

# Performance of Decentralised Governance in India – A Review

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## **Abstract**

Since then the process of decentralisation in the planning and developmental activities was continued. In 1969, the Planning Commission issued some guidelines on the introduction of district planning. Again in 1977; M.L. Dantewala working group recommended specific guidelines for the introduction of block-level planning. After that Ashok Mehta Committee has also submitted its report on Panchayati Raj in 1978. Moreover, the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, finally presented its Report on Decentralisation of Development Planning and its implementation in the states in 1983. Finally, in 1984, the Group on District Planning submitted its report and this was considered as the basis of proposals on Decentralised Governance under the Seventh Plan. Accordingly, the Planning Commission of India introduced the Decentralised Governance in the country for the first time during the Seventh Plan. From the very beginning, India has adopted the system of centralised planning with little variation. Considering the huge size and proportion of rural population in India, it is felt that proper linkages must be established between dispersed small villages and also between such villages and adjacent small towns by developing appropriate infrastructural facilities such as feeder roads, improved transport facilities, marketing and storage facilities, health and sanitation facilities and other welfare centres. Under Decentralised Governance better linkages between villages and small towns can be developed under local conditions, priorities and resources.

*Key words: Decentralised governance, development, India, infrastructure, Planning Commission*

## **Introduction**

Decentralised Governance can promote active participation of local people in implementing various local plans and programmes. Thus it can enhance the involvement of local communities in such development activities. Under Decentralised Governance, wastage of resources can be reduced to a minimum level as the people participating in these developmental activities keep a close watch over the utilisation of fund as well also on the implementation of plan projects. Decentralised Governance can show more trickle down or percolation effects in respect of poverty alleviation programmes and employment generation in rural areas as in this type of planning, various projects are selected for generating huge productive employment opportunities in the rural areas. Moreover, this can help in building up of various types of community assets, viz., panchayat house, village roads, schools, tanks etc. which can supplement rural income and also can enhance the levels of living of the rural people.

**Objective:**

This paper intends to explore and analyze **Democratic Decentralisation of governance in India** with precisely defined governance functions are formally assigned by law to local governments, backed by adequate transfer of financial aid and also the **emerging challenges**

- However, there is no evidence to show that corruption has increased due to decentralisation.
- Decentralised corruption tends to get exposed faster than national or State-level corruption. People erroneously perceive higher corruption at the local level, simply because it is more visible.
- However, we can keep track of corrupt local government representatives more easily than those at the higher levels.

In India, economists, social scientists and political thinkers consider the Decentralised Governance as the sole machinery for the control and solution of country's serious economic problems like poor growth rate, poverty, inequality, unemployment, unbalanced growth, regional inequalities etc. During the last forty years of centralised planning, the country has failed to tackle all these economic problems in appropriate manner. Thus, in order to tackle these problems effectively, the planning process in India should be decentralised at the grass root or local level in an appropriate manner. Although the Seventh Plan has introduced the Decentralised Governance process in a serious manner but the Eighth Plan (1992-97) has given special emphasis on the Decentralised Governance process for local area planning.

***Following are some of important measures which are to be adopted for the improvement of performance of Decentralised Governance in India:***

1. Panchayati Raj Institutions of the country should be strengthened for the effective implementation of Decentralised Governance.
2. Proper organisations of marginal and small farmers, landless agricultural labourers, artisans, scheduled castes and scheduled tribe community and other backward classes should be developed for their proper representation in local bodies.
3. Land reforms and other institutional reforms must be introduced for the successful implementation of Decentralised Governance in India.
4. For wiping out regional disparities in respect of economic development, Decentralised Governance should be adopted simultaneously among all the states of the country. In order to have a proper shift from centralised planning process to Decentralised Governance process, the country should adopt a uniform policy throughout the country.
5. State governments should make necessary arrangement for devaluation of funds in adequate quantity for Panchayati Raj Institutions along with mobilisation of local private capital.

## Conclusion

More fiscal resources—fiscal stimulus program—are needed to support the local governments to tackle coronavirus, which will grow exponentially soon. Increased fiscal stimulus will also promote rural structural transformation. Under the present arrangement, local governments make little or no contribution to the design and implementation of economic and social development programs. They have limited autonomy and resources to provide meaningful service. Earmarked transfers designed by the centre should not continue to dominate local government finances. India needs to deepen and unbundle the decentralisation agenda to promote economic and social democracy, and provide budget responsibility to local governments. Moreover, government administrative machinery, elected people's representatives and banks should co-operate effectively for proper implementation of Decentralised Governance in India. Thus, in order to have proper implementation of economic planning, decentralisation of the planning process throughout the country is the need of the hour.

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