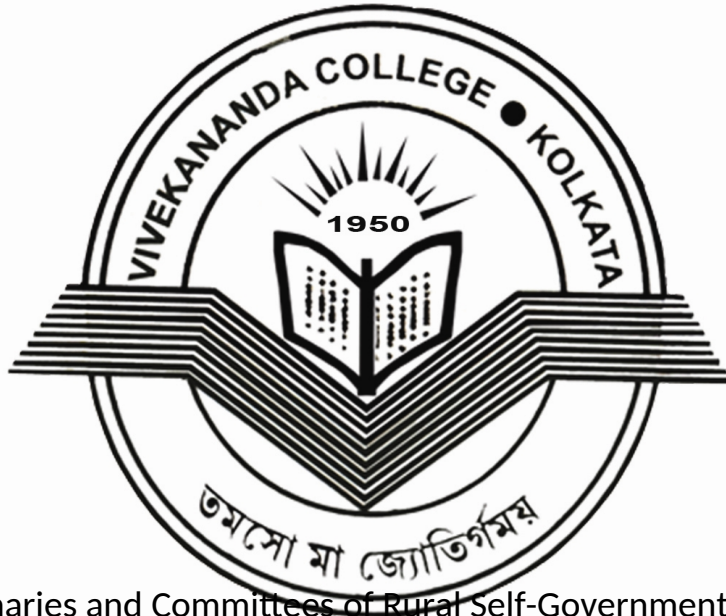


**VIVEKANANDA COLLEGE**

**THAKURPUKUR**

**KOLKATA-700063**

**NAAC ACCREDITED 'A' GRADE**



Topic: Functionaries and Committees of Rural Self-Government

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### **Sthayee Samitis or Standing Committees of Panchayat Samiti:**

An important role has been assigned to the committees in the administration of Panchayat Samiti. According to the Panchayat Amendment Act, 1992, the Panchayat Samiti has nine Sthayee Samitis, namely, viz.

- i. Finance, Establishment, Development and Planning
- ii. Public Health, Environment
- iii. Public Works and Transport
- iv. Agriculture, Irrigation and Cooperatives
- v. Education, Culture, Information and Sports
- vi. Cottage and Small-Scale Industries, Relief and Social Welfare
- vii. Forest and Land Reforms
- viii. Food and Supplies
- ix. Fisheries and Animal Resource Development

The Panchayat Samiti can, however, constitute any other committee subject to the approval, or under any general or special directions of the State government.

These committees exercise, perform and discharge such powers, functions and duties as assigned to them by the Panchayat Samiti. Each Sthayee Samiti consists of

- a) Sabhapati and Sahakari Sabhapati (ex-officio)
- b) 3-5 members elected by the Panchayat Samiti
- c) Not more than three government officers appointed by the State government. However, they cannot take part in the voting and cannot be appointed as the Karmadhakshyas

No person except the Sabhapati and the Sahakari Sabhapati of the Panchayat Samiti can simultaneously be a member of more than three committees. The Sabhapati and the Sahakari Sabhapati are the ex-officio members of each of these standing committees, and this arrangement undoubtedly makes their position important in the organization and functioning of the Panchayat Samiti.

- These Committees are headed by **Karmadhakshyas**, who are elected by the members of the Sthayee Samitis in the very first meeting.
- The Karmadhakshyas act as the chairpersons of the standing committees.
- They convene and preside over the meetings of the sthayee samitis.
- They distribute powers and functions among the members of the standing committee and coordinate their functioning.
- The Karmadhakshyas remain responsible to the Panchayat Samiti for the proper functioning of their respective sthayee samitis.

Each committee has a departmental officer of the BDO's office as its secretary and has powers of implementing, reviewing and monitoring sectoral programmes. The

Panchayat Extension Officer, a staff of the BDO's office, acts as the Secretary to the standing committee on Finance, Establishment, Development and Planning.

The various plans and projects for development prepared by the Gram Panchayats within a Panchayat Samiti have to be integrated and coordinated for their proper implementation. For this purpose, each Panchayat Samiti has a coordination committee. The members of this committee are the Sabhapati and the Sahakari Sabhapati of the Panchayat Samiti, Karmadhakshyas of each of the Standing Committees and the Panchayat Extension Officer. The Secretary to the Panchayat Samiti acts also as the Secretary to this committee. The meeting of this coordination committee is held at least once a month.

The Sabhapati of the Panchayat Samiti is however, the most influential member by virtue of his ex-officio chairmanship of the most important committee on Finance, Establishment, Development and Planning. In most of the Panchayat Samitis, this single factor is seen to have turned the Sabhapati into the political boss within the block area. The Sabhapati's leadership in the vital standing committee most often contributes to the growth of a tension between him and the BDO over such issues as selection of development beneficiaries or allocation of funds to different Gram Panchayats within the block. Decision-making after all, is an act of choice among different alternative ways of doing things and determining priorities on the basis of not only facts and information, but also values and pressures. In the decision making process of the Panchayat's administration at the block level, these two functionaries play the most important role.

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### **Sthayee Samitis or Standing Committees of Zilla Parishad:**

The functions of the Zilla Parishad are also performed by a number of standing committees.

The Panchayat Act of 1973 provides for the nine standing committees of the Zilla Parishad on the same pattern as in the case of the Panchayat Samiti. The Zilla Parishad may constitute other committees with the approval of the State government. The different important Sthayee Samiti of Zilla Parishad are:

- i. Finance, Establishment, Development and Planning
- ii. Public Health, Environment
- iii. Public Works and Transport
- iv. Agriculture, Irrigation and Cooperatives
- v. Education, Culture, Information and Sports
- vi. Cottage and Small-Scale Industries, Relief and Social Welfare
- vii. Forest and Land Reforms

- viii. Food and Supplies
- ix. Fisheries and Animal Resource Development

Each sthayee samiti consists of:

- a. The Zilla Parishad's Sabhadhipati and Sahakari-Sabhadhipati( ex-officio)
  - b. Three to five members elected by the elected members of the Zilla Parishad from among themselves, and
  - c. Not more than five government officers appointed by the state government
- Each committee is to elect its own Chairperson (designated **Karmadhyaksha**), but the Zilla Parishad's Sabhadhipati would ex-officio chair the committee on Finance, Establishment, Development and Planning. These Committees are headed by Karmadhakshyas, who are elected by the members of the Sthayee Samitis in the very first meeting.
  - The Karmadhakshyas act as the chairpersons of the standing committees.
  - They convene and preside over the meetings of the sthayee samitis.
  - They distribute powers and functions among the members of the standing committee and coordinate their functioning.
  - The Karmadhakshyas remain responsible to the Zilla Parishad for the proper functioning of their respective sthayee samitis.

The Secretary of the Zilla Parishad is to act as secretaries to all the committees. No member other than the Sabhadhipati or Sahakari-Sabhadhipati can belong to more than two committees. The committees exercise such powers and perform such duties as may be assigned to them by the Zilla Parishad or prescribed under rules framed by the State government.

Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti function through Sthayee Samitis which enjoy the powers to monitor and review the progress of development works within the relevant sectors. Departmental officers are answerable to their corresponding standing committees. In order to achieve coordination of functions between different standing committees and to monitor the activities of the lower tier panchayat bodies, separate committees called Samanyaya Samitis (coordination committees) have recently been statutorily set up in all Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads.