Polity & Governance · GS - II

The credibility of grassroots democracy depends on free, fair and transparent local elections. Examine the role of State Election Commissions and discuss the challenges associated with electoral ethics in Panchayati Raj institutions.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 19/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

73rd Constitutional Amendment; Article 243K; State Election Commission; decentralisation; electoral ethics; voter inducement; Model Code of Conduct; transparency; accountability; grassroots democracy.

Model Answer

Introduction

Panchayati Raj institutions promote democratic decentralisation and citizen participation. Their legitimacy depends on elections that are free, fair and conducted without undue influence on voters.

Role of State Election Commissions

1. Constitutional Mandate: Article 243K provides for the State Election Commission to supervise, direct and control Panchayat elections.

2. Electoral Administration: State Election Commissions oversee relevant electoral processes, including electoral rolls and the conduct of local elections, subject to applicable law.

3. Democratic Accountability: Credible elections enable citizens to hold local representatives accountable for governance and public service delivery.

Challenges to Electoral Ethics

Voter inducement, misuse of public resources, misinformation, intimidation and opaque campaign practices can undermine electoral fairness. Social divisions and limited awareness of electoral rules may further complicate local contests.

Measures

State Election Commissions should enforce applicable electoral rules consistently, monitor complaints and promote voter awareness. Political parties and candidates must follow campaign regulations and avoid inducements. Transparent expenditure reporting and accessible grievance-redressal mechanisms can strengthen accountability.

Conclusion

Strong State Election Commissions and responsible political participation are essential for protecting the integrity of grassroots democracy and improving local governance.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP