

Difference Between Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat

In urban regions, governance is guided through municipalities while in rural regions it is accomplished through the Panchayati Raj system. The Panchayati Raj system works in almost every state except some states like Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Delhi.

Panchayat assemblies were conducted in ancient India to organise the governance of the village. In 1992, the Panchayati Raj was formalised. The system of Panchayat Raj was included in the constitution through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 and was effective from April 24, 1993.

Article 40 in the Constitution of India states that the village panchayats will be granted powers that allow them to function as independent units of self-governance. The first committee formed under the Panchayati Raj system was the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee.

What Is Gram Sabha?

The Gram Sabha is the permanent body taking charge of the legislative actions at the village level. All the adult members of the village constitute the Gram Sabha, they keep checking on the Panchayat. The Gram Sabha takes care of several matters like finance, development, and expenditure. Gram Sabha is part of Gram Panchayat, and there are a few points that highlight the difference between the Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat with reference to exercising authority and power.

What Is Gram Panchayat?

The Panchayat Raj is divided into three tiers: Zilla Parishad, Panchayat Samiti, and Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat is further divided into Nyaya Panchayat and Gram Sabha. The Gram Panchayat organises meetings where matters related to the village and disputes among the villagers are discussed for resolution.

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The prime difference between gram sabha and gram panchayat is that the gram panchayat is a temporary elected body that takes charge of numerous tasks to efficiently manage village welfare. The Gram Sabha is a permanent body keeping checks on the panchayat and handling the legislative issues of the village. The table below highlights the major difference between gram sabha and gram panchayat.

Type of Committee	Gram Panchayat	Gram Sabha
Definition	Gram Panchayat is the committee that works at the village level. It is the lower-level element of the Panchayati Raj.	Gram Sabha is the legislative body that works at the village level.
Tenure of the Committee	Gram Panchayat is a temporary body and is elected for five years.	It is a permanent body.
Functions	The main functions of Gram Panchayat include maintaining records, implementing government schemes, ensuring the welfare of the villagers, and collecting taxes.	Organises discussions on different plans of the Panchayat on several personal issues, and development schemes and keeps checks on the Panchayat.
Members elections	The election for the members of the Gram Panchayat is organised. The Gram Sabha elects the members.	There is no election held for electing the members of the Gram Sabha.
Members	The members of Gram Panchayat include the ward members and the Sarpanch.	All the adult members of the village (above the age of 18) and with voter IDs.
Meetings	Meeting every month	Mandatory two meetings in a year