CHAPTER 3

HISTORY OF LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

3.1: Introduction

3.2: Evolution of Local Self Government in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Pre 1882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>1882-1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>1920-1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>1937-1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>1950-1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>1992-2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Local Self Government in Pune

3.3.1 Pune Municipality

3.4 Pune Municipal Corporation
CHAPTER 3

HISTORY OF LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

3.1: Introduction

Historically, local government had always preceded national government. Man first evolved his neighborhood government. Even after the rise and growth of national government, the local government continued to exist.

The historical account of the Local Self Government is taken by the researcher in this chapter.

3.2: Evolution of Local Self Government in India

The evaluation of Local Self Government in India is studied in following periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Period I</td>
<td>Pre 1882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period II</td>
<td>1882-1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period III</td>
<td>1920-1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period IV</td>
<td>1937-1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period V</td>
<td>1950-1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period VI</td>
<td>1992-2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Period I: Pre – 1882

The first statutory enactment dealing with municipal administration in India is contained in Section 158 of the Charter Act of 1793 (George III 1793) which established municipal administration in the three presidency towns of Madras, Calcutta and Bombay and empowered the appointment of Justices of the Peace with authority to make assessments on houses and lands and provide for scavenging, watching and repairing of the streets. The municipal administration was extended to the district towns in Bengal in 1842 when the Bengal Act was passed, which enabled the setting up of a town committee for sanitary purposes upon applications made by two-thirds of householders in a town.
The municipal Act of 1850 was made applicable to the whole of British India. Unlike the earlier statutes, provided for indirect taxation to which people had been accustomed since times immemorial. Lord Mayo’s Resolution in 1870 made the first systematic attempt to make Provincial Governments responsible for the development of Local Self Government with the policy of decentralization for the management of their own local finances and functions.

PERIOD II: 1882-1919

The effect on Local Self Government of the policy inaugurated by Lord Mayo was reviewed in 1881 both in number and usefulness of municipalities. On the 18th of May 1882, Lord Ripon’s Government issued their historic Resolution. Lord Ripon felt that the spread of education and the desire of the educated Indians to be associated with administration made it necessary that this element be given full opportunity to train the people over whom it rules, more and more as time goes on, to take an intelligent share in the administration of their own affairs.

Lord Ripon’s resolution enunciated the following principles which were henceforth to inform and guide local government in India:

1. Local bodies should have mostly elected non-governmental members and chairman.

2. The state control over local bodies should be indirect rather than direct.

3. These bodies must be endowed with adequate financial resources to carry out their functions. To this end, certain sources of local revenue should be made available to the local bodies which should also receive suitable grants from the provincial budget.

4. Local government personnel should be operated under the administrative control of the local bodies. The government personnel who are deputed to the local government must be treated as employees of the local government and subject to its control.
5. The resolution of 1882 should be interpreted by the provincial governments according to the local conditions prevalent in the provinces. Another significant stage in the history of local government was the publication in 1909 of the report of Royal commission upon Decentralization, set up in 1906.

PERIOD III: 1920-1937

Local Self Government became significant in the diarchic system of Government by the Government of India Act, 1919. The Reform period is marked by an increased activity of the Provincial Legislature in the domain of local self-government with an end to make them really self-governing units.

In Madras (Chennai), up to 1925, 10 official bills and 6 non-official bills relating to both rural and urban local bodies were introduced. In Bombay (Mumbai), the number for the same period was 16 and 13 respectively. In Bengal, between 1924-26, the Provincial Legislature saw the introduction of 4 Government bills and 15 non-official bills. Other provinces also displayed the same enthusiasm, e.g., in Madhya Pradesh, between 1921 and 1927, 211 questions were asked and 11 resolutions were moved on matters relating to local bodies.

In 1935-36 a number of municipalities in the Punjab and Bihar and Orissa were either warned or superseded. What has been said of Bihar and Orissa and the Punjab municipalities was equally true of Madhya Pradesh and Assam municipalities.

Failure to collect arrears of taxes became a common fault and some serious misappropriations due to lack of supervisions were reported. Certain improvements in the machinery of local self-government were undoubtedly called for and in particular the relationship between the Provincial Government and local bodies were investigated.

PERIOD IV: 1937-1949

Although, attempts at improving the system began much earlier, creation of machinery for the supervision of municipal government began only after 1937. In Bombay (Mumbai, Uttar Pradesh there were special committees appointed for reconstructing the whole machinery.
The national movement for independence was also reaching new proportions. With the growing strength of the national movement and the achievement of provincial autonomy, the local government in India ceased to be a mere experimental station of self-government; it became, indeed, the constituent part of self-government for the country as a whole. The Central Provinces set up an enquiry committee in 1935, the United Provinces in 1938, and Bombay in 1939.4

The independence of the country in 1947 ushered a new period in the history of local government in India. With the termination of alien rule there was self-government at all the levels—central, provincial and local. The local government was, thus, enabled to function for the first time under an atmosphere of national independence. In 1948 the ministers of Local Self Government in the provinces met under the chairmanship of the Central Minister for Health. This was the first meeting of its kind. Amrit Kaur, the Minister for Health, and chairman of the conference, observed: “I believe this is the first time that the Government of India has called a conference. At the same time the subject of Local Self Government is of such vital importance to the general well-being of the people that I felt it would be definitely beneficial if a forum could be provided where those responsible for this important arm of the administration all over India could meet together periodically, exchange ideas and discuss problems of common interest.”

PERIOD V: 1950-1992

As the present Constitution came into force in 1950, the local government may be said to have entered a new phase in that year. The Constitution allotted local government to the state policy affirmed: “State shall take steps to organize village panchayats to endow them to function as units of self-government.

As compared to the dramatic changes in rural local government the development of urban local government has been slow to the extent of being unimpressive. It is only of late that the urban local government has attracted the attention of the government. The Third Five Year Plan took note of the significance of urban local government and said: “In the next phase of planning, as many towns and cities as possible, at any rate those with a population of one lakh or more, should come into the scheme of planning in an
organic way: each state mobilizing its own resources and helping to create conditions for a better life for the citizens.

Many state governments set up committees to enquire into functioning of local government institutions and to suggest remedial measures. The Central government also appointed committees to this end. The Panchayti Raj was, indeed, recommended by a committee set up by the central government. In addition to the Balvantray Mehta Committee (1957), the Central Government set up the Ashoka Mehta Committee on Panchayti Raj Institutions (1978) and the GVK Rao Committee to review the existing administrative arrangements for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation Programmes (1985). The central government has itself set up the following committees to report on urban local government:

1. Local Finance Enquiry committee, 1951.
6. Committee on Budgetary Reform in Municipal Administration, 1974.

There has been a spurt in the number of municipal corporations in the country. While there were only three corporation towns in 1947, the number in the nineties is 73.

Another significant development has been the separation of the rural local government from the urban local government. The departments of community development and Panchayati Raj have been set up in the states as well as at the centre to deal with rural government. The departments of local self-governments in the states are, consequently, concerned with only the urban local government.

Local government is the third stratum of government since 1993 but it falls within the jurisdiction of the states. As is, therefore, to be expected, there are some notable variations in nomenclature, pattern of local government and its working in various states. Yet, there is an unusually high degree of uniformity in the system of local government in
the country. This is so, because, historically, local government in India is a product of an exceptionally centralized administrative system. Under the present constitution it has been shaped within the framework of centralized planning. Further, the continuance of the same political party in power at centre (except for 1977-79) and in states except for very brief periods in Kerala, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, etc. is another factor to be reckoned with.

PERIOD VI: 1993-2006

Recent years have witnessed an increasing interest and a growing consciousness of the need and importance of Local Self Government as provider of services to the local community as well as an instrument of democratic self-government. Local government is an integral part of the national government structure, the level of government closest to the citizens and in the best position both to involve them in the decision making process of improving their living conditions and to make use of their knowledge and capabilities in the promotion of all round development. There are two types of local government: urban local government and rural local government. Until recently, urban local government was manifested in Municipal Corporations, Municipal Councils, Town Area Committees and Notified Area Committees. However, the Seventy-Fourth Constitution Amendment Act adopted in 1992 proposes to form a uniform structure of Municipal Corporations, Municipal Councils and Nagar Panchayats in transitional areas. Rural local government operates through Zilla Panchayats (Parishads), Taluka Panchayats and Village Panchayats.

3.3 LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT IN PUNE

Pune is the seventh largest city in India and second largest city in Maharashtra after Mumbai.

Development of Pune as a city commenced from 1818, with the city area being just 5 sq.km. In 1987, the area of Pune city was 138.38 sq.km; with the addition of adjacent villages in 1997, the current area of PMC jurisdiction is 243.96 sq km, housing 2.54 million populace within 144 wards.
3.3 PUNE MUNICIPALITY

It was in the year 1856 that the Government of Bombay established a municipality in Poona. The actual administrative machinery began to function in 1857. Till the year 1877 the annual reports of the municipality were not printed or made available for public information. The first annual report was published for the year 1877-78. The report for the year 1879-80 contains an appendix which gives a short account of the administrative and financial system that prevailed during the period 1858 to 1879. Figures are available regarding the total population of the city in 1870, total revenue of the municipality, and total expenditure incurred by the municipality during the same period. It mentions the sources from which the city population received its water supply, the arrangements made for conservancy and promotion of health and convenience of the people and their education.

The municipality had no water works of its own. The following Table 3.1 were the main sources from which the city received its water supply.

Table 3.1
Water sources and water supply in 1879 wise classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Water Source</th>
<th>Water Supply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The old Katraj aqueduct</td>
<td>6,50,000 Gallons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Khadakwasala aqueduct</td>
<td>6,50,000 Gallons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chaodharis' aqueduct</td>
<td>50000 Gallons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nana Fadnavis aqueduct</td>
<td>1,00,000 Gallons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rastia's aqueduct</td>
<td>50000 Gallons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: PMC record

The Mutha on the North of the city and the Nagzari stream which runs through it provided water for washing and ablution to a large portion of the population. There were 1,282 wells in the city which provided drinking water to the people. The municipality had to pay about Rs. 10,000 per year to government for taking water from the
Khadakwasala Canal. The average daily consumption of water was over 6,00,000 gallons in 1879.

The city had sixteen miles of macadamized main roads, sixteen miles of roads of lesser importance also macadamized, besides fourteen miles of lanes kept in repair with murum and sand. The expenditure on roads was Rs. 14,499 in 1858-59; and Rs. 16986 in 1879-80. The streets were lighted with kerosene lamps. The number of such lamps was 460 in 1879-80, and the cost of lighting Rs. 7,048. The principal thoroughfares were watered, and the cost was Rs. 2,327 in the same year.

The municipality maintained four to five fire engines which rendered valuable assistance to the public particularly during the great fires of 1877-78 and 1880-81.

The early efforts of the municipality in the field of education were confined to annual grants to Government and private schools in the town. The municipality did not conduct its own schools, primary or technical. The expenditure on education did not go beyond Rs. 980.

The expenditure on public safety has developed much more gradually than that on other heads. It may be due to the fact that there has been little capital outlay either on the fire service or on lighting. From 1901 to 1935 the expenditure increased by 342 percent.

The municipality has been maintaining its own fire brigade ever since the last sixty years to render timely help to the needy citizens. The Municipality undertook in 1930-31 the work of enlarging the water mains in the city.

Before 1923-24 the drainage system of the town was considered as most unscientific and prejudicial to public health. The first drainage scheme was completed in 1923-24.

It will be observed that the Municipality did not spend much on medical service till 1925.

In 1925 there were five dispensaries and this number increased to 8 in 1936-37. There were then seven allopathic dispensaries and one Ayurvedic.

There was a rapid growth of primary education from 1885 to 1896. This growth was arrested during the period from 1896 to 1908 when the City was in the grip of terrible epidemics. After 1909, however, the progress was continuous.
Technical School: - The school was established by the Municipality in the last quarter of the 19th century for imparting technical education. In 1935 there were about 56 students; special drawing and weaving classes were attached to the school for the benefit of those who could not attend the school as regular students.

Compulsory Primary Education: - In 1931-32 there were six boys' and girls' compulsory schools. The number of schools was the same in 1936-37. In 1931-32 about 715 boys and 734 girls attended the compulsory schools. In 1936-37 there were 771 boys and 747 girls or about 1,548 pupils in the compulsory schools.

3.4: Pune Municipal Corporation

The city followed the Bombay Provincial Municipal Corporation Act 1949, through which certain cities were allowed to change the status of their municipalities. Efforts to convert the Poona Municipality to a Corporation had been initiated way back in 1933, when it was proposed to merge the four local authorities, the city Municipality, the Suburban Municipality and the Poona and Khadki Cantonment boards into one. But the request was turned down due to the imminent recurrence of the plague epidemic which it was feared might spread to the cantonments. The request, repeated in 1939, was again rejected due to the War. Finally, a committee under the chairmanship of M.D. Bhat recommended the setting of the Corporation, which came into being on 15 February 1950, by amalgamating the city and Suburban Municipalities. The two Cantonments remain separate entities to this day.

The first elections to the Corporations were held in March 1952; S.G. Barve had already been appointed as the first Municipal Commissioner, As mentioned earlier, the road construction and widening schemes got immediate priority and were taken up on a massive scale. Strides were also made in the control of epidemics and the laying of drainage and sewage lines and removal of garbage. But the Corporation faced enormous problems from its very inception. When it came into being, the population of Pune was four hundred and eighty thousand. The city was not a cohesive and single urban entity.
Another type of development, more recent, was influenced by the grid pattern of Cantonment. It attracted middle-class residents to the areas between Deccan Gymkhana and Ganeshkhind Road. These planned developments in which one could also include Koregaon Park and Bund Garden, virtually formed a cordon around most of the old city. These neighborhoods developed as elite ones, with the emergence of the modern professional business classes.

Faced with the problems of the old city and the different ways in which it had developed, the new Municipality found the going difficult. Pune citizens had become more aware of their rights regarding civic services, which they expected the Corporation to provide, especially due to the inevitable comparisons with Bombay. Therefore the Corporators were forced to announce new schemes with each budget. Due to recurring financial problems, adequate finances for newer schemes could not be found as the limited resources of the civic body were already tied up the earlier schemes. This created major problems over the years, and complicated matters, since providing for the completion of the old schemes became increasingly difficult. By taking up grandiose projects for creation of capital assets, priority schemes like increase of water supply, extension of drainage, or adoption of measures for public health had to be set aside. Thus when budgets were diverted to schemes outside the priority list, essential services felt the resource crunch; this resulted in a backlog in those services.

Apart from all this, almost immediately after its formation, the Corporation had to face the unprecedented increase in population due to sudden migration from the rural hinterland and the arrival of refugees after Partition. There was also the expansion of municipal limits from a mere 44 sq. kms to 139 sq. kms, when the Corporation was formed. This brought a large rural segment into the city limits, giving rise to a duality in urban development.
REFERENCES


