

All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP)

The **All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP)** has played an important role in the development of Panchayati Raj institutions in India, advocating for decentralized governance and local self-governance. Its historical development and key figures like Jayaprakash Narayan, Balwant Rai Mehta, and Lal Bahadur Shastri have significantly shaped the structure of panchayats and local governance in India.

History of All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP)

Organization and Early Years:

The **All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP)** was established in 1958 by prominent leaders of the time with the primary objective of promoting the idea of decentralized governance at the grassroots level. Its aim was to empower rural communities through panchayats, which were seen as the foundation of a democratic and inclusive society. AIPP was formed at a time when India, after independence, was focused on strengthening its democratic institutions, and panchayats were considered crucial in the process of rural development and self-governance.

Role in Strengthening Panchayats

The **All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP)** worked as a national federation to advocate for the importance of panchayats and local self-governance. It became involved in discussions on the constitutional recognition of panchayats and ensured that the local self-governance system was established in India's political structure.

The **All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP)** played an important role in promoting the implementation of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992, which was a historic step in giving constitutional status to panchayats and empowering local bodies with more powers and responsibilities.

Advocacy and Policy Influence

For decades, the **All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP)** has been actively involved in shaping policies related to Panchayati Raj and advocating for more decentralized and effective governance systems. It has worked toward better resource allocation, effective implementation of rural development programs, and ensuring empowerment of marginalized groups such as women and Scheduled Castes.

Key Leaders and Their Roles in Panchayati Raj

Balwant Rai Mehta was one of the key figures who shaped the concept of Panchayati Raj in India. He played an important role in the Panchayati Raj movement and was the first president of the All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP). He is known for his participation in the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957), which was established by the Government of India to study the functioning of panchayats and suggest improvements.

Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957):

The committee's report made an important recommendation for decentralization of power to ensure that people at the grassroots level could make decisions and participate in governance. The committee's key recommendation was the establishment of a three-tier Panchayati Raj system at the village, intermediate, and district levels. This became the foundation of the Panchayati Raj system that India follows today. The committee emphasized the need for democratic decentralization to allow local bodies to function and make decisions independently.

Impact

The recommendations of the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee laid the groundwork for the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, which gave panchayats recognition as constitutional institutions, granting them the right to manage local development and governance. Jayaprakash Narayan's perspective for India emphasized strengthening panchayats as a means of grassroots democracy, empowerment of local communities, and a vehicle for social and economic transformation.

Movement for Total Revolution

In the 1970s, Jayaprakash Narayan led the Total Revolution (Sampurna Kranti) movement, which demanded transformation of Indian society through a decentralized political structure. He was a supporter of decentralized governance and critical of the over-centralization of power. His views were consistent with the objectives of the Panchayati Raj movement, particularly in promoting local participation in decision-making.

Impact

His advocacy for rural self-governance and his criticism of centralization had a significant impact on the national discourse about decentralization of power, which ultimately led to the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. India's second Prime Minister, **Lal Bahadur Shastri**, was a strong supporter of the Panchayati Raj system and rural development. He emphasized the importance of both national security and agricultural development, promoting the idea of 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan' (Hail the Soldier, Hail the Farmer). His focus on rural development was closely linked to the empowerment of panchayats.

Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Under Shastri

Shastri believed that self-reliant villages could accelerate the country's economic development. As Prime Minister, he advocated strengthening panchayats as the foundation for implementing rural development plans. During his tenure, he worked on initiatives to improve agricultural production and rural infrastructure, and he considered panchayats essential for the success of these initiatives.

Impact

The government of Lal Bahadur Shastri supported the establishment of Panchayati Raj institutions in several states, and his advocacy helped lay the foundation for the eventual national recognition of Panchayati Raj as an important part of India's governance structure.

Discussions and Development Around Panchayati Raj

Especially during the 1950s and 1960s, discussions around Panchayati Raj focused on decentralization, local empowerment, and the need to integrate rural communities into the national democratic framework.

The Following Events Were Important:

Panchayati Raj Committees:

The report of the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957) was one of the first important steps in institutionalizing the idea of Panchayati Raj. The committee's recommendations on the three-tier structure paved the way for future policies.

Constitutional Amendment:

Although the idea of Panchayati Raj was important, panchayats were not formally recognized in the Indian Constitution until the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992. This amendment gave panchayats constitutional status and made their elections mandatory at the village, intermediate, and district levels.

Influence of Leaders:

Leaders like Jayaprakash Narayan and Lal Bahadur Shastri influenced the development of the Panchayati Raj system by emphasizing the importance of rural empowerment and decentralized governance. Their advocacy helped push the issue forward, leading to the institutionalization of panchayats in Indian politics.

Formation and Development of the Movement of All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP)

The All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) was central to bringing together local leaders, policy advocates, and civil society organizations to discuss challenges and solutions for effective Panchayati Raj. It played an important role in following up with the government for reforms and promoting the idea of strengthening panchayats to implement local development programs.

Conclusion:

The All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) has been an important force in advocating for decentralized governance in India. The roles of Balwant Rai Mehta, Jayaprakash Narayan, and Lal Bahadur Shastri in

the development of the Panchayati Raj system were crucial in shaping India's rural governance structures. Their contributions, both through formal reports and social movements, were significant in the ultimate recognition and empowerment of panchayats under the Indian Constitution, which culminated in the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. This laid the foundation of a more inclusive, decentralized, and participatory governance model that continues to shape rural India. The All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) continues to play an important role in strengthening the decentralized governance system and ensuring effective implementation of policies at the grassroots level.

Its Importance for the Government Lies in the Following Areas:

Strengthening Grassroots Governance: The All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) works to enhance the functioning and empowerment of panchayats across the country. Panchayats are the most local form of government in India, and AIPP supports them in better administration, policy implementation, and local self-governance. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 gave panchayats a constitutional mandate, and AIPP plays an important role in ensuring their effectiveness.

Facilitating Policy Support:

The **All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP)** works as a platform to advocate for policies that improve the functioning of panchayats. It can influence national-level decisions by making recommendations and raising concerns about the issues of local governance. This ensures that the government is aware of grassroots-level challenges and the aspirations of local communities.

Promoting Rural Development: Rural development is a key aspect of India's socio-economic growth. Since panchayats are directly involved in implementing development schemes related to sanitation, education, healthcare, basic infrastructure, and welfare, AIPP helps guide and monitor their activities, ensuring that the government's rural development programs effectively reach their intended goals.

Capacity Building and Training:

The **All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP)** provides training and capacity-building programs for panchayat representatives, elected members, and government officials. This strengthens the administrative and decision-making skills of local leaders and ensures that the government's rural development programs and policies are effectively implemented at the grassroots level.

Ensuring Financial Assistance and Accountability:

The All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) plays a role in ensuring that panchayats receive adequate financial assistance for their activities and projects. It helps advocate for proper resource allocation from state and central governments. Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of accountability in the use of funds and resources at the local level.

Promoting Transparency and Accountability:

By working collaboratively with panchayats, the All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) ensures that the governance process is transparent and accountable. It promotes citizen participation in local decision-making processes, which is essential for strengthening democracy and good governance.

Advocating Transfer of Powers:

The All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) advocates for the transfer of powers to panchayats, emphasizing the right to make more decisions at the local level. This reduces the centralization of power and makes governance more responsive to the needs of local communities.

Linking Panchayats to National Programs:

The **All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP)** helps bridge the gap between central or state-level government programs and local implementation. It ensures that panchayats are aware of national and state-level schemes—including those related to poverty alleviation, education, health, and infrastructure—and facilitates their smooth implementation.

Promoting Social Justice:

Through its focus on panchayats, the All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) ensures that marginalized communities—such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and women—receive proper representation and benefits from government schemes. It works to make rural India more equitable by addressing concerns related to social justice.

Promoting Sustainable Development:

The All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) supports panchayats in implementing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the local level.

It ensures that rural areas are aligned with the broader national goals of sustainable and inclusive development. In summary, the All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) works as an important pillar of decentralized governance, ensuring that local self-governments are empowered, policies are effectively implemented, and the government better addresses the needs of rural India. It acts as a medium between the government and grassroots institutions, enabling more responsive and effective governance. To enhance the development of villages and panchayats, AIPP needs to be empowered with a specific set of powers and resources that will enable it to better fulfill its role as an advocate for decentralized governance and development. Here are some powers and functions that should be given to AIPP to increase its impact on rural development:

Financial Autonomy and Resource Allocation:

Control over Funds: The All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) should be given the authority to directly allocate and monitor funds for panchayats. This would include a large share of funding from central and state governments for rural development projects.

Resource Mobilization Capacity: AIPP should be empowered to facilitate the creation of local revenue generation mechanisms (such as taxes, fees, or bonds) for panchayats. This would give panchayats greater financial independence and reduce dependence on external funding.

Transparent Financial Management: Effective development can be achieved by giving AIPP the power to ensure transparent and accountable use of funds within panchayats.

Policy Advocacy and Implementation Power:

Influencing Policy Decisions: AIPP should have more powers to advocate for policy changes that benefit rural areas, such as infrastructure development, water management, and education.

Its recommendations should be made mandatory or at least given priority in national and state policy-making processes.

Monitoring and Implementation of Schemes: AIPP should be given the authority to implement national rural development schemes on the ground, ensuring they reach the intended beneficiaries. These include programs like MNRGA, rural electrification, and Swachh Bharat.

Decentralized Decision-Making:

Increased Role in Planning and Implementation: AIPP should receive direct participation in the planning and implementation of rural development programs, allowing local needs to guide development efforts rather than relying solely on top-down government directives. The power to approve local projects (such as roads, schools, health facilities) should be granted to ensure these initiatives are in line with priorities and needs.

Strengthening Grassroots Governance Structures: To strengthen panchayats—**Legal Authorization:** AIPP should have the power to legally recognize and ensure the proper functioning of panchayats in all areas, guaranteeing that they operate democratically and in accordance with the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. **Designing Local Governance Models—Autonomy:** AIPP should be allowed to create customized governance structures for different areas (rural or tribal), ensuring that local challenges and needs are effectively addressed.

Training and Capacity Building: Develop training programs for panchayat leaders; AIPP should be given the authority to establish comprehensive capacity-building programs for elected representatives in panchayats. This will improve the skills of local leaders, ensuring they are well equipped to handle governance and development challenges.

Building Support Networks: AIPP can also facilitate the formation of networks among panchayats for knowledge sharing, resource pooling, and mutual support.

Implementation of Social Justice Measures:

Ensuring Inclusivity in Development Programs: AIPP should have the authority to implement social justice measures in panchayats, such as ensuring that Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), women, and other marginalized groups receive adequate representation and are included in decision-making processes.

Monitoring Anti-Discrimination Laws: AIPP should also be given the right to monitor and report on the enforcement of anti-discrimination laws at the panchayat level, to ensure that these laws are being followed and social justice is being delivered in rural areas.

Legal Authority for Dispute Resolution:

Conflict Resolution Mechanism: AIPP should be given the power to establish formal mechanisms for dispute resolution within panchayats, especially for matters related to land, resource management, and community disputes. This will help maintain social harmony in rural areas. **Legal Assistance for Panchayat Leaders:** AIPP can provide legal assistance to panchayats in cases of corruption, mismanagement, or conflict with higher authorities, ensuring that local governance remains independent and protected from undue influence.

Local Infrastructure Development:

Rights over Local Infrastructure Projects: AIPP should be given the powers to approve and oversee basic infrastructure projects for villages and districts, such as electricity, water supply, and healthcare facilities.

Control over Rural Education and Healthcare Systems: AIPP should be given the authority to allocate funds for rural schools, colleges, and healthcare centers and to monitor their efficient use, to ensure quality education and healthcare services are available in rural areas.

Promoting Sustainable Development:

Environmental Governance Powers: AIPP should be given the authority to monitor local environmental regulations and implement sustainability programs at the panchayat level. This would include monitoring natural resource management, waste disposal, and promoting renewable energy sources.

Local Climate Action Plans: AIPP can be tasked with preparing and implementing climate adaptation strategies for villages, especially in areas sensitive to climate change.

Enhanced Public Accountability: Audit and Monitoring: AIPP should have the power to audit the functioning of panchayats and ensure they are following proper governance practices, including transparency in decision-making, budget allocation, and project implementation.

Citizen Participation: AIPP can ensure more citizen participation in decision-making, ensuring that panchayats are accountable to community needs and providing a framework for local people to express their opinions and participate in governance.

Technology and Innovation in Governance: Digital Empowerment: AIPP should have the authority to integrate technology in Panchayati Raj, promoting the use of e-governance tools and digital platforms for greater transparency, efficiency, and access to services.

Promoting Smart Villages: AIPP can lead initiatives that promote the development of smart villages, integrating digital infrastructure for better communication, education, healthcare, and access to markets.

Conclusion: Empowering AIPP with the above powers would significantly increase its ability to promote rural development, promote good governance at the panchayat level, and strengthen the overall development of villages. By giving AIPP more financial, political, and administrative authority, it can more effectively advocate for policies, ensure transparent resource management, and promote inclusive, sustainable development in rural India. These improvements will not only improve the lives of rural citizens but also contribute to the broader goals of national development.

All India Panchayat Parishad

The All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) has played an important role in the development of Panchayati Raj and empowerment of local self-governance in India. Since its formation, many important figures and leaders have contributed to its development, the development of Panchayati Raj institutions, and the formation of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. Below is a list of some key people who have played an important role in the formation and development of AIPP as well as in the Ministry of Panchayat in India.

The All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) has played an important role in promoting and developing Panchayati Raj in India, providing a platform for local self-governance and decentralization. Key figures like Balwantray Mehta, Jayaprakash Narayan, Valmiki Prasad Singh, and several others gave lectures on local democracy and rural empowerment. Their collective efforts helped the formation of the Ministry of Panchayat and ultimately the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, which formally established Panchayati Raj institutions, ushering in a new era of decentralized governance in India.

1. Balwantray Mehta – Role, Balwantray Mehta Committee Chairman (1957):

Contribution: Mehta was one of the most influential leaders in establishing Panchayati Raj in India. The Mehta Committee (1957) recommended the three-tier system of panchayats (Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti, and Zila Parishad), which laid the foundation for decentralization of power at the local level. Although he was not directly involved in the formation of AIPP, his recommendations were important in strengthening local governance and influenced AIPP's work.

2. Jayaprakash Narayan (JP):

Role: Political leader and social reformer. **Contribution:** Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) was a strong supporter of Gram Swaraj (village self-governance) and decentralization. His philosophy of democracy and self-reliance in rural areas aligned with the principles of Panchayati Raj. Although he did not have a direct primary role in AIPP's formation, his advocacy for Panchayati Raj and rural development influenced AIPP's formation and development, especially in terms of empowerment of local institutions.

2A Dr. Lal Singh Tyagi – President from 1973 to 1990. During his tenure, the Panchayat Parishad's office guest house and other work of 60 years were done, after which he made me write my panchayat introduction directly.

3. Shri Valmiki Prasad Singh – Role, President of All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP):

Contribution: As president of AIPP, Valmiki Prasad Singh played an important role in advocating for the empowerment and decentralization of panchayats. He worked to create a national platform for discussion on issues related to local governance and promoted the importance of local self-governance. Under his

leadership, AIPP became instrumental in shaping the future of the Panchayati Raj system in India.

4. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel:

Role: First Deputy Prime Minister of India (1947-1950) and Home Minister. **Contribution:** Despite not being directly involved in the formation of AIPP, Sardar Patel played an important role in the conceptualization of the Panchayati Raj system in India. Patel strongly believed in decentralized governance as a means of promoting unity and development in India after independence. His perspective on self-reliant villages inspired later leaders of the Panchayati Raj movement.

5. Jawaharlal Nehru:

Role: First Prime Minister of India. **Contribution:** Nehru was the chief architect of India's planning and development framework. His advocacy for democratic decentralization in the early years of India's independence laid the groundwork for the development of the Panchayati Raj system. He emphasized the need for rural development and self-governance, and his government's policies ultimately gave birth to Panchayati Raj institutions, which also included support for AIPP in its early years.

6. Rajendra Prasad:

Role: First President of India. **Contribution:** During Rajendra Prasad's presidency, important changes occurred in India's political and governance structures. Although he was not directly involved in AIPP's formation, his support for democratic institutions and rural development contributed to a broader political environment in which local governance developed, including the formation of the Panchayati Raj system.

7. Lal Bahadur Shastri:

Role: Prime Minister of India (1964-1966). **Contribution:** Shastri strongly believed in strengthening rural areas and local institutions. Under his leadership, emphasis was placed on the importance of Panchayati Raj and policies for rural development began to gain momentum. Although his tenure was short, Shastri's focus on local self-governance and his support for reforms helped lay the stage for the Ministry of Panchayat that came later.

8. Indira Gandhi:

Role: Prime Minister of India (1966-1977, 1980-1984). **Contribution:** Indira Gandhi's government played an important role in advancing the Panchayati Raj system (although the 73rd Amendment was passed after her tenure), which gave Panchayati Raj institutions constitutional status. In the 1970s, her policies gave special attention to empowering rural communities and women through the Panchayati Raj system.

9. V. Venkatswami:

Role: Member of All India Panchayat Parishad and social reformer. **Contribution:** V. Venkatswami played an important role in the institutional development of the Panchayati Raj system in India, especially in promoting village self-governance. His role in AIPP's early years helped empower panchayats in its broader mission. His support for decentralization and inclusive governance helped shape AIPP's early advocacy efforts.

10. Babu Jagjivan Ram:

Role: Central Rural Development Minister (1977-1979). **Contribution:** As Central Rural Development Minister, Jagjivan Ram was in favor of empowering rural communities and advancing reforms in the

Panchayati Raj system. His efforts in the latter half of the 1970s helped advance the national discourse on strengthening panchayats as a means of decentralization and rural development.

11. P.V. Narasimha Rao:

Role: Prime Minister of India (1991-1996). **Contribution:** While his primary contribution is associated with economic reforms, P.V. Narasimha Rao also oversaw the implementation of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment in 1992, which gave panchayats constitutional recognition. This was a historic achievement for Panchayati Raj in India. Rao's leadership and his perspective on decentralization reinforced the work started by earlier leaders and strengthened the role of panchayat institutions in governance.

Formation of Ministry of Panchayat:

The Ministry of Panchayat was established to oversee the functioning and development of Panchayati Raj institutions in India. The ministry was important in implementing reforms and providing guidance to state governments, especially in the context of the 73rd Amendment. The Rural Development Ministry played an important role in supporting Panchayati Raj institutions and enabling them to effectively fulfill their responsibilities. Babu Jagjivan Ram was one of the early leaders who served as Central Rural Development Minister in the 1970s, paving the way for the ministry's development.

Major Ministries and Departments:

Panchayati Raj Ministry: The formal establishment of this ministry occurred in 2004, which was an important step toward strengthening the Panchayati Raj system. It focuses on empowering local state governments, implementing reforms, and providing financial and technical assistance to panchayats. The Rural Development Ministry, which has been involved in rural development, basic infrastructure, and local self-governance, supports the overall implementation of Panchayati Raj across India.

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) was one of the most influential political figures in post-independence India. His contribution to social reform, political movements, and promotion of democratic values is well known. JP had a deep impact on India's political landscape. His advocacy for decentralization, rural development, and empowerment of people was instrumental in shaping India's local governance systems, including his important role in the formation of the All India Panchayat Parishad.

Jayaprakash Narayan played an important role in shaping India's vision for local self-governance and Panchayati Raj. His ideas on decentralization, social justice, and inclusive participation had a deep and lasting impact on Indian politics, particularly on grassroots development and democratic governance. His contribution, especially through the formation of the All India Panchayat Parishad, helped prepare the ground for the institutionalization of Panchayati Raj in India.

Early Life and Education:

Birth: Jayaprakash Narayan was born on October 11, 1902 in a village called Sitabdiara in the Saran district of Bihar, British India, in a Kayastha family.

Education: He completed his early education in Bihar and later went to America, studying at the University of California, Berkeley. During his time in America, Jayaprakash Narayan became aware of the

ideas of social justice, democracy, and non-violent resistance, which later influenced his political ideology in India.

Participation in Indian Freedom Movement:

Becoming part of the freedom struggle: JP was greatly influenced by the Indian independence movement and returned to India in the 1920s. He joined the Indian National Congress (INC) under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership and participated in the Non-Cooperation Movement and Salt March in 1942. He was an active participant in various freedom activities, including the Quit India Movement. His commitment to non-violence and social justice was an integral part of his political philosophy, which is why the British imprisoned him several times.

After independence in 1947, JP shifted his focus from the freedom movement to social reform and political reforms in independent India. He became disillusioned with the political establishment and tried to bring about changes that could solve the growing challenges of poverty, corruption, and increasing centralization of power. JP's role in the formation of the All India Panchayat Parishad lies in his philosophy of decentralization and empowerment of rural communities. His vision for a strong democratic system was focused on grassroots participation, and this was reflected in his advocacy for the establishment of Panchayati Raj institutions.

Background: After independence, the Government of India tried to create a system of local governance capable of decentralized decision-making and empowering communities, especially in rural areas. Jayaprakash Narayan was greatly influenced by Gandhian ideals of self-reliance and village-based governance. He believed that Gram Swaraj (village-level self-governance) was essential for India's development and democracy. His work in rural development and social reform led him to focus on strengthening local institutions like panchayats (village councils), which could make the governance process more directly participatory for the people.

His work in social reform directed him to focus on strengthening local institutions like panchayats (village councils), which could make the governance process more directly participatory for the people. In 1957, the Government of India recognized the need for a cohesive national framework for local self-governance. As a result, the All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) was formed, a body whose objective was to represent the interests of local governance institutions and help establish a nationwide Panchayati Raj system. Balwantray Mehta was a key figure in the formation of the Panchayati Raj system through the Mehta Committee Report, while JP's role was also important in advocating for panchayats as part of broader social-political reforms.

The establishment of the All India Panchayat Parishad was done to provide a platform for panchayats across India to discuss issues related to local governance and to ensure that panchayats work effectively with adequate resources, rights, and autonomy. JP was active in these discussions, promoting the idea that decentralized governance through panchayats could solve many of India's problems related to social justice, rural development, and poverty alleviation.

JP's Advocacy for Decentralization:

JP was a strong supporter of decentralization of power at the grassroots level. He believed that local bodies like panchayats should be given the right to make decisions about the development of their own areas. According to him, rural people should have control over their economic, social, and political life.

Promoting Local Democracy:

JP's view of democracy was not limited to electoral politics at the national or state level. He argued that true democracy can only be realized when people actively participate in governance. JP's commitment to social justice extended to ensuring the participation of marginalized groups—including women, lower castes, and tribals—in the Panchayati Raj system. He emphasized that panchayats should be inclusive and provide equal platforms for all sections of society.

JP's Contribution to Panchayati Raj:

While Balwantray Mehta played a central role in shaping the administrative structure of Panchayati Raj through the Mehta Committee report, JP's perspective was more focused on the social and philosophical foundations of this system.

JP believed that for India's progress, the political structure needed to empower people at the grassroots level. He saw the Panchayati Raj system as a means of promoting local democracy, restoring self-reliance, and promoting social and economic development in rural areas.

Support and Reforms:

Through the All India Panchayat Parishad, JP emphasized the need for more power transfer from the central government to local bodies. He argued that this would lead to better resource allocation, more efficient use of funds, and the ability to more effectively address local needs.

Rural Reconstruction:

JP was one of the early supporters of rural reconstruction as a broad effort to eliminate economic and social inequalities in rural India. He believed that panchayats could work as an organized force for rural reconstruction, focusing on education, health services, sanitation, and basic infrastructure. Supporting local leadership: Jayaprakash Narayan worked to build leadership at the village level, empowering local leaders to take responsibility for their communities and push development forward.

Total Revolution Movement:

In the 1970s, Jayaprakash Narayan became a central figure in the Total Revolution (Sampurna Kranti) movement, which aimed to reform Indian society politically, socially, and economically. This movement emphasized decentralization, empowering the people, and reducing the centralization of power.

Although this movement was primarily a response to political corruption and authoritarianism, it was also linked to JP's long-held belief in the power of grassroots democracy and the need for a more decentralized, participatory political system.

Legacy and Impact:

JP's advocacy for Panchayati Raj and local self-governance left a lasting impact on India. His ideas were ahead of his time and he laid the foundation for future reforms in India's political system.

His contribution to rural development and decentralization ultimately influenced the 73rd Constitutional Amendment (1992), which formally established the three-tier Panchayati Raj system (Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti, and Zila Parishad) and gave it constitutional status.

His efforts in the Total Revolution movement and for decentralization of power influenced many leaders and political movements across India, and increased the demand for more democratization and participatory governance.

Death:

Jayaprakash Narayan passed away on October 8, 1979, but his ideas and advocacy for decentralization and social justice continued to inspire political leaders and reformers across India.

Shri Balwantray Mehta

Shri Balwantray Mehta was a prominent Indian politician and social reformer who is known for his important role in the development of local governance systems, particularly the Panchayati Raj system. His contribution was important for India's democratic framework. Here, a comprehensive look is taken at his life, his contribution to the formation of the All India Panchayat Parishad, and his role in it.

The work of Shri Balwantray Mehta, especially through the All India Panchayat Parishad and the Shri Balwantray Mehta Committee, brought about revolutionary changes in India's approach to local governance, making it more participatory and decentralized and playing an important role in creating a more participatory democratic system. His efforts laid the groundwork for the constitutional recognition of Panchayati Raj and have had a lasting impact on India's political landscape.

Early Life and Education:

- **Birth:** Shri Balwantray Mehta was born on July 19, 1916 in Rajkot city of Gujarat in British India.
- **Education:** He completed his school education in Gujarat and obtained a graduate degree with a law degree. During his student years he was inspired by the nationalist movement and was actively involved in social and political activities.

Political Career and Contribution to Indian Politics:

- Shri Balwantray Mehta was a member of the Indian National Congress and was closely associated with the Indian freedom struggle. He became an important figure in the party, working to establish democratic principles that later became central to India's political landscape after independence.
- After independence in 1947, Mehta was committed to ensuring more public participation in democratic governance and promoting decentralization of power.

Role in Formation of All India Panchayat Parishad: One of the most important milestones in Shri Balwantray Mehta's career was:

His participation in the formation of All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP), which played an important role in establishing Panchayati Raj institutions across the country.

The Panchayati Raj system is a framework for decentralization of power that enables local self-governance in rural areas. The goal was to provide local communities with the capacity to manage their own affairs and resources. Shri Balwantray Mehta's view was that local bodies like Gram Parishads (panchayats) should be given autonomy to make decisions on local matters, rather than relying on distant government officials. He believed this would strengthen democracy by ensuring broader participation and improving governance efficiency.

Formation of All India Panchayat Parishad:

- In the early 1950s, the Government of India was exploring the best ways to implement local self-governance. In 1957, Shri Balwantray Mehta was appointed as Chairman of Community Project Administration (CPA) in the Planning Commission of India.

- His role was important in organizing and implementing a structured, democratic, and well-functioning Panchayati Raj system.
- It was under his leadership that the All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) was formed in 1957 as a nationwide organization to represent the interests of panchayats and advocate for the establishment of a more effective local governance system.
- AIPP's role was to unite panchayats across the country, organize their functioning, and ensure they received the necessary resources, guidance, and support from the central government.
- The formation of AIPP was an important step toward establishing a comprehensive Panchayati Raj framework across India.

Shri Balwantray Mehta Committee (1957):

- Contribution to the development of the Panchayati Raj system: In 1957, Shri Balwantray Mehta also chaired the Balwantray Mehta Committee (also known as the Panchayati Raj Committee).
- The committee was tasked with reviewing the functioning of panchayats and suggesting reforms.
- The Mehta Committee Report (1957) recommended the establishment of a three-tier Panchayati Raj system, which includes:
 1. **Gram Panchayat (Village Level):** The lowest level of local government, dealing with issues at the village level.
 2. **Panchayat Samiti (Block Level):** The middle level, responsible for coordination of several Gram Parishads.
 3. **Zila Parishad (District Level):** The highest level, which oversees the entire district and acts as a link between the state government and Gram Parishads.

Recommendations of the Mehta Committee:

- The report emphasized the importance of local self-governance and decentralization of power to ensure effective administration at the grassroots level.
- It advocated for the direct election of members of panchayats, strengthening the democratic process, and ensuring that local leaders are elected by the people rather than appointed by the government.
- The committee also called for more participation of women and marginalized communities in Panchayati Raj institutions.
- The recommendations of the Mehta Committee were the foundation for the future expansion of the Panchayati Raj system in India, and it eventually led to the enactment of the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution of India in 1992, which made the Panchayati Raj system a constitutional unit.

Legacy and Impact:

- Shri Balwantray Mehta's contribution to local governance in India has left an indelible mark on the country's political structure. The establishment of Panchayati Raj institutions has been an important achievement in empowering local communities and strengthening democracy.
- Mehta's work with AIPP and the Mehta Committee laid the foundation for India's decentralized governance system and played an important role in promoting local self-governance.
- His role in shaping the All India Panchayat Parishad and the Panchayati Raj system helped increase political participation of rural communities and made governance more accessible.

Later Life and Death:

- After his contribution to the development of the Panchayati Raj system, Shri Balwantray Mehta continued to play an active role in politics and public service while holding various positions. He remained a strong supporter of democratic decentralization until his death.
- Shri Balwantray Mehta passed away on September 19, 2001.

Delhi High Court

In the Delhi High Court

Criminal Revision P. 534/2018

Through Valmiki Prasad Singh and Others:

Through Citizenship Delhi and Others:

Petitioners:

Shri Varun Kumar Sinha, Smt. Pratibha Sinha, and Shri Sneh Vardhan, Advocates.

Respondents:

Smt. Richa Dhawan, APP for State.

Inspector Lalit Kumar, P.S. DIAIYU/Former.

Shri Yatendra Sharma and Shri Prateek Sharma, Advocates for R-2, 3, and 4.

Coram:

Hon'ble Ms. Justice Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora

Order

Date: 19.02.2025

1. The present petition has been filed under Section 397 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Cr.P.C.),

In which the following relief has been sought:

(i) To set aside the order dated 18.05.2018 passed by the Lead SDM, Mayur Vihar, in case number SDM (DT)/Cr.PC. 145/P 3/2017 titled 'State vs. Party No. 1, Shri Subodh Kant Sahay and Others' and Party No. 2, Shri Valmiki Prasad Singh and Others.

(ii) To direct the Hon'ble SDM, Mayur Vihar, to hand over the premises and other structures of All India Panchayat Parishad, Panchayat Dham land, which is located in Khasra No. 8/29, Khasra No. 368, Village Gharonda Neem Ka Banker, Patparganj, Mayur Vihar, Phase-1, Delhi, to the petitioners.

(Emphasis added)

The learned counsel for the petitioner relied on the order of Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) dated 25.04.2017 and the special order dated 03.10.2017.

The judge set aside the order dated 25.04.2017 and sent the parties to the Hon'ble SDM for new proceedings. 2.1 He relied on the final order dated 18.05.2018 passed by the Hon'ble SDM, in which the relevant part is as follows: '20. As far as this argument is concerned, the government agencies are giving

recognition to them as the chairman of the Parishad, which Party No. 2 wants to prove through a letter written to the Kerala Local Administration Institute, a copy of which was sent to Shri Valmiki Prasad Singh as addressed to them as chairman of the Parishad, a copy of which was also presented by the other party to Shri Subodh Kant Sahay addressed to them as chairman of the Parishad. In reality, none of these two letters can be relied upon because the government department sends such invitation letters to office bearers based on available records which are often outdated.

21. Now, regarding Party No. 1, they have submitted the testimony of 10 employees of the Parishad as evidence, all of whom confirm the possession of the group of Subodh Kant Sahay. Party No. 1 has also provided details of cheque payments made to the contractor appointed for renovation of the office premises. These cheques show dates between 31/12/2016 and 14/3/2017. The contractor's affidavit has also been submitted in which they confirmed that they worked in the premises under the supervision of Dr. Ashok Chauhan and Shri Anil Sharma. The evidence submitted by Party No. 1 seems reliable and convincing, sufficient to show that Party No. 1 was actually in possession of the Parishad premises and Party No. 2 tried to enter the premises in a dispute and attempted to capture it forcibly.

22. It can be seen here that these conclusions are only interim measures and have no bearing on the validity of elections organized by two parties on 19/12/2013 and 21/12/2013. Party No. 1 has already filed a case in the Hon'ble Civil Judge, Karkardooma Court, Delhi.

In which it has been prayed that the elections held on 21/12/2013 be declared valid and legal and they be declared as the valid and legal elected governing body of the Parishad. 2.2 (Emphasis added)

He states that the learned SDM had given the opinion that restoring the possession of All India Panchayat Parishad (AIPP) property to the respondent No. 2 is an interim measure and the learned SDM was influenced by the fact that respondent No. 2 had challenged this election of 19.12.2013 in a civil court (in which the petitioner was elected as the chairman of AIPP). He states that the learned SDM decided to wait for the result of that civil proceedings in which the election was challenged. 2.3 He further states that the petitioner has also succeeded in the civil case No. 765/2017 filed again against respondent No. 2 and the civil court has dismissed the said case and given the following opinion.

15. Additionally, the plaintiff has sought to declare the election dated 21.12.2013 void from the date of the cause of action, i.e., the election held on 19.12.2013. The plaintiff has filed an order passed by Sh. Subodh dated 19.12.2013 by which Sh. Subodh Kant Sahay, the alleged chairman of AIPP, declared the office memorandum dated 19/12/2013 as null and void and suspended and disqualified the membership of the participating candidates, and therefore, the appropriate remedy would be to declare the previous election null and void, after which the subsequent election cannot be considered valid.

17. My view is that the plaintiff's suit is clearly barred by law. Accordingly, the application filed by the defendant under Order 7 Rule 11 is allowed. The plaintiff's suit is dismissed.

2.4 He states that this decision of the Civil Court has become final because respondent No. 2 chose not to challenge the said decision.

2.5 He states that after succeeding in the Civil Court, the petitioner filed an application before the Hon'ble SDM to restore possession in favor of the petitioner.

He states, however, that the said application has not been heard by the Hon'ble SDM due to the pending status of the present revision petition.

2.6 He states that the present revision petition was filed on 28.05.2018, which came before the decision in Civil Suit No. 765/2017. He states that if the Hon'ble SDM is directed on 09.05.2019 to restore possession in favor of the petitioner, he will be satisfied, taking into account the Civil Court's order of 09.05.2019.

2.7.1 He also relies on the Civil Court order passed on 17.09.2019 in Civil Suit No. 94579/2016, in which it was stated that Shri Kishore Taviyad has not been authorized to represent AIPP. He states that the said decision is also relevant because respondent No. 2 relied on the authority of Shri Kishore Taviyad, who was appointed as member of AIPP by respondent No. 2.

3. In response, the counsel for respondent No. 2 states that it is a matter of record that the Civil Suit's decision has not been challenged by respondent No. 2. He states that respondent No. 2's argument is that since then new elections of AIPP have been held and therefore, the alleged elected body led by the petitioner as chairman does not exist.

4. This court has considered the submissions of the parties and finds merit in the petitioner's submissions.

5. The subject land clearly belongs to AIPP and is neither the personal property of the petitioner nor of respondent No. 2. The subject land can only be acquired through the office bearers of AIPP. No individual has rights over the land in their personal capacity.

6. Since on 18.05.2018, when the disputed order was passed, the Hon'ble SDM was influenced by the fact that the petitioner's election was in dispute, it is a significant development that the Civil Court's subsequent decision of 05.09.2019 refuses to declare in favor of respondent No. 2 that the election held on 21.12.2023 was valid.

7. Keeping in mind the limited relief sought by the petitioner as stated in paragraph 2.6, the present petition is disposed of and the SDM advocate is directed to decide the petitioner's pending application regarding restoration/transfer of possession of the subject land according to law, while keeping in mind the Civil Court's order of 05.09.2019 passed in Civil Suit No. 765/2017, which is related to respondent No. 2's election. 8. Given that the application/matter has been pending for a long time, the learned SDM is requested to hear and decide the matter expeditiously according to their calendar.

8. Given that the application/matter has been pending for a long time, the learned SDM is requested to hear and decide the matter expeditiously according to their calendar.

9. With the above directions, the petition is disposed of along with any pending applications (if any).

10. The digitally signed copy of this order, which has been duly uploaded on the official website of Delhi High Court www-delhihighcourt-nic-in, shall be deemed as a certified copy of the order for compliance purposes. No physical copy of the order shall be demanded by any authority/institution or party.

MANMEET PRITAM SINGH ARORA

Overview of Conferences of All India Panchayat Parishad

S.No.	Place	Date	Inaugurated By	President
1.	Deoghar (Bihar)	12-4-1938	Shri Gulzari Lal Nanda Planning Minister, India	Shri Balwant Rai Mehta
2.	Ujjain (M.P.)	13-11-1959	P. Jawaharlal Nehru Prime Minister, India	Shri Balwant Rai Mehta
3.	Jaipur (Rajasthan)	13-5-1961	Shri Mohanlal Sukhadia Chief Minister, Rajasthan	Shri Jayaprakash Narayan
4.	Bangalore (Karnataka)	18-7-1964	Shri Balwantray Mehta Chief Minister, Gujarat	Shri Jayaprakash Narayan
5.	Bardoli (Gujarat)	24-11-1968	Shri Morarji Desai Deputy PM, India	Shri Jayaprakash Narayan

6.	New Delhi	24-3-1973	Shri V.V. Giri Vice President, India	Shri Surendra Kumarje
7.	Bhubaneswar (Odisha)	16-10-1973	Smt. Indira Gandhi Prime Minister, India	Dr. Lal Singh Tyagi
8.	Patna (Bihar)	8-4-1978	Shri Ghanik Lal Mandal Governor, India	Dr. Lal Singh Tyagi
9.	New Delhi	19-12-1978	Shri Morarji Desai Prime Minister, India	Dr. Lal Singh Tyagi
10.	Kurukshetra (Haryana)	12-7-1980	Shri Rao Virendra Singh Ag. Minister, Govt. of India	Dr. Lal Singh Tyagi
11.	Nagpur (Maharashtra)	19-9-1981	Shri Ratubahai Adani Gandhian Sarvodaya Leader	Dr. Lal Singh Tyagi
12.	Gandhinagar (Gujarat)	25-5-1983	Smt. Indira Gandhi Prime Minister, India	Dr. Lal Singh Tyagi
13.	New Delhi	22-9-1986	Shri Rajiv Gandhi Prime Minister, India	Dr. Lal Singh Tyagi
14.	New Delhi	11-6-1990	Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma Vice President, India	Dr. Lal Singh Tyagi
15.	New Delhi	8-11-1995	Dr. Jagannath Mishra Min., Govt. of India, Rural Dev.	Shri Sahdev Chaudhary
16.	New Delhi	22-11-2006	Dr. Raghuvesh Prasad Singh Rural Dev. Minister, Govt. of India	Shri Subodh Kant Sahay
17.	All India		Panchayat Vice Chairman	Somnath Chatterjee
18.	Mokama	25 Sep 2011	Rajiv Ranjan Singh Panchayati Raj Minister	

List of Presidents of AIPP

1. 1958 to 1961 – Balwant Rai Mehta
2. Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan
3. 1961 to 1973 – S.K. De
4. 1973 to 1990 – Dr. Lal Singh Tyagi
5. 1990 to 1998 – Sahdev Bhai Chaudhary
6. 1998 to 2001 – Jagdish Narayan Mandal
7. 2001 to 2002 – Acting President Hariprasad Gupta
8. 2002 to 2007 – Lambodar Pathak
9. 2007 to 2013 – Acting President Subodh Kant Sahay
10. 2013 to 2025 – President Valmiki Prasad Singh

