Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the role of State Election Commissions in strengthening grassroots democracy in India. What administrative and technological challenges can affect the conduct of local-body elections?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 28/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

73rd Constitutional Amendment; Article 243K; electoral decentralisation; State Election Commission; EVM reliability; administrative preparedness; voter confidence; accountability and transparency

Model Answer

Introduction

Panchayati Raj institutions provide a constitutional framework for decentralised governance. Free, fair and timely local-body elections are essential to ensure their democratic legitimacy.

Role of State Election Commissions

1. Constitutional mandate: Article 243K vests the superintendence, direction and control of Panchayat elections in the State Election Commission. Article 243ZA provides a corresponding role in municipal elections.

2. Democratic decentralisation: Regular elections enable citizens to elect local representatives and participate in decisions concerning water, sanitation, roads and local development.

3. Accountability: Competitive elections allow voters to evaluate local representatives and strengthen responsiveness to community needs.

Key challenges

Faulty electronic voting machines, inadequate replacement equipment, staffing shortages, logistical difficulties and misinformation can disrupt polling. Delays may inconvenience voters and undermine confidence if not addressed transparently.

Way Forward

Election authorities should conduct pre-poll equipment testing, maintain reserve machines, train polling personnel and establish rapid technical-response teams. Clear communication about delays and replacements can reduce confusion. Accessible polling arrangements and transparent complaint-redressal mechanisms should also be strengthened.

Conclusion

Strong State Election Commissions, supported by adequate resources and reliable technology, are vital to protecting electoral integrity and deepening grassroots democracy.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP