Polity & Governance · GS - II

Examine the significance of Panchayat elections in strengthening grassroots democracy in India. Discuss how the conduct of local elections can influence state-level political dynamics.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 20/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

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Answer Hint

73rd Constitutional Amendment, democratic decentralisation, Article 243K, State Election Commission, local accountability, grassroots leadership, party participation, anti-incumbency, voter priorities, electoral trends.

Model Answer

Introduction

Panchayat elections are an essential component of grassroots democracy in India. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment institutionalised rural local self-government and expanded opportunities for citizen participation.

Significance of Panchayat Elections

- **Decentralisation:** They enable communities to participate in local governance and development planning.
- **Accountability:** Elected representatives can be held responsible for local services and public expenditure.
- **Inclusive representation:** Constitutional provisions for reservations promote the participation of women and disadvantaged communities.
- **Political leadership:** Local elections provide opportunities for emerging leaders to gain public experience.

Influence on State Politics

Panchayat elections can indicate public satisfaction with governance, reveal local organisational strengths and expose grassroots discontent. Political parties may therefore view them as important tests of support. However, local outcomes do not necessarily predict assembly results, as state elections involve broader policy issues and different political alignments.

Way Forward

State Election Commissions should ensure free, fair and timely elections. Greater transparency, voter awareness and effective devolution of funds, functions and functionaries can strengthen local democracy.

Conclusion

Panchayat elections are more than political contests; they are instruments of participatory governance and accountability that contribute to the broader democratic system.

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