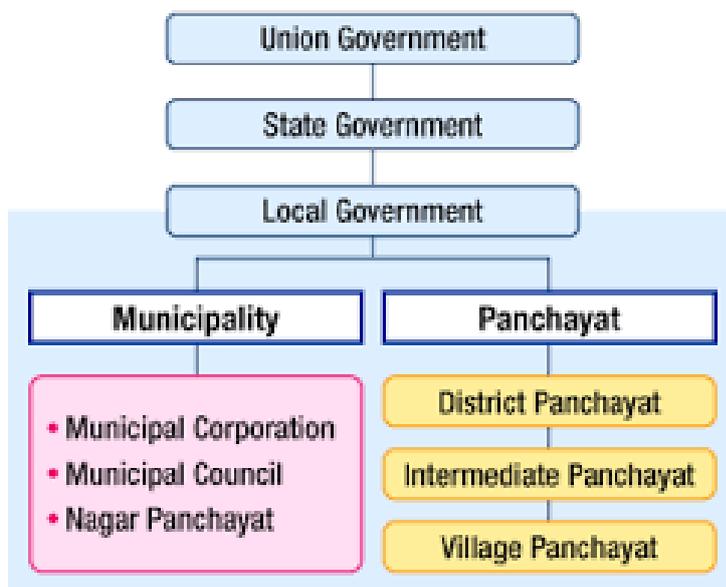# Know Your Local Government

Introduction -

Local government is an integral part of the three-tier system of government in India, the other two tiers are the union/central government and the state government. Local government is at the bottom of a pyramid of governmental institutions whereas union/central government is at the top and the state government functions at the middle range.

Though traditional forms of local governance have existed in India for centuries, the post-Independence period saw a shift towards building a system of local government, in no small part due to the influence of Mahatma Gandhi. The passing of the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments made it mandatory for each state to constitute rural and urban local governments, to establish mechanisms to fund them, and to carry out local elections every five years. (IDR Explains | Local government in India, 2020)

Structure of Local Government –

Features of Governing bodies in Urban area

Features of three local governing bodies in an urban area		
Municipal Corporation	**Municipal Council**	**Nagar Panchayat**
1. These are meant for big cities with a population of more than 100,000 people. 2. Its head is called Mayor. 3. It has more powers and sources of revenue.	1. These are meant for smaller cities with a population between 25,000 and 100,000 people. 2. Its head is called Chairman/President.	1. These are meant for areas that transition from rural to the urban population between 11,000 and 25,000 people. 2. Chairman is the head, but the Executive Officer is an

4. It deals with State Government directly.	3. It has fewer powers and sources of revenue. 4. It deals with State Government indirectly through District Administration.	official in charge of Nagar Panchayat. 3. It has fewer powers and sources of revenue. 4. In-charge co-ordinates between Chairman of Municipal Council and ward members.

Features of Governing bodies in Rural area

Features of three local governing bodies in the rural area		
Distict Council/ Zila Panchayat	**Block Panchayat**	**Village/Gram Panchayat**
1. The 'Zila Panchayat' is an apex (highest) body under Panchyati Raj. Its co-ordinates various activities of the various Block Panchayats. 2. The Chief Executive Officer is the head of Zila Panchayat 3. Term – 5 years (In the case of dissolution, election would be compulsorily held within six months.)	1. This is an intermediate body that co-ordinates the activities between all Village Panchayats in each block. 2. The Chief Administrative Officer of Block Panchayat is known as Block Development Officer (BDO). 3. Term – 5 years (In the case of dissolution, election would be compulsorily held within six months.)	1. Gram Panchayat is the 'Executive body' of Gram Sabha. 2. The members (Sarpanch/President and Vice President) of Gram Panchayat are elected by the members of Gram Sabha. 3. Term – 5 years (In the case of dissolution, election would be compulsorily held within six months.)

Role of Panchayati Raj in the Rural Development –

- Administrative activities such as the maintenance of village records, the construction, maintenance and repair of roads, tanks, wells, and so on.
- Improving socio-economic welfare through the promotion of rural industries, health, education, women, and child welfare, among others.
- Judicial functions such as trying petty civil and criminal cases such as minor thefts and money disputes are also performed either by separate Justice Panchayat or by Gram Panchayats.

Role of Municipality in the Urban Development –

- Town Planning – Zones & Building Regulations
- Extension, beautification, and cleanliness of city
- Providing essential services and facilities to urban area
- Construction and maintenance of roads, bridges, and drainage system
- Water supply for domestic, industrial, and commercial purposes
- Maintenance of playgrounds, streetlights, sanitation, schools, and hospitals
- Maintaining birth and death records

Do You Know?

- Mayor is also known as first citizen of city.
- Who is the Pioneer of Local Government in India?
  In 1882, Lord Rippon, Viceroy of India, took the initiative to form an elected local government body.
- How many Municipal Corporations are there in Goa?
  – A total of 13 Municipal Corporations are there in Goa.
- Which is the largest and richest Municipal Corporation in India?
  - The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) of the city of Mumbai in Maharashtra is the largest and richest municipal corporation in India.
- Who is the Union Minister of Panchayati Raj?
  - Shri Narendra Singh Tomar.