Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the role of urban local bodies in achieving sustainable sanitation and solid waste management in Indian cities. What institutional and governance reforms are required to improve urban cleanliness outcomes?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 13/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

74th Constitutional Amendment, Twelfth Schedule, Article 243W, municipal capacity, source segregation, waste processing, citizen participation, financial devolution, accountability, circular economy.

Model Answer

Introduction

Urban cleanliness is essential for public health, environmental sustainability and quality of life. Initiatives such as Swachh Survekshan encourage competition among cities, but sustained outcomes depend on effective municipal governance.

Role of Urban Local Bodies

1. **Service delivery:** Municipalities are responsible for sanitation, conservancy, solid waste management and related civic services, subject to State devolution.

2. **Waste management:** Door-to-door collection, source segregation, recycling and scientific disposal reduce pollution and landfill dependence.

3. **Public participation:** Awareness campaigns and community engagement encourage behavioural change and responsible waste disposal.

4. **Monitoring:** Performance assessments and citizen feedback can improve transparency and municipal accountability.

Required Reforms

- Strengthen municipal finances through predictable transfers and improved revenue mobilisation.
- Build technical capacity for waste processing and scientific landfill management.
- Ensure segregation at source and integrate informal waste workers.
- Improve coordination among municipalities, State governments and urban development agencies.
- Use digital monitoring while ensuring independent verification of cleanliness indicators.

Conclusion

Clean cities require more than rankings and awards. Empowered municipalities, adequate resources, citizen participation and scientifically managed waste systems are essential for sustainable urban sanitation.

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