



100 Years of Madras Legislative Council

Why in News

Recently, the President addressed the **commemoration of the 100th year of the Tamil Nadu Assembly**, formerly **known as the Madras Legislative Council (MLC) in Chennai**.

Key Points

▪ History:

- The Madras Legislative Council was **set up in 1921 under the Government of India Act 1919**.
 - The term of the Council was **for a period of three years**. It consisted of 132 Members of which **34 were nominated by the Governor and the rest were elected**.
- It **met for the first time** on the 9th January 1921 **at Fort St. George, Madras**.
- The Council was inaugurated by the Duke of Cannaught, a paternal uncle of the King of England, on the 12th January 1921 on the request made by the **Governor Wellington**.
- The **Second and Third Councils**, under this Act were constituted **after the general elections held in 1923 and 1926 respectively**.
- The **fourth Legislative Council** met for the first time **in November 1930** after the general elections held during the year and its life was extended from time to time and it **lasted till the provincial autonomy under the Government of India Act, 1935 came into operation**.

▪ Significance:

- This legislature **became the fountainhead of many progressive legislations** which were subsequently replicated across the country to empower the weaker sections of society and strengthen Democracy.
- Abolition of the [Devadasi system](#), **widow remarriage**, [mid-day meals in schools](#) and **distribution of agricultural land to the landless** were some of the revolutionary ideas that transformed the society.
- The concept of the **Welfare State** has taken deep roots in this legislature.

State Legislature

▪ About:

- The primary function of the State Legislature, like the Union Parliament, is **law-making**. The State Legislature is **empowered to make laws on [State List and Concurrent List](#)**.

▪ Types of Legislature:

- Just as Parliament has two Houses, the **states can also have a [Legislative Council](#) in addition to the Legislative Assembly**.
- Therefore there can be **two types** of legislatures i.e **Unicameral or Bicameral** on the basis of the number of houses to implement laws for the state.

- **Unicameral:** Legislative Assembly
- **Bicameral:** Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council.
- Presently, there are Six States having a Legislative Council: **Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Karnataka.**
- **Constitutional Provisions:**
 - **Articles 168 to 212 in Part VI** of the Constitution deal with the organisation, composition, duration, officers, procedures, privileges, powers and so on of the state legislature.
 - **Article 168** states that for **every State there shall be a Legislature** which shall consist of the **Governor**.
 - **Article 169** states that notwithstanding anything in article 168, **Parliament may by law provide for the abolition of the Legislative Council** of a State having such a Council **or for the creation of such a Council** in a State having no such Council, if the Legislative Assembly of the State passes a resolution to that effect.

Political System at State Level

State Government

Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly/Lower House)

- 60-500 Members, called MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly)
- Members are directly elected by Residents of the state in State elections.
- Whichever political party has majority votes, forms the state government and chooses the **Chief Minister**
- Election every 5 years.
- Head is called 'Speaker' and is usually of the stronger political party

- **Only in 6 bicameral states** – Maharashtra, AP, Bihar, Telangana, Karnataka, UP

Vidhan Parishad (Legislative Council/ Upper House)

- Less than one third of Vidhan Sabha Members
- 1/3rd members are elected by members of local bodies, 1/3rd by MLAs, 1/12th from teaching, 1/12th from graduates etc.
- Members are called MLC (Member of Legislative Council)
- Members sit for 6 years, with one third retiring every two year
- Head is called 'Chairman' and is elected from the members

Source: TH