Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in strengthening grassroots democracy in India. Discuss the significance of free and fair local body elections.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 05/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Constitutional decentralisation, 73rd Constitutional Amendment, Gram Panchayat, State Election Commission, electoral participation, accountability, women's representation, local development, electoral transparency.

Model Answer

Introduction

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992, gave constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions and strengthened democratic decentralisation in rural India.

Role in Grassroots Democracy

Panchayats provide institutional representation to rural communities and enable citizens to participate in local decision-making. They contribute to rural development, sanitation, drinking water, infrastructure and implementation of welfare programmes. Reservation for women and disadvantaged sections promotes inclusive political participation.

Significance of Free and Fair Elections

Regular elections ensure democratic accountability and continuity of local governance. The State Election Commission, established under Article 243K, supervises and conducts Panchayat elections. Rajasthan's 2026 Panchayat elections across 3,716 Gram Panchayats illustrate the scale of grassroots electoral participation.

Transparent voting, impartial administration, accessible polling facilities and timely counting are essential for public confidence.

Challenges and Way Forward

Financial dependence, inadequate administrative capacity and limited devolution of powers affect Panchayat effectiveness. Strengthening the three Fs—functions, funds and functionaries—is essential.

Conclusion

Empowered Panchayati Raj Institutions and credible elections are fundamental to participatory democracy and inclusive rural development.

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