



District Development Councils: A New Unit of Governance in PRI and its Role in the Overseeing of the Local Government in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

Danish Majeed Sheikh

Swami Ramadan Teerth Marathwada University Nanded Maharashtra

ABSTRACT

A system is a set of things, rules or regulations that are interconnected to one another in order to perform the various functions. There are various types of systems in the government of any country like legislative, Executive and Judiciary systems. Panchayat is also a system which perform various functions at the lower of governance. The PRI in Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir before the abrogation of special status was an incomplete administrative system but after the abrogation of Article 370 and with the introduction of District Development Councils has completed the structure of the PRI in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The 73rd Amendment Act find its presence in the territory of Jammu and Kashmir through the creation of DDCs because it established the three-tier structure of local government in the UT

Key words: District Development Councils, Article 370, Abrogation, Functions.

Introduction

After the abrogation of Article 370 one of the biggest administrative changes was the formation of DDCs in the local government. The formation of DDCs was the replacement of District Planning and Development Board in all districts of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Prior to the abrogation of special status, the Panchayat Raj Institutions was not having a complete structure like the rest of the Indian. Introduction of DDC in the UT has completed the threetier administrative system of local government.

Composition

On 16 October 2020, the Ministry of Home Affairs first introduced the District Development Councils in the PRIs of Jammu and Kashmir by amending the J&K Panchayat Raj Act, 1989, in order to provide for establishment of elected District Development Councils in Jammu and Kashmir. Each council will be headed by an additional district development commissioner as the chief executive officer and the chairperson of the council will represent it. Each DDCs will consist of 14 directly elected members and five standing committees, these five committees will be for development, public works, health and education, finance and welfare. Apart from this the structure will also include District Planning

Committee for every district which consists of MPs representing the area, Members of the State Legislature representing the areas within the district, chairperson of the DDC of the District, President of municipal council etc and the MP will function as the chairperson of this committee. The term of the DDC will be five years and the electoral process will allow for reservation for Scheduling Castes, Schedule Tribes and women.

Functions

To prepare and approve district plans and capital expenditure. To take measures to increase agriculture and horticulture production, establishment and maintenance of veterinary hospitals, first-aid centres and mobile veterinary dispensaries, promotion of rural and cottage industries. Responsibility to use the developmental aid or government funds for the development of an entire district and carry out schemes launched by the Union of India. To organise general meetings after every three months in order to frame a new plan or to work on pending plans. To construct and maintain culverts and district roads, causeways and bridges, promotion of social welfare programs like wellbeing of handicapped, mentally retarded and destitute, promotion of educational, economic, social, cultural, and other interests of the SC, ST and Backward classes. To supervise the activities of Gram Panchayats, Block Development Council and Panchayat Smiti in his own jurisdiction at district level. The District Planning Committee will consider and guide the formulation of development programmes for the district, it also prioritizes various schemes and focus on the issue that will help in the fast development and economic

uplift of the district, formulating and finalizing the plan and non-plan budget is also an important function of the DPC and formulate of periodic and annual plans for the district is also the responsibility of the DPC.

Why DDCs

- Before the introduction of DDCs the PRIs was defunct due to incomplete administrative structure.
- The introduction of DDCs has completed the three-tier administrative system of PRIs.
- The DDC in PRIs marks the implementation of the entire 73rd Amendment Act in Jammu and Kashmir
- The DDCs will effectively become representative bodies for the development at the grassroots even if the elected representatives in the UT are absent.