

Viksit Panchayats & Viksit Bharat

Live Mints

Paper - II
(Polity)

Decades before the term 'Viksit Bharat' was coined, Rabindranath Tagore's Gitanjali held out an Indian vision: "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high; Where knowledge is free; Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake." This encapsulates Viksit Bharat. With visible changes in many sectors, India is moving rapidly towards becoming a developed nation by 2047.

What is the Concept of Viksit Bharat?

- **Rural Focus:** With 64.1% of the population in rural areas governed by Gram Panchayats, the development in these regions is vital.
- **Empowering Local Governance:** States with greater power devolution like Kerala and Karnataka have shown better socio-economic outcomes through programs like Kudumbashree and the GP Human Development Index, exemplifying effective local governance.

How Important are Gram Panchayats in Achieving Viksit Bharat?

- **Central Role in Development:** Gram Panchayats are crucial for grassroots empowerment, directly impacting India's journey towards becoming a developed nation by 2047.
- **Decentralization of Authority:** Effective decentralization, where local bodies like Gram Panchayats have the autonomy to plan and implement projects, correlates with improved socio-economic development.
- **Policy Support:** The GP Development Plan (GPDP) encourages local stakeholder involvement, enhancing the efficiency and relevance of development initiatives.
- **Digital innovations** such as Aadhaar, UPI, Co-win, ABHA, and the Universal Citizen Interface are transforming citizen services. These tools help Sarpanches make informed decisions and align local development plans with state and national schemes.

How are women empowered through local governance?

- **Constitutional Mandate:** The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act mandates a 33.3% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions, ensuring women's participation in local governance.
- **Impactful Leadership:** Empowered women leaders at the grassroots have driven significant societal changes. For example, Jyoti Behar Devi, a Sarpanch from Jharkhand, successfully banned alcohol in her panchayat and promoted livelihood opportunities. Anita Devi from Bihar transformed her vehicle into an ambulance, reducing home deliveries from 65% to 8% by improving healthcare access.

What should be done?

- **Empower Gram Panchayats:** As seen in Kerala and Karnataka, where devolution of powers has boosted socio-economic development, similar strategies should be implemented nationwide.

- Implement Local Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs): Aligning projects with community needs through GP Development Plans.
- Customize Good Governance Models: Scale models like Andhra Pradesh's 'village secretariat' for streamlined governance and improved service delivery across different regions.
- Build Competent Leadership Teams: Develop strong leadership and organizational structures within Gram Panchayats to ensure the timely delivery of quality services, mirroring successful team dynamics seen at higher levels of governance.

Expected Question for Prelims

Que. Consider the following statements in the context of empowerment of Panchayats in India-

1. Digital innovations like Aadhaar, UPI, Co-WIN, ABHA and Universal Citizen Interface can become means of empowering Panchayats.
2. Programs like Kudumbashree and GP Human Development Index are examples of empowered Panchayat.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| (a) Only 1 | (b) Only 2 |
| (c) Both 1 and 2 | (d) Neither 1 nor 2 |

Answer : C

Mains Expected Question & Format

Que.: How can Gram Panchayats become the engine of developed India? Discuss.

Answer's Approach:

- ❖ Explain the concept of developed India in the first part of the answer.
- ❖ In the second part, discuss the role of Gram Panchayats in building a developed India.
- ❖ Finally give a conclusion giving suggestions.

Note: - The question of the main examination given for practice is designed keeping in mind the upcoming UPSC mains examination. Therefore, to get an answer to this question, you can take the help of this source as well as other sources related to this topic.