

CSR & Social Governance

(Chapter 16)

(Total= 20 marks)

Time - 1 Hr

Answer the following question.

Case Study 1

The concept of local self government is not new to our country and there is mention of community assemblies in the Vedic texts. Around 600 B.C., the territory north of the river Ganga comprising modern day north Bihar and eastern U.P. was under the suzerainty of small republics called Janapadas among which Lichhavis were the most powerful. In these Janapadas, the affairs of the State were conducted by an assembly consisting of local chieftains. In the post Mauryan times as well, there existed republics of Malavas and the Kshudrakas where decisions were taken by "sabhas". The Greek Ambassador, Megasthenes, who visited the court of Chandragupta Maurya in 303 B.C. described the City Council which governed Pataliputra - comprising six committees with 30 members. Similar participatory structures also existed in South India. In the Chola Kingdoms, the village council, together with its sub-committees and wards, played an important part in administration, arbitrated disputes and managed social affairs. They were also responsible for revenue collection, assessing individual contribution and negotiating the collective assessment with the King's representative. They had virtual ownership of village waste land, with right of sale, and they were active in irrigation, road building and related work. Their transactions, recorded on the walls of village temples, show a vigorous community life and are a permanent memorial to the best practices in early Indian polity. The present structure of Local Self Government institutions took shape in 1688 when the British established a Municipal Corporation at Madras which was followed by creation of similar bodies at Bombay and Calcutta (1726). Comprising a Mayor and a majority of British-born Councillors, these Corporations were basically units of administration enjoying considerable judicial powers. During the next 150 years, municipal bodies were created in several mufasil towns although their functions remained confined to conservancy, road repairs, lighting and a few other sundry items.

Questions:

(5 marks each)

1. What are the primary functions and responsibilities of a Secretary in an organization or association?

Answer

The Secretary of a Gram Panchayat is expected to perform the following functions:

- Take necessary steps to execute and implement the resolutions passed by the Panchayat at its Meetings.
- Communicate the decisions concerning persons of respective Panchayat area to them.
- Convene Meetings of Gram Panchayat and its Committees.
- Attend every Meeting of the Gram Panchayat including the Gram Sabha Meetings.
- Write the proceeding of every Meeting in the Minutes Book either in physical or electronic form.
- Place all the correspondence received by him, especially various schemes of the Government and instructions issued by the Government, before the Sarpanch and also for the information of all the Members during the meeting.
- Receive all correspondence on behalf of the Gram Panchayat and take appropriate action on the same.
- Finalise, in consultation with the Sarpanch, the Agenda and Notes on Agenda of every Meeting.
- Maintain all the registers and records prescribed under the applicable laws.
- Report to the Block Development Officer for any vacancy in the office of the Sarpanch/Up-Sarpanch or a Member.

- Be responsible for the safe custody of Panchayat funds, assets and the records maintained by the Gram Panchayat.
- Report to the Block Development Officer about any illegal act or misconduct or misuse or abuse of powers, any infringement of the legal provisions by the Sarpanch or Up-Sarpanch or the members of the Gram Panchayat, as soon as the same come to his knowledge.
- Comply with the instruction issued by the Government from time to time.
- Maintain cordial relations with the elected representatives of Gram Panchayat.

2. What is the purpose of preparing an agenda for a meeting, and how does it contribute to effective meeting management?

Answer

1. The Secretary shall finalise the Agenda and Notes on Agenda of every Meeting in consultation with the Sarpanch.
2. Each item of business to be taken up at the Meeting shall be serially numbered.
3. Agenda setting out the business to be transacted at the Meeting and Notes on Agenda shall be given to all the Members along with the Notice of the Meeting, unless otherwise provided in the applicable laws.
4. The Notes on Agenda shall specify details about the business to be transacted at the meeting.
5. The Notes on Agenda may be sent separately after issuing the Notice, but at least 3 clear days before the Meeting.
6. Agenda and Notes on Agenda of the Meeting of the Gram Panchayat shall be sent by the Secretary or by such other officer as prescribed by the Government for this purpose and in their absence, by the Sarpanch or any other Member, authorised by the Panchayat for this purpose.
7. Wherever the presence of the Patwari or other Tehsil level functionaries of the State Government or of a Panchayati Raj Institution, is required or desired by the Gram Panchayat at a Meeting, the Agenda and Notes on Agenda of such meeting shall also be sent to them.
8. Agenda and Notes on Agenda shall also be sent to such officer as may be prescribed by the Government.
9. If majority of the Members agree to convene a special Meeting, the Agenda and Notes on Agenda may be circulated at a shorter period of time than stated above. In such cases, the Agenda and Notes on Agenda shall be given at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Case Study 2

Lord Mayo introduced elected representatives for these municipalities and this was further developed by his successor, Lord Ripon, in 1882. By the 1880s, these urban municipal bodies had a pre-dominance of elected representatives in a number of cities and towns, including Calcutta and Bombay. A corresponding effective structure for rural areas came up with the enactment of the Bengal Local Self Government Act, 1885 which led to the establishment of district local boards across the entire territory of the then Bengal province. These boards comprised nominated as well as elected members with the District Magistrate as Chairman who was responsible for maintenance of rural roads, rest houses, roadside lands and properties, maintenance and superintendence of public schools, charitable dispensaries and veterinary hospitals. Within a span of five years, a large number of district boards came into existence in other parts of the country, notably Bihar, Orissa, Assam and North West Province. The Minto-Morley Reforms, 1909 and the Montague Chelmsford Reforms, 1919, when Local Self Government became a transferred subject, widened the participation of people in the governing process and, by 1924-25, district boards had a preponderance of elected representatives and a non-official Chairman. This arrangement continued till the country's Independence in 1947 and thereafter till the late 1950s.

In 1990, a combined Constitution Amendment Bill, covering both Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) & Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) was tabled in Parliament. It was a skeleton legislation which left the details to be crafted by the State Governments in their State enactments; even matters concerning elections were left completely to the discretion of the State Government. With the dissolution of the Government, this Bill too lapsed.

Questions:

(3 marks each)

1. What is the significance of maintaining minutes in the context of meetings held by organizations, societies, or companies?

Answer

1. The Secretary shall maintain the Minutes.
2. Distinct Minutes Book shall be maintained for the meetings of the Gram Panchayat and its Standing Committees.
3. The Minutes shall be maintained in Hindi or in the official language of the State.
4. Pages of the Minutes Book shall be consecutively numbered.
5. Minutes shall not be pasted or attached to the Minutes Book or tampered with, in any manner.

2. What is meant by “quorum” in the context of a meeting, and why is it important? Explain the procedure to be followed if a meeting cannot be held due to the absence of a quorum. What are the rules regarding the adjournment of a meeting for want of quorum?

Answer

1. If, at the appointed time for the Meeting, a quorum is not present, the Member(s) present shall wait for at least 30 minutes or for such longer period as may be prescribed by the Government or agreed to by the Member(s) present at the meeting and if within such period there is no quorum, the Meeting shall be adjourned to any future day on such time as the Chairperson or in his absence as the Member(s) present at the meeting may decide.
2. If even at an adjourned meeting no quorum is present, the Meeting shall stand cancelled.
3. If at a Meeting where the quorum is present, few agenda items remain pending for discussion/ decision due to insufficiency of time, the meeting may be adjourned to the following day or any other future day to discuss the unfinished agenda of that Meeting.

Q3. **(4 marks)**

Draft a notice for meeting of Gram Panchayat .

Answer

(Name of Panchayat & Block/ District))

To

Name & Address of the Member

Madam/Sir,

Date:

This is to inform you that the Meeting of(name of Gram Panchayat) is scheduled to be held on (Day & Date) from (time) onwards at (place) to discuss and transact the following matters :

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)
- (iv)

The detailed Agenda and Notes on Agenda are enclosed.

You are requested to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting. Yours faithfully (signature)

(Name of Secretary/ Authorised Officer)

Standard List of Agenda Item

The following items shall be invariably be included in the Agenda of Meetings:

- To grant Leave of Absence;
- To take note of the Minutes of the previous Meeting;
- To take note of the Minutes of the Meetings of Standing Committee(s);
- Follow up and Action Taken Report (ATR) on the decisions of the Previous Meeting;
- Approval/Concurrent review of Gram Panchayat Budget and Annual Plan implementation/utilisation;
- Statement of Income and Expenditure and the reasons for fluctuations in the financial statements, if any;
- Approval of New Works and Schemes;
- Review of utilisation of funds under various schemes;
- Review of physical progress of construction work, other projects and activities;
- Review of Village Sanitation, Street Lighting, Rural Roads, Drinking Water, Anganwadi, Fair Price Shops, Maintenance of School Buildings; Health Centre, etc.
- Any other matter

BEST OF LUCK