

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN MAHARASHTRA

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INTRODUCTION

Local government in *Maharashtra* State has general structure of Local Governance in India and is broadly classified in two categories, Urban Local Government and Rural Local Government. The Local Government in Maharashtra is classified into two categories; Urban Local Government and Rural Local Government. This chapter will discuss the nature and functions of Local Governments in the State of Maharashtra and shall conclude with the position of Urban Local Government in Nashik District.

Urban Local Government

Urban Local government can broadly be classified as Municipal Corporation and municipal council. This classification is based on the population of urban area and the location of each of the area. There are a few Cantonments and Nagar Panchayats, depending upon the local situation in each of the district.

1. Municipal Corporations

Large Urban areas are governed by *Municipal Corporations* also called just Corporations. The area under the Corporation is further divided up into Wards. Individual wards or collection of wards within a corporation sometimes have their own administrative body called Ward Committees.

1. Mumbai	2. Kolhapur	3. Parbhani city
4. Thane	5. Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad	6. Latur
7. Mira-Bhayandar	8. Solapur	9. Akola
10. Navi Mumbai	11. Ahmednagar	12. Amravati
13. Kalyan-Dombivli	14. Nashik	15. Nagpur
16. Ulhasnagar	17. Malegaon	18. Chandrapur
19. Bhiwandi-Nizampur	20. Jalgaon	21. Pune
22. Pimpri-Chinchwad	23. Dhule	24. Aurangabad
25. Nanded-Wagaha	26. Vasai-Virar	

Source: Wikipedia Free

2. Municipal Councils

Smaller Urban areas are governed by Municipal councils or Municipal Boards also called just Municipalities. Municipalities are also subdivided into Wards, which may be grouped together into Ward Councils. One or more Corporators are elected to represent each ward. Currently in Maharashtra, there are 222 municipalities.

3. Municipal Bodies in Nashik District

Profile of Nashik (Marathi: नाशिक) ¹ is a city in Maharashtra, India. Nashik is located in the northwest of Maharashtra, 180 km from Mumbai and 202 km from Pune. Nashik is the administrative headquarters of Nashik district and Nashik Division. Nashik, which has been referred to as the "Wine Capital of India",^[2] or as India's Napa Valley,^[3] is located in the Western Ghats, on the western edge of the Deccan peninsula on the banks of the Godavari. It is claimed to be the fastest growing city in Maharashtra. Nashik has prospered the most in the past 20 years. It got its name from mythological event when Lord Rama's brother, Laxmana, cut off Surpanakha's nose. Surpanakha was Ravana's sister. "nasika" means nose in Sanskrit. Hence due to this event Nashik got its name.^[4] In addition to supplying the name to the famed Nassak Diamond,^[5] the city is known for its picturesque surroundings and pleasant climate. The Godavari River flows through Nashik from its source, which lies to the southwest of the city, in Tryambakeshwar. Nashik Urban Agglomeration (Nashik UA) has a (projected year 2008) population of 1,620,000^[6] and a total area of 264.23 km² ^[7] which makes it the fourth largest urban area in Maharashtra in terms of population. Nashik is the third most industrialized city in Maharashtra after Mumbai and Pune .^[8]

Details of Urban local-self bodies in Nashik District are given in Tables 1, 2 and 3 below:

Table 1 gives total urban population of Nashik district, distributed into various municipal bodies in the district. Similarly, distribution of total population into males/females and decennial rate of growth per cent is also worked out. Aggregate growth rate of population in MNCs is highest at 41.8 between 1991 and 2001.

Table 1. Classification of Urban Centers with population and rate of Decennial population growth in Nashik District

(Numbers as per census 2001)

Sr. No	City	Classification of City	Population				Decennial rate of growth %
			Total	Male	Female	Sex Ratio	
1	Nashik	"B" Class MNC	10,77,236	5,75,737	5,01,499	871	64.0
2	Malegaon	"B" Class MNC	4,09,403	2,08,864	2,00,539	960	19.50
MNCs Total		2	14,86,639	7,84,601	7,02,038	895	41.8
3	Manmad	"B" Class MC	72,401	37,002	35,399	957	18.09
4.	Yeola	"B" Class MC	43,207	22,402	20,805	929	25.06
B class MCs Total		2	1,15,608	59,404	56,204	946	21.2
5	Satana	"C" Class MC	32,561	16,793	15,768	939	17.69
6	Tryambak	"C" Class MC	9,804	5,124	4,680	913	24.37
7	Igatpuri	"C" Class MC	31,539	16,405	15,134	923	37.92
8	Sinnar	"C" Class MC	31,630	16,429	15,201	925	22.29
9	Nandgaon	"C" Class MC	23,195	11,981	11,214	936	13.51
10	Bhagur	"C" Class MC	12,457	6,381	6,076	952	3.14
C class MCs Total		6	1,41,186	73,113	68,073	931	19.8

Table 1. Classification of Urban Centers with population and rate of Decennial population growth in Nashik District (Contd...)

(Numbers as per census 2001)

Sr. No	City	Classification of City	Population				Decennial rate of growth %
			Total	Male	Female	Sex Ratio	
All Municipal bodies		10	17,43,433	9,17,118	8,26,315	901	AGR 25.8
Census Towns							
1	Soygaon	Census Town	21819	11347	10472	923	105.2
2	Dyane	Census Town	24832	12730	12102	951	119.87
3	Surgana	Census Town	6147	3297	2850	864	41.05
4.	Ozar	Census Town	45954	24249	21705	895	10.28
5	Lasalgaon	Census Town	12532	6568	5954	907	27.8
6	Eklahra	Census Town	12013	6258	5755	920	0.05
7	Ghoti	Census Town	20206	10412	9794	941	28.56
Census Towns Total		7	143493	68632	74861	914	47.5
1	Deolali	Cantonment 1	50620	27712	22908	827	--
Total Towns		8	194113	102573	91540	892	41.6
Total Urban Centers & Population		18	19,37,546	10,19,691	9,17,855	900	31.1

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra, 2007-08, p. 266

This rate of population growth for 'B' class municipal areas has been 21.2 per cent, less than half of the MNCs area. 'C' Class MCs show a still lower rate of population growth at 19.8 per cent. Highest rate of population growth is surprisingly recorded by Census Towns at 47.5 per cent. Aggregate growth rate of urban population located in 2 MNCs, 2 'B' Class MCs, 8 'C' class MCs and 7 Census towns worked out to 41.6 per cent, a much higher rate than that of aggregate growth of population in the district. This shows high speed of urban population growth in Nashik district on account of better employment opportunities and civil amenities available in cities as compared to villages. Rural population is migrating to urban areas over time.

Table 2. Classification of Urban Centers with population and rate of Decennial population growth in Nashik District

Sr. No.	Classification of Municipal body	Number	Population				Annual Growth Rate	Percent Share in Dist. Pop.
			Total	Male	Female	Sex Ratio		
	MNCs Total	2	14,86,639	7,84,601	7,02,038	895	41.8	76.8
	B class MCs Total	2	1,15,608	59,404	56,204	946	21.2	6.2
	C class MCs Total	6	1,41,186	73,113	68,073	931	19.8	7.2
1	Deolali Cantonment	1	50620	27712	22908	827	--	2.6
	Census Towns Total	7	143493	68632	74861	914	47.5	7.2
Total Urban Population		18	19,37,546	10,19,691	9,17,855	903	31.1	100.0

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra, 2007-08, p. 266

Table 2 shows distribution of total urban population by the type of local bodies serving them. Almost 76.8 percent of the urban population is served by the Municipal Corporations. All the remaining local bodies serve just 23.2 per cent of urban population.

One more observation of this table is about the sex ratio in cities and towns covered by municipal bodies. Sex ratio is lowest at 827 in cantonment area and 895 females per 1000 males in MNCs, both having a lower ratio than the district average 903 females per 1000 males. It is quite natural because Nashik is an industrialised city where many single males stay leaving their families behind in their home towns or villages. Very small number of military personnel stays in Deolali cantonment area with their families. Rest; leave their families at their native places for taking care of elder family members and children who are learning. Surprisingly, the sex ratio in census towns is lower than 'B' and 'C' class MC towns. This demographic characteristic shall be an issue of altogether different research paper.

Table 3 presents the relative share of Nashik District in the local administration of the State.

Table 3. Number of Local-self Government bodies in Nashik District and in the State

Sr. No.	Local-self Government body	Unit	Number in Maharashtra	Number in Nashik District	Per cent share of District in the State
1	MNCs Total	Number	26	2	7.7
2	B class MC Total	Number	222	2	0.9
3	C class MC Total	Number	NA	8	-
4	Cantonment board s	Number	7	1	14.3
5	Census Towns Total	Number	NA	7	-
6	Zilla Parishads	Number	33	1	3.0
7	Panchayat Samitees	Number	355	15	4.2
8	Gram Panchayats	Number	28813	1373	4.8

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra, 2007-08, p. 266

Table 3 shows the significant share of Nashik District in the State of Maharashtra of urban local-self government bodies. In each type of body, the share exceeds 2.9 per cent, the average per district for a just distribution. It shows that the local government bodies in Nashik district may have significant impact on the overall administration of the state.

Rural Local Governance

Rural governance in India is based on the *Panchayati Raj* system. It is a three tier system, with the Zilla Parishad at the district level, Blocks at the middle level and Village Council at the lowest level.

1. Zilla Parishad

Zilla Parishad (commonly known as ZP) is a local government body at the district level in India. It looks after the administration of the rural area of the district and its office is located at the district headquarters. There are 33 Zilla Parishads in Maharashtra, one each in every district.

2. Panchayat Samiti

Panchayat Samiti is a local government body at the Tehsil or Taluka level in India. It works for the villages of the Tehsil or Taluka that together are called a Development Block. The Panchayat Samiti is the link between the Gram Panchayat and Zilla Parishad. There are 355 panchayat Samitees or block panchayat in Maharashtra.

3. Gram Panchayats

Gram Panchayats are local government bodies at the village level. The Gram Panchayat is the foundation of the Panchayat System. A Gram Panchayat can be set up in villages with a population of more than five hundred. There is a common Gram Panchayat for two or more villages if the population of these villages is less than five hundred. It is called Group-Gram Panchayat. As on 31st March 2002, there were 2, 65,000 Gram Panchayats in India.^[1] This number of gram Panchayats in Maharashtra is 28813. The gram panchayat is the foundation of the Panchayat System.

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1. Zilla Parishad

The panchayat raj is a South Asian political system mainly in India, Pakistan, and Nepal. The word "panchayat" literally means assembly (*ayat*) of five (*panch*) wise and respected elders chosen and accepted by the local community. However, there are different forms of assemblies. Traditionally, these assemblies settled disputes between individuals and villages. Modern Indian government has decentralized several administrative functions to the local level, empowering elected Gram Panchayats. Gram Panchayats are not to be confused with the unelected Khap Panchayats (or caste Panchayats) found in some parts of India.^[1] The Khap(Hindi:खाप, IAST: *khāpa*) and Sarv Khap (सर्व खाप) was a system of social administration and organization in the republics of Northwestern Indian states such as

Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh since ancient times. *Khap* is a term for a social - political grouping and used in a geographical sense. Other parallel terms are Pal, Ganasangha, Janapada or republic.

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2. Block panchayat/ Panchayat samiti

A block panchayat (Panchayat Samiti) is a local government body at the tehsils or Taluka level in India. It works for the villages of the Tehsils or Taluka that together are called a Development Block. The panchayat samiti is the link between the gram panchayat and the district administration. There are a number of variations of this institution in various states. It is known as Mandal Praja Parishad in Andhra Pradesh, Taluka panchayat in Gujarat, Mandal Panchayat in Karnataka, Panchayat Samiti in Maharashtra etc. In general, it is a form of Panchayat raj at a higher level.

Panchayat samiti is a local government body at the Tehsil or Taluka level in India. It works for the villages of the Tehsil or Taluka that together are called a Development Block. The Panchayat Samiti is the link between the Gram Panchayat and Zilla Parishad. There are 355 Panchayat Samitis or block panchayat in Maharashtra.

1. Constitution

It is composed of ex-officio members (all Sarpanchas of the Gram Panchayats in the Panchayat Samiti area, the MPs and MLAs of the area and the SDO of the subdivision), co-opted members (representatives of SC/ST and women), associate members (a farmer of the area, a representative of the cooperative societies and one of the marketing services), and some elected members. The Samiti is elected for 5 years and is headed by the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman.

2. Departments

The common departments in the Panchayat Samities are as follows:

1. General administration	2. Finance	3. Public work
4. Agriculture	5. Health	6. Education
7. Social welfare	8. Information technology and others	

There is an officer for every department. A government appointed Block Development Officer (BDO) is the executive officer to the Samities and the chief of its administration.

3. Functions

1. Implement schemes for the development of agriculture.
2. Establishment of primary health centres and primary schools.
3. Supply of drinking water, drainage, construction/repair of roads.
4. Development of cottage and small-scale industries and opening of cooperative societies.

5. Establishment of youth organisations.

4. Sources of income

The main sources of income of the panchayat Samitis are grants-in-aid and loans from the State Government. Government charges Panchayat Raj Cess on the farmers and collects the same along with land revenue. Collection of this cess is then distributed among the institutions working under panchayat Raj System by way of grants and subsidies. These Institutions have no authority to levy and collect their own taxes. How do they manage their expenditure on the plans of rural development and welfare will be a matter of an independent study.

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