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## Panchayats

1. Part IX of the Constitution envisages a three tier system of Panchayats : ? Panchayat at the village level; ? The District Panchayat at the district level; ? The Intermediate Panchayat in States where the population is above 20 lakhs.
2. All the seats in a Panchayat is filled by direct election.
3. The electorate is named 'Gram Sabha'.
4. The Chairperson of each Panchayat is elected according to the law passed by a State.
5. Seats are reserved in Panchayat for Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population [Art. 243D].
6. Out of the reserved seats, 1 / 3 is reserved for women belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. 1 / 3 of the total seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat is reserved for women.
7. A State can make similar reservation for Chairpersons in the Panchayats.
8. Every Panchayat can continue for 5 years from the date of its first meeting. It can be dissolved earlier in accordance with State law.
9. A Panchayat reconstituted after premature dissolution, continues only for the remainder of the period. But if the remainder of the period is less than 6 months it is not necessary to hold elections.
10. All persons above 21 years of age and qualified to be a member of the State Legislature are qualified as a member of a Panchayat [Art. 243F].
11. Panchayats can be entrusted to prepare and implement plans for economic development and social justice.
12. A State can authorise a Panchayat to levy, collect and appropriate taxes, duties, tolls etc.
13. After the 73rd amendmend of the Constitution (25 April, 1993), every 5 years the States appoint a Finance Commission to review the financial position of the Panchayats and make recommendations.

- 14.** State Election Commission consisting of a State Election Commissioner is appointed by the Governor for superintendence, direction and control of elections to Panchayats [Art. 243K].
- 15.** The Community Development Programme was launched on Oct. 2, 1952.
- 16.** The Democratic Decentralisation was implemented for the first time in 1958 in some areas of Andhra Pradesh on experimental basis.
- 17.** The Panchayati Raj was introduced for the first time on Oct. 2, 1959 in Nagur District of Rajasthan by the Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru. Rajasthan is the first state in India, where Panchayati Raj was implemented in the whole state.

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