

## CALL FOR CHAPTERS

### DEEPENING DECENTRALISATION: AN ANALYSIS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN INDIA OVER THE LAST THREE DECADES



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#### CONCEPT

The principles of democracy and decentralisation have been deeply ingrained within the administrative and cultural fabric of India since ancient times. However, the advent of foreign invasions and subsequent British colonisation in India ushered in a paradigm shift towards the implementation of centralised administrative systems. This came as a significant setback to the process of decentralising governance to local entities. As the process of governance underwent a gradual centralisation, the devolution of powers to local bodies experienced a perceptible decline, rendering it a mere semblance of substantive decentralisation.

While pre-independence nationalist movements in India placed significant emphasis on the establishment of local governments, post-independence India did not put local governments at a pedestal one would have hoped for. The Draft Constitution of India initially excluded local governments, but their inclusion in the constitutional text was eventually secured due to the persistent advocacy of some leaders. In 1950, when Indians adopted a constitution for the new democracy, local governments were placed under the State List of the Seventh Schedule. This bestowed upon the States the exclusive legislative authority over matters pertaining to local governments. Moreover, the village panchayats found mention in the Directive Principles of State Policy whereas urban local governments remained absent from the constitutional text.

The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments in 1992 extended constitutional recognition to the rural and urban local bodies in India, after a wait of 42 years. The constitutional amendments were

subsequently followed by the enactment of conformity legislation by the various States. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that as local government remained within States legislative competence with broad discretion at the hands of the States, the implementation of these amendments has varied across different States. While some States have fared well in terms of decentralisation of governance and devolution of funds and functions, others have not been able to keep up.

Three decades after the constitutionalising the local governments, the implementation of the local government reforms has remained a major concern. There are enormous challenges in implementing the legal provisions regarding decentralisation. Several pertinent issues can be identified within the realm of local governance. These encompass the collection of funds, the streamlining of various programmes, the effective execution of policies pertaining to reservation, and the enhancement of capacity and training initiatives for local body members among others.

A quick rewind of our memory to the happenings in the last decade would further suggest why resilient local government is unavoidable today. With a burgeoning population of the nation, each legislator has a big population to cater in their electoral constituency. This is taking representatives farther from the constituents. In such a situation, the local government representatives remain closest to the constituents. These local representatives cater to the demands of the public. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic the representatives of the local governments stood tall as warriors against the deadly disease. Similar quick responses have been called from the local government representatives during floods, droughts, cyclones, and other emergent situations.

However, the capacity of the local governments to answer to these calls can be debated. While the local governments have a long list of functions devolved to them under the Constitution, the actual devolution of these functions by different State governments have varied. Where the functions have been devolved to the local bodies, the finances necessary to carry on the functions have either not been devolved or have been insufficient. The usurpation of powers by the line departments, dominance of the bureaucracy, the prominent role played by the district collector, lack of revenue base is some of the practical difficulties. Moreover, at the macro level, the tug of war of powers between the Union, state and local governments in a multilevel federalism cannot be ignored.

Against this backdrop, we are seeking scholarly research manuscripts to reignite the discussion around decentralisation and local governance in India.

## ABOUT ANAGH

ANAGH, a non-profit organisation, emerges as a manifestation of the collective human spirit, duly constituted under Section 8 of the Company Act, 2013. Its noble purpose is to propel social endeavours that bestow upon society the transformative power to transcend and attain sustainable goals. Our chosen methodology, in its essence, embodies a profound and all-encompassing approach. It transcends disciplinary boundaries, weaving together the threads of scholarly inquiry, the promotion of public policy, and the fervent activism rooted in local communities.

In our relentless pursuit, we endeavour to propagate the principles of sustainable living, safeguard the sanctity of natural habitats, and embolden individuals to manifest their agency in effecting change within their respective communities. In our unwavering dedication to the pursuit of knowledge, the cultivation of originality, and the harmonious union of minds, we pledge ourselves to the noble cause of forging a future that is both enduring and beneficial for the countless generations that lie ahead.

## THEMES

***“Deepening Decentralisation: An Analysis of Local Governments in India Over the Last Three Decades”***. The author(s) are welcome to submit their chapter on any topic which is related to the title of Book.

## SUBMISSION PROCEDURE:

1. The submissions are welcome from Academicians, Professionals, Social Workers, Political Scientists, Development Economists, members of Civil Society Organisation, Legislators, Lawyers, Students and/or anyone having a deep interest in the subject.
2. The submissions must be accompanied by an abstract, covering letter bearing the following information: • Full Name of the Author(s) • Designation • Institutional Affiliations (if any) • Contact Details of the Author(s) clearly explaining the topic and objectives of the proposed chapter **on or before 20.11.2023** to email: [editor.anagh@gmail.com](mailto:editor.anagh@gmail.com)
3. Submissions must be made in **.doc/.docx** formats only.
4. All manuscripts will be accepted based on a double-blind peer review editorial process.

5. There shall be a rigorous review process. The editorial board will ensure a greater standard of review and identification of quality academic writing. The authors shall be intimated about the status of their manuscript at every stage.
6. The decision of the editorial board shall be final and binding regarding the manuscript. They reserve the sole rights to the publication of the selected chapter in addition to; inter alia, any edits/amends/reproduction.

#### **PUBLISHER:**

This book shall be published by **ANAGH - Forum for Sustainable Outreach** bearing an ISBN **978-81-965952-2-7**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** There are no submission or acceptance fees for manuscripts. This book is anticipated to be released on 26 January 2024.

#### **IMPORTANT DATES:**

- **November 20, 2023:** Submission of Chapter
- **December 15, 2023:** Review Results
- **December 31, 2023:** Final Chapter Submission
- **January 10, 2024:** Final Acceptance
- **January 26, 2024:** Publication of Book

#### **PERKS**

1. No Publication Fee will be charged at any stage of the Online Book Publication.
2. Edited Book Publication Identity No – ISBN (Pre-Allotted) – **978-81-965952-2-7**.
3. Certificate of Publication.

#### **PUBLICATION GUIDELINES:**

The contributors must follow the guidelines mentioned below:

1. Any manuscript not meeting these guidelines will be returned to the author(s) for correction, which may cause significant delays in the publication process.
2. Word Count for the book chapter- 4000 to 8000 (excluding reference).

3. Only **ORIGINAL** submissions will be accepted for publication. Manuscripts should not have been previously published or be submitted for publication elsewhere. Manuscripts should be submitted in Times New Roman, with font size 16 for title, 14 for headings and 12 for body text, line spacing 1.5; justified, with justified margins on all sides. **Manuscripts can be in the form of chapter. 'Chapter' refers to a comprehensive and thorough analysis of issues related to the title of Book.**
4. Co-authorship is permitted but there can be a maximum of two authors.
5. Referencing Style to be followed: **APA (7<sup>th</sup> Edition)**
6. The chapter shall go through strict plagiarism check and the plagiarism shall not be more than the permitted limit by the University Grant Commission Rules. The author shall be solely responsible for plagiarism if it is detected before or after publication of a book chapter.

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