

District Councils in Jammu & Kashmir

October 22, 2020

In news

Union Cabinet cleared decks for the introduction of a three-tier system of local body governance in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir

Key highlights

- Amendment to the **Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act, 1989**, effected by the Ministry of Home Affairs on October 16, will lead to the **establishment of District Development Councils (DDC)**
- Members of DDCs will be **directly elected by voters of the Union Territory.**
- The **DDCs will be the three-tier** – at the district level, over the block and village levels
- The three-tier system was **not there in Kashmir before**
- Under the amended law, **each district of J&K will be divided into 14 constituencies, electing a member each to the DDC.**
- The DDC members will then elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson.
- These **DDCs will replace the District Development Boards which were headed by a state cabinet minister** and had MLCs, MLAs, MPs as members when J&K was a State.
- The erstwhile District Development Boards were at the centre of planning and development as they were responsible for approving development plans for the districts, through which all funding was routed.
- As per the amendment, the **DDCs will have jurisdiction over the entire district**, excluding those areas designated as municipalities or municipal corporations

- As per the amendment, all DDC members, whether or not elected by direct election from the territorial constituencies in the district, shall have the right to vote in the meeting of the District Development Council
- But the MLAs will have no voting rights in the case of election or removal of the chairman and vice-chairman. Only the directly elected members shall have the right to vote