Polity & Governance · GS - II

Uncontested elections in rural local bodies can reduce electoral expenditure and political confrontation, but they also raise questions about democratic competition and accountability. Critically examine.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 12/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Electoral consensus, uncontested elections, grassroots democracy, political participation, electoral expenditure, democratic competition, accountability, Gram Sabha, local self-government, inclusive governance.

Model Answer

Introduction

Panchayati Raj Institutions form the foundation of grassroots democracy. Uncontested elections, where candidates are elected without electoral competition, may reflect local consensus but also require democratic scrutiny.

Potential Benefits

- **Reduced expenditure:** Candidates and communities can avoid certain election-related expenses.
- **Social harmony:** Consensus-based selection may reduce electoral rivalry and local conflicts.
- **Administrative continuity:** Broad agreement may facilitate cooperation in local development initiatives.
- **Community participation:** Negotiated selection can encourage collective decision-making.

Democratic Concerns

Uncontested elections may sometimes result from unequal power relations, social pressure or the absence of genuine political alternatives. They can restrict voter choice, weaken political accountability and marginalise disadvantaged groups.

Way Forward

The legitimacy of such elections requires free consent, transparency and compliance with election laws. Gram Sabhas should remain active, while reservation provisions and safeguards for weaker sections must be effectively implemented.

Conclusion

Consensus can complement electoral democracy, but it cannot replace democratic freedoms. Strong participation, transparency and accountability are essential for meaningful grassroots self-government.

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