

Chapter 5 Panchayati Raj

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

Solution 1:

Water problem had become very acute. The hand pump water has gone well below the point up to which the ground has been drilled. They hardly got any water in the taps. Women have to walk 3 Km to get the water from the Suru river. They were planning to go ahead with watershed development.

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

Solution 2:

Gram Sabha is of great importance because they elect the gram panchayat members, they keep a check on the activities of gram panchayat so that funds are utilised in the right way, and to make sure that all problems and solutions are discussed and solved in the right manner at the right time.

All members should attend the meetings, if not few people will not be able to find solutions for problems and everyone and any wrongdoings of gram panchayat can be taken care of.

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

Solution 3:

Gram panchayat members are elected by the gram sabha. The gram panchayat is answerable to gram sabha. Gram sabha can keep a check on the activities of members of the gram panchayat.

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

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

Solution 4:

Students need to do this task keeping in mind their areas.

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

Solution 5:

All members of gram panchayat are elected by members of the gram sabha.

All adults above the age of 18 years are members of the gram sabha.

6. Read the following news item.

Nimone is a village on the Chauphula-Shirur Road. Like many others, this village has also been facing a severe water shortage for the last few months and villagers depend on tankers for all their needs. Bhagvan Mahadeo Lad (35) of this village was beaten with sticks, iron rods and axes by a group of seven men. The incident came to light when some villagers brought badly injured Lad to hospital for treatment. In the FIR recorded by the police Lad said that he was attacked when he insisted that the water in the tanker must be emptied into the storage tanks constructed as part of the water supply scheme by Nimone Gram Panchayat so that there would be equal distribution of water. However, he alleged that the upper caste men were against this and told him that the tanker water was not meant for the lower castes.

Adapted from Indian Express, May 1, 2004

a. Why was Bhagvan beaten?**Solution a:**

He wanted the tanker water to be emptied into the storage tanks as part of the water supply scheme by Nimone Gram Panchayat.

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

It was a clear case of caste discrimination as he was beaten in the first place by people of an upper caste who said lower caste people did not have the rights over the tanker water.

7. Find out more about watershed development and how it benefits an area?**Solution 7:**

Watershed development helps in conserving water and it recharges the water in an area. It can even transform the landscape of a place from barren land to a green meadow in a couple of years.