the action plans of the Taluk Panchayat and obtain the approval of the Taluk Panchayat. If some works cannot be included for various reasons, this shall be informed to the Gram Panchayat for informing the Gram Sabha at a later state. If some of the recommendations/decisions of the Gram Sabha pertain to the Zilla Panchayat, the Executive Officer shall report the same to the Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Panchayat.

- The Executive Officer of the Taluk Panchayat shall consolidate the demands, suggestions and proposals received on the schemes of the Zilla Panchayat from all the Gram Sabhas in the Taluk and send a report to the Chief Executive Officer within one week of the completion of all the Gram Sabhas in the Taluk,

- Arrangements may also be made for videography or photography of the Gram Sabha for documentation purposes. Copies of the photographs of the Gram Sabha shall be submitted to the Executive Officer of the Taluk Panchayat.

The Gram Panchayat or the villagers may organise cultural programmes on the day of the Gram Sabha to generate enthusiasm among the villagers and ensure wider participation

© PRIA. The text may be reproduced for non-commercial purposes, provided credit is given to PRIA. To obtain permission for uses beyond those outlined in the Creative Commons license, please contact PRIA Library at library@pria.org. Please use the following citation:

PRIA: Compilation of Gram Sabha Related Provisions in Different State Acts and State Policies



Participatory Research in Asia
42, Tughlakabad Institutional Area, New Delhi-110062
Ph:+91-011-29960931/32/33
Web: www.pria.org