

DEMOCRATIC DECENTRALISATION IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Decentralization is a word that has been used by different people to mean a good many different things. But what do we see in practice? Experiments with local government that end in chaos and bankruptcy; 'decentralized' structures of administration that only act as a more effective tool for centralizing power; regional and district committees in which government officials make decisions while the local representatives sit silent; village councils where local people participate but have no resources to allocate. Decentralization helps to identify the needs and preferences of people through their direct participation in plan formulation and implementation. It empowers weaker sections and overcomes the domination of the elite to certain extent. In India, Panchayati Raj system is identified as the prime instrument of decentralization through which democracy becomes truly representative and responsive. The Indian states were functioning as a federation only at two levels- Union and States. 73rd amendment strengthens the decentralization process in India and facilitates powers from the states to the local bodies. The present paper studies the process of decentralisation in India and The principal focus is on the 73rd Amendment, which deals with district, sub-district and village level institutions in rural areas.

KEY WORDS: Decentralization, Panchayat, government, 73rd amendment, political, administrative and fiscal Decentralization.

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