

## **CHAPTER XIV**

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

#### **Urban Local Government**

The history of development of Local Government institutions in urban areas of the district covers a period of more than one hundred years. The first step towards the introduction of Local Government in the district was taken in 1867 by constitution of Municipalities at Thanesar, Shahabad, Ladwa and Pehowa. In 1885, Thanesar and Shahabad were reconstituted as Class-II Municipalities. Pehowa Municipality was abolished between 1885 to 1887. In 1908, Ladwa Municipality was converted into a Notified Area Committee.

The Punjab Small Town Committees Act, 1921 was repealed by the Punjab Municipal (Second Amendment) Act, 1954 and it converted all Small Town Committees into Class III Municipal Committees. Accordingly, the Small Town Committee of Ladwa, was converted into Class III Municipal Committee in 1955. The Municipal Committee at Pehowa was reconstituted in 1959 with the enforcement of Haryana Municipal Act, 1973. The Ladwa Municipal Committee was again converted into Notified Area Committee. In 1979, it was again declared as Class “C” Municipality. Thanesar Municipality was declared as Class I Municipality in 1975. In 2004, the district had 4 Municipalities viz. Thanesar, Shahabad, Pehowa and Ladwa. With the enforcement of Haryana Municipal Act, 1973, all Municipal Committees were superseded. Elections for Shahabad, Pehowa and Ladwa Municipal Committees were held in October 1987. The affairs of Thanesar Municipality are still looked after by an Administrator appointed by the Government.<sup>1</sup>

The main functions of the Committees are to supply water for drinking and other purposes, maintain streets, roads, drains and sewerage, control dangerous or offensive trades, construct buildings and design layout of streets, make arrangements for fire fighting and to look after public health and scavenging of the town. They also

---

<sup>1</sup> Elections to Thanesar Municipality could not be held in 1987 due to some legal complications.

provide street lights, playgrounds, public parks, medical aid, public libraries, etc.

The main sources of income of the Municipalities include house tax, rent of shops, development charges, stamp duty, license fee etc.

**Thanesar Municipality.**- The local government was first introduced in this town in 1867 by constituting a Municipal Committee at Thanesar. In 1885, it was reconstituted into a Class II Municipal Committee.<sup>1</sup> It was converted into class I Municipality in 1975. The last elected Municipal Committee was superseded in 1968 and since then an Administrator appointed by the Government has been looking after its affairs. It is divided into 31 wards. It covers an area of 32.063 square kilometers and according to 2001 census, serves a population of 1,22,319.

The piped water supply in the town was started during 1960-61. The Municipality is maintaining 16 tubewells and two reservoirs with a capacity of 60,000 gallons.

Prior to the introduction of electric street lights in 1954, kerosene lamps were being used. In March, 2004, 533 electric bulbs, 613 sodium lamps, 220 mercury lamps and 3450 fluorescent tubes lighted various parts of the town.

The Municipality maintains 10 parks in different localities of the town. Among these, Harshvardhan Park is worth seeing.

It has made adequate sanitary arrangements in the town and has appointed one Chief Sanitary Inspector, one Sanitary Inspector, five Sanitary Darogas, four tractor Drivers, four cartmen, three donkey-men and 147 *Safai Mazdoors*. It has made arrangements for removal of night soil and garbage through tractor trolleys, *jhota thelas* and handcarts. The refuse is dumped into compost pits prepared for the purpose at distance from the town.

It maintains a fire fighting unit comprising one motor fire engine and one jeep besides necessary equipment. The staff consists of a Fire Station Officers, a Sub Fire Officer, three driver operators and three firemen. It maintains 45 kilometers of M.C. road.

---

<sup>1</sup> Karnal District Gazetteer, 1976, p. 370.

It also maintains a library-cum-reading room which is located in the Municipal office. It has 8,000 books and subscribes to 10 journals and periodicals. Besides, it is also providing newspapers for the reading rooms being maintained by Sh. Ravidas Sabha, Jat Dharamshala and Balmiki Ashram.

The income and expenditure figures of the Municipality from 1990-91 to 2003-04 indicate that there has been significant increase in both income and expenditure since 1990-91. The increase can be attributed to expansion in the town area and execution of development schemes. The income and expenditure of the Municipality are given below:-

<b>(Rs. in Lakhs)</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
1990-91	104.75	106.06
1991-92	132.58	123.90
1992-93	142.10	145.82
1993-94	124.32	199.00
1994-95	120.75	121.87
1995-96	158.08	154.32
1996-97	145.03	154.32
1997-98	225.18	137.69
1998-99	252.60	215.77
1999-00	239.89	239.63
2000-01	240.44	205.45
2000-02	265.38	291.91
2002-03	347.66	355.34
2003-04	460.77	457.85

**Shahabad Municipality.**-In 1867, a Municipal Committee was set up at Shahabad which was reconstituted as a Class II Municipal Committee in 1885.<sup>1</sup> It covers an area of 16 square kilometers and is divided into 17 wards. The elected Municipal Committee was superseded in July 1973 and reconstituted in October, 1987. Now, there are 17 elected and two nominated Members. According to 2001 census, it serves a population of 37,130.

<sup>1</sup> Karnal District Gazetteer 1976, p. 370.

The piped water supply was introduced in the town in 1961. The Municipality is maintaining 15 tubewells and 3 reservoirs with a capacity of 67,000 gallons and work for another reservoir is in progress. In March, 2004, there were 57 public stand posts and 5,761 private water connections. The per capita water supply was 70 gallons per day.

The town is provided with surface drains and work for underground sewerage is in progress. The streets are well paved. The Municipality maintains 3.48 kilometers of metalled roads.

Prior to introduction of electricity in 1954, kerosene lamps were used for street lighting. In March 2004, 638 florescent tubes and 100 sodium vapour lamps lighted various parts of the town.

The Municipality maintains one library located in main bazaar. The library has 11,501 books and subscribes to 19 journals and newspapers. It also maintains three parks.

The conservancy and public health are looked after by one Sanitary Inspector, one Sanitary Jamadars, 76 *Safai Mazdoors* and one driver. The Municipality has provided two tractors trolleys to its staff to carry the filth to the dumping ground located outside the town.

The income and expenditure of the Municipality from 1995-96 to 2003-04 as given below indicated rise in the annual budget and reflect its expanding activities:-

<b>(Rs. in lakhs)</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
1995-96	106.44	99.94
1996-97	144.75	122.10
1997-98	163.89	151.86
1998-99	127.12	120.29
1999-00	115.09	109.61
2000-01	104.06	99.80
2001-02	107.04	98.47
2002-03	129.30	120.18
2003-04	252.85	218.59

**Pehowa Municipality.**-Pehowa Municipal Committee was first constituted in 1867, but was abolished between 1885-87. It was

reconstituted as a Class III Municipal Committee in 1959.<sup>1</sup> It covers an area of 11.5 square kilometers and is divided into 17 wards. According to 2001 census, it serves a population of 33,547. In April, 2005 elections of the Municipal Committee were held and since then affairs of the Committee are being looked after by an elected body.

The piped water supply was introduced in the town in 1968. The Municipality maintains 11 tubewells for this purpose. Now the per capita water supply in the town is 130 liters per day and there were 24 stand posts and 4,132 private water connections.

Prior to introduction of electricity in the town, kerosene lamps were being used for street lighting. In March, 2004, 2 mast lights, 140 mercury bulbs, 572 fluorescent tubes and 58 poles on central verge with double tubes lighted various parts of the town. It maintains three parks, a reading room and a fire brigade.

The health and conservancy staff includes one Sanitary Inspector, 4 Sanitary Darogas and 67 Sweepers. The night soil is removed by the Sweepers and carried to the municipal compost depot near Ward No. 8 in 2 tractor trolleys and 25 wheel barrows. The town is served by open surface drains. Underground sewerage has been provided in 4 marla colony.

The income and expenditure figures of the Municipality from 1994 to 2003-04 given below indicate that it is making every possible efforts to augment its resources to provide better civic amenities to the residents:-

<b>(Rs. in lakhs)</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
1994-95	54.08	51.29
1995-96	86.19	81.93
1996-97	60.64	62.70
1997-98	80.77	85.39
1998-99	79.66	80.85
1999-00	75.19	72.75
2000-01	82.69	83.85
2000-02	242.08	142.75
2002-03	135.18	159.43
2003-04	175.66	219.80

<sup>1</sup> Karnal District Gazetteer 1976, p.371.

**Ladwa Municipality.**-Ladwa Municipality was first constituted as a Municipal Committee in 1887, but in 1908 it was reconstituted as a Notified Area Committee. It was converted into a Small Town Committee in 1924 and was raised to class III Municipal Committee in 1955.<sup>1</sup> With the enforcement of the Haryana Municipal Act, 1973, it was converted into a Notified Area Committee. In 1979, it was again declared as a Class “C” Municipality. In October, 1987, 12 Members were elected and one Member was nominated by the Government. Since then, the affairs of the Municipal Committee are being looked after by an elected body. It has 13 wards and covers an area of 5 square kilometers. According to 2001 census, it serves a population of 22436.

Piped water supply in the town was introduced in 1973. The Municipality maintains three tubewells. Now, there are 3300 private water connections, 250 public water stand posts and 10 hand pumps for public use. The per capita water supply was 110 liter per day.

Underground sewerage has been provided in nearly 3/4<sup>th</sup> of the town. In 2003-04, there were 950 sewerage connections and 400 low cost latrines in the town and two sets of public flush latrines for public use. The Municipality has provided surface drains in other parts of the town where sewerage has not been introduced.

Prior to the introduction of electric street lights in 1955, kerosene lamps were being used for the purpose. In 2003-04, there were 400 fluorescent tubes and 125 sodium vapour lamps for street lightening. Municipal Committee has erected 513- stepped and tubular poles with 2 sodium lights of 150 watts at each pole at Saharanpur-Kurukshetra road.

For general sanitation, the Municipality employed one Sanitary Inspector, two Sanitary Darogas, two tractor drivers and 64 whole time *Safai Mazdoors*. It provided 50 wheel barrows to its staff to carry the garbage to the specified places from where it is removed to the dumping ground for preparing compost. It maintains one tractor and two trolleys for removal of daily refuse.

---

<sup>1</sup> Karnal District Gazetteer 1976 p.371.

It maintains a library-cum-reading room. The library has 2000 books and subscribes to 6 newspapers. It maintains Nehru Park within the premises of the Municipality. The park is well maintained.

The income and expenditure figures of the Municipality from 1991-92 to 2003-04 given below, show that there has been increase in the resources and expansion in developmental activities since 1991-92:-

<b>(Rs. in lakhs)</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
1991-92	50.49	48.91
1992-93	39.68	42.19
1993-94	30.92	33.86
1994-95	35.03	33.56
1995-96	63.35	64.05
1996-97	53.01	52.63
1997-98	65.49	63.98
1998-99	66.85	63.90
1999-00	79.38	79.13
2000-01	83.71	85.34
2001-02	90.30	94.61
2002-03	98.69	97.81
2003-04	114.48	96.62

### **Town Planning**

The town planning helps in eradicating the evils of haphazard and ugly growth of towns. To coordinate town planning activities in the district, the office of the District Town Planner, Kurukshetra was set up in 1973. The overall control of the office and its activities vests with the Director, Town and Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh.

The District Town Planner provides necessary technical guidance to the Municipalities and other Government Departments in

formulating various Development Plans for the towns. The controlled areas are declared to check haphazard growth around towns and Development Plans distinctly showing the areas under various land uses are prepared to guide future development of the town.

The areas around Kurukshetra, Pehowa and Shahabad were notified as controlled areas under the Punjab Scheduled Roads and Development Act, 1963 and building activities were regulated through Development Plans. Further, to curb the mushroom growth of unplanned colonies, the Government regulated and governed the sale of plots by private colonizers through Haryana Development and Regulation of Urban Areas Act, 1975.

In order to cater to the needs of commercial and residential plots, the Government has established Urban Estate at Kurukshetra and Shahabad. The Kurukshetra Urban Estate is spread over an area of about 395.929 hectares. The sector 13 has already been developed and is planned for a population of 7500. The Haryana Urban Development Authority (HUDA) has taken up in hand development of residential sectors 7, 5, 4, 3 and 2. The plots in these sectors have already been allotted to the applicants. The work of providing amenities in these sectors is in full swing. Urban Estate has also been set up at Shahabad which is divided into 2 sectors and is spread over an area of 37 hectares. These Urban Estates have been provided with all the modern amenities. Besides, some industrial plots are also being developed in Kurukshetra Urban Estate. The Colonization Department has established a *Mandi* at Pehowa. Haryana Marketing Board has established new Grain Markets at Shahabad, Ladwa, Babain, Kurukshetra, Ajrana and Ismailabad. The development of religious places in and around Kurukshetra is looked after by the Kurukshetra Development Board. Besides, numerous regulative schemes under the Haryana Municipal Act, 1973 have been undertaken by Thanesar Municipality.

The Department of Town and Country Planning has prepared interim Master Plans for Kurukshetra and Shahabad for a projected population of 1,00,000 and 30,000 respectively, The Department has already undertaken the job of preparing Interim Master Plan for Pehowa. The Plan provides adequate area for different purposes based on the needs of the projected population.

### **Panchayati Raj**

The system of village Panchayat is very old. In ancient times, the village formed the basic unit of social and economic life. The social contacts were more intimate, personal and lasting. The system of Panchayati Raj in the country has a chequered history.

Under the British Rule, the village organization as a self-sufficient unit, was the characteristic feature of the old Indian economy which was disturbed to some extent. The joint family system under the rising spirit of individualism began to lose its shine. Internal cohesion and unity of the village community was also affected. The Panchayats lost their power and prestige and slowly became defunct and obsolete. This virtual disappearance of Panchayats brought about the disintegration of village communities. For the time being, there was a vacuum. It was realised that for routine administration of the common affairs of the village, some kind of organisation should be created. Decentralisation Commission (1908) concluded that it was desirable in the interest of decentralization and of the association of the people with the task of administration that an attempt be made to constitute the village Panchayats for the administration of local affairs. Consequently, an attempt to revive Panchayati system was made in 1912 with the enactment of Punjab Panchayats Act, 1912. The attempt made in 1912 to revive the Panchayati system failed to inspire any confidence or respect in the people because only those persons could find a place in the Panchayats who had ingratiated themselves with the authorities. The village Panchayat Act, 1922, abolished the Panchayats created by the Act of 1912 and provided for the constitution of Panchayats consisting of elected *Panches* holding office for three years. The Panchayats were given administrative functions and judicial powers both criminal and civil. The Panchayat Act of 1939 consolidated and extended the law relating to Panchayats and gave them powers of taxation.

The necessity of establishing village Panchayats throughout the country was fully recognized after independence. Mahatma Gandhi had all along dreamt of 'Gram Swaraj' or 'village republic'. Article 40 of the constitution of India lays down that the State shall take steps to organize village Panchayats and invest them with such

powers and authorities as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government. In pursuance of this Policy, the Punjab Gram Panchayat Act of 1952 and 1953 were passed. These enactments sought to establish 'Gram Swaraj'. One main object sought to be achieved through this legislation was to restore to the Panchayats their pristine influence in the villages. This Act provided for establishment of a Panchayat in every village with a population of not less than 500 and a joint Panchayat for a village with lesser population by grouping it with any contiguous village or villages, the combined population of which was not less than 500.

The final step towards the implementation of the Panchayati Raj was the enactment of the Punjab Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads Act, 1961. Under this Act, the Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads were constituted at the Block and District level respectively. In this way, the Panchayati Raj became a three tier system having Panchayat at village level, Panchayat Samiti at the block level and Zila Parishad at the district level.

#### **ZILA PARISHAD**

The rural area of the district prior to June 13, 1973 was under the administration of the Zila Parishad which replaced the Distt. Board in February 1964. However, the Zila Parishads were abolished on June 13, 1973 and its powers have been vested in the Deputy Commissioner.

Prior to 1973, Kurukshetra was a Sub Division of Karnal District. The Sub Division was upgraded in 1973 as a separate District and the rural area development works were under the control of the Deputy Commissioner, till the enactment of the Haryana Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 which provided for the constitution of Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad for better administration of the rural areas and other matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. Addl. Deputy Commissioner is the Ex-officio Chief Executive officer of Zila Parishad. With the enactment of Haryana Panchayati Raj Act, 1994, Zila Parishad was reconstituted in 1995. The first Election of Kurukshetra Zila Parishad was held in 1995 and it consisted of 27 members detail below including seats reserved by the Government:-

(a) Total Members of Zila Parishad (15) (Elected ward wise).

(b) 5 Chairman of Panchayat Samitis (Ex-officio Members)

(c) 1 MP/6 MLA (Ex-officio Members).

**Duties.-** The Zila Parishad advised/supervised and coordinated the plans prepared by the Panchayat Samitis examined their Budget and advised the Government about Panchayats and Panchayat Samities and kept a watch over the agriculture production and construction works/ Education/ Health etc.

**Income.-** The income of the Zila Parishad accrues from the funds allotted by the Central or the State Government grants from all India Bodies and Institutions.

The income and expenditure of Zila Parishad during 1994-95 to 2003-04 are given below under S G R Y & P R I schemes and Adm. Office Estt. etc.

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	SGRY Scheme		PRI Scheme		Adm. Office Estt.etc.	
	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure
1995-96	-	-	-	-	12.21	5.35
1996-97	-	-	-	-	10.46	7.53
1997-98	-	-	-	-	8.18	7.02
1998-99	-	-	-	-	14.80	7.90
1999-00	-	-	-	-	10.74	8.54
2000-01	-	-	4.47	4.46	8.42	7.47
2001-02	-	-	15.40	15.40	17.30	11.84
2002-03	52.33	52.33	19.85	15.39	11.23	9.91
2003-04	46.74	46.74	7.75	10.94	13.52	8.89

### **Panchayats**

Generally, there is one Panchayat for each village, but in a few cases of small villages, there is a joint Panchayat. Every Panchayat has a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 9 Members called the *Panches*. There is one Scheduled Caste *Panch* and one woman *Panch*. In April 2005, there were 378 Panchayats in the district and the total membership of Panchayats was 3,513 including 384 Scheduled Castes and 373 Backward Class *Panches* and *Sarpanches*.

**Functions.-** The main functions of the Panchayats are rural development, with particular reference to increase in agricultural production. It includes agriculture, animal husbandry, health and sanitation, forests, industries, education and social education, social welfare, village public works, sports and recreation. In fact, Panchayats are to work in almost all spheres for betterment of the village community. During 2003-04, the Panchayats have constructed 8 buildings for First Aid Posts and have opened 8 Maternity Centres.

**Judicial Powers.-** The Panchayats are empowered to try certain minor offences like petty thefts, trespasses, encroachments on public property and public nuisance. The Panchayats have also been given powers to try cases under various sections of the Indian Penal Code. They are empowered to impose fines. They are bound by the provisions of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 and as such, lawyers are not allowed to appear in the proceedings before a Panchayat. The Chief Judicial Magistrate hears appeals against the orders of the Panchayats. He is empowered to transfer cases from one Panchayat to another.

The Panchayats try civil and revenue suits for recovery of moveable property or the value of such property for money or goods due on contract or the price thereof for compensation for wrongfully taking or damaging moveable property, and suits mentioned in clauses (j), (k), (l) and (n) of sub section 3 of section 77 of the Punjab Tenancy Act, 1987. The Panchayats are under the control of the District Judge in civil suits and the Collector in revenue suits and they are also Appellate Authorities.

The judicial work done by the Panchayats during 2003-04 is given on next page :-

(a) Total civil and revenue cases	35
(b) Cases instituted	15
(c) Cases decided	8
(d) Cases pending	15

**Sources of Income.-** The Panchayats are authorised to levy taxes, duties and fees. Apart from miscellaneous items, the main sources of income are; grants from government, house tax, income from *shamlat* land, voluntary contributions, 3 percent of the land holding tax of the Panchayat area, and fines. The income and expenditure of Panchayats from 1994-95 to 2003-04 of the district is given in table 1.

#### **Panchayat Samitis**

The district has been divided into 5 Blocks viz, Babain, Thanesar, Ladwa, Shahabad and Pehowa, each having a Panchayat Samiti. Each Panchayat Samiti has primary, associate, co-opted and ex-officio Members. Out of primary Members, 16 Members are elected by *Panches* and *Sarpanches*, 2 by Members of Co-operative Societies within the jurisdiction of the Panchayat Samiti and one by Members of the Market Committees in the Block. If this membership does not include 2 women and four persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, the balance is made up by co-option. Every member of the Haryana Legislative Assembly representing the constituency, of which the block forms a part, is an Associate Member. The Sub Divisional Officer (Civil) having jurisdiction in the Block and Block Development Officer are ex-officio members. The Block Development Officer of the Block is the ex-officio Executive Officer of the Panchayat Samiti. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Panchayat Samiti are elected by the primary and co-opted Members from amongst themselves for a term of three years.

**Duties.-** It is the duty of the Panchayat Samiti to provide for and make arrangements for carrying out the requirements of the Block in respect of agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries, health and rural sanitation, communication, social education, co-operation and miscellaneous development works.

**Income.-** The income of the Panchayat Samiti consists of a Samiti fund which comprises apportionment made by the government out of the balance district fund; seven percent of the total annual land holding tax realized within the area of the Panchayat Samiti, taxes, cesses and fees imposed by the Panchayat Samiti, grants, contributions and funds allotted by the Government, local bodies and Panchayats and rents and proceeds accruing from the property vested in and managed by the Panchayat Samiti. The Panchayat Samities are authorized to impose taxes with the prior permission of the Government. The Government also provides funds whenever any subject is transferred to their control. A portion of the cattle fair income is also transferred to the Panchayat Samiti. The income and expenditure of the Panchayat Samities in the district from 1994-95 to 2003-04 are given below:-

<b>Year</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure (Rs. in lakhs)</b>
1994-95	42.48	42.45
1995-96	51.67	40.30
1996-97	61.72	64.75
1997-98	72.07	71.70
1998-99	75.24	75.18
1999-00	134.26	50.53
2000-01	71.52	68.11
2000-02	91.15	85.20
2002-03	101.79	106.43
2003-04	118.36	122.33

**TABLE-1**  
**Income and Expenditure of Panchayats**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure (Rs. in lakhs)</b>
1994-95	54.29	359.13
1995-96	904.82	425.48
1996-97	478.10	64.75
1997-98	603.41	503.64
1998-99	702.07	585.09
1999-00	924.77	87.33
2000-01	806.90	109.48
2000-02	903.61	100.27
2002-03	851.75	916.59
2003-04	116.87	109.93