



## 30th Anniversary of the 73rd and 74th Amendments

**For Prelims:** 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment, 11<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Constitution, Distribution of power, 2<sup>nd</sup> ARC.

**For Mains:** Status of Democratic Decentralisation in India, Challenges Related to Decentralisation in India.

### Why in News? ‘

The year 2023 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Indian Constitution. But still India's local government requires many technical, administrative and financial fixes.

### What are the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments?

- **73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act:**
  - **Panchayati Raj Institution** was constitutionalized through the **73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992**.
  - This act has added a new **Part-IX to the Constitution of India** and consists of provisions from **Articles 243 to 243 O**.
  - In addition, the act has also added a new **11<sup>th</sup> Schedule** to the Constitution and contains 29 functional items of the panchayats.
- **74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act:**
  - **Urban local governments** were constitutionalized through the **74<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act** during the regime of **P.V. Narsimha Rao's government** in 1992. It came into force on 1st June 1993.
  - It added **Part IX -A** and consists of provisions from **Articles 243-P to 243-ZG**.
  - In addition, the act also added **the 12<sup>th</sup> Schedule to the Constitution**. It contains **18 functional items of Municipalities**.

### What is the Status of Democratic Decentralisation in India?

- **Positive Aspects:**
  - **Empowerment of Local Communities:** Democratic decentralisation has given more power to local communities to participate in **decision-making** processes and to implement **development projects** according to their specific needs and priorities.
    - This has led to **greater participation of citizens in governance** and **decision-making processes**.
  - **Accountability and Transparency:** Decentralisation has also led to greater accountability and transparency in governance.
    - Local governments are more **directly accountable to citizens**, and decision-making processes are more transparent and open to public scrutiny.
  - **Promotion of Diversity and Inclusivity:** Democratic decentralisation has allowed for **greater representation of marginalised communities** in decision-making processes.
    - This has led to more **inclusive policies** that address the needs and interests of all citizens, regardless of their social, economic, or cultural background.
- **Challenges Related to Decentralisation in India:**

- **Uneven Distribution of Power and Resources:** Decentralisation has been implemented **unevenly across different states and regions of India**, leading to **disparities in the distribution of power and resources**.
  - Some states and regions have been more successful in implementing decentralisation than others, which has **led to uneven development outcomes**.
- **Ceremonial Status to Mayor:** The **2<sup>nd</sup> Administrative Reform Commission** noted the Mayor in the Urban Local Government in most states enjoys primarily a ceremonial status.
  - In most cases, the **Municipal Commissioner**, appointed by the State Government has all the powers and the elected Mayor ends up performing the role of the subordinate.
- **Infrastructural Loopholes:** Many **Gram Panchayats (GPs)** lack a building of their own and share spaces with **schools, anganwadi, and other entities**.
  - While some have their own building, they lack basic facilities such as **toilets, drinking water, and electricity**.
  - Although **Panchayats have internet connections**, they are not always functional. Panchayat officials have to visit **Block Development offices** for any data entry purposes, which delays the work.

## Way Forward

- **Strengthening Local Government Institutions:** The institutional framework for local governance in India needs to be strengthened by providing them with more **autonomy, resources and powers**.
  - This can be done by **revising laws, regulations and procedures** that constrain the functioning of local governments
- **Capacity Building:** Local government officials and elected representatives need to be trained and equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively carry out their roles and responsibilities.
  - This can be achieved through **training programs, exchange visits and mentoring**.
- **Community Participation:** The success of democratic decentralisation depends on **active participation of citizens in decision-making** and implementation of local development plans.
  - Community participation can be enhanced through **awareness campaigns, public meetings and consultations**.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQ)

### Prelims

**Q1. Local self-government can be best explained as an exercise in (2017)**

- (a) Federalism
- (b) Democratic decentralisation
- (c) Administrative delegation
- (d) Direct democracy

**Ans: (b)**

**Q2. The fundamental object of the Panchayati Raj system is to ensure which among the following? (2015)**

1. People's participation in development
2. Political accountability
3. Democratic decentralisation
4. Financial mobilisation

**Select the correct answer using the code given below**

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 4 only

- (c) 1 and 3 only  
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

**Ans: (c)**

### **Mains**

**Q1.** Assess the importance of the Panchayat system in India as a part of local government. Apart from government grants, what sources can the Panchayats look out for financing developmental projects? **(2018)**

**Q2.** To what extent, in your opinion, has the decentralisation of power in India changed the governance landscape at the grassroots? **(2022)**

**Source: IE**

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/30th-anniversary-of-the-73rd-and-74th-amendments>

