Class 11 Political Science (Indian Constitution at Work) Chapter 8: Local Governments - Notes, Important Questions and MCQs (2026-27)

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These Class 11 Political Science Chapter 8 notes cover “Local Governments” from the NCERT textbook Indian Constitution at Work (2026-27): why we need local government, its growth in India, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, three-tier Panchayati Raj, urban local bodies, reservations, State Election and Finance Commissions, transfer of subjects and implementation challenges – with tables, Q&A, 10 MCQs and a free PDF.

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Chapter Overview

Local government is government at the village and district level, closest to ordinary people. It lets citizens take part directly in solving local problems like water, roads, sanitation and schools, deepening democracy.

Although local bodies existed earlier, they became constitutional institutions only after the 73rd (rural) and 74th (urban) Amendments of 1992, which created a uniform three-tier Panchayati Raj system and municipalities, with regular elections, reservations and financial support.

Important Topics and Concepts

Why Local Government?

- Local problems are best understood and solved locally.
- Brings democracy to the grassroots; people participate in decisions.
- Makes government more responsive and accountable.
- Builds political awareness and leadership.

Growth of Local Government in India

- Village assemblies (sabhas) existed in ancient times.
- Elected local bodies were set up during British rule (Lord Ripon’s initiative, 1882).
- After Independence, local government was placed in the Directive Principles and states made their own laws.
- Community Development Programme (1952) and three-tier Panchayati Raj recommendations followed, but bodies were weak and dependent on states.

The 73rd Amendment (Rural)

- Three-tier structure: Gram Panchayat (village), Panchayat Samiti/Mandal (block), Zila Parishad (district); smaller states may skip the middle tier.
- Gram Sabha of all adult voters of a village.
- Direct elections every five years; State Election Commission conducts them.
- One-third seats reserved for women (including within SC/ST seats); reservation for SCs and STs in proportion to population; states may reserve for backward classes.
- 29 subjects in the Eleventh Schedule transferred to Panchayats; State Finance Commission reviews finances every five years.

The 74th Amendment (Urban)

- Applies to urban areas: Nagar Panchayats, Municipal Councils and Municipal Corporations.
- Similar provisions: direct elections, reservations, State Election and Finance Commissions.
- 18 subjects in the Twelfth Schedule.
- Urban population has grown rapidly, making city governments important.

Implementation and Challenges

- Elections are held regularly and millions of women and members of disadvantaged groups have become representatives.
- Limited real transfer of powers and functions by states.
- Dependence on state and central grants; few own revenue sources.
- Bureaucratic control and lack of trained staff limit effectiveness.

73rd vs 74th Amendment

Most-asked comparison.

Basis	73rd Amendment	74th Amendment
Area	Rural	Urban
Bodies	Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti, Zila	Nagar Panchayat, Municipal Council, Municipal

Basis	73rd Amendment	74th Amendment
	Parishad	Corporation
Schedule	Eleventh (29 subjects)	Twelfth (18 subjects)
Women's reservation	One-third	One-third
Elections	Every 5 years by State Election Commission	Same
Finances	State Finance Commission	Same

Three Tiers of Panchayati Raj

Level	Body	Area
Village	Gram Panchayat (with Gram Sabha)	Village or group of villages
Block	Panchayat Samiti / Mandal	Block or taluka
District	Zila Parishad	District

Important Definitions and Terms

Term	Meaning
Local government	Government at village and city level
Panchayati Raj	Rural local self-government
Gram Sabha	Assembly of all adult voters of a village
Gram Panchayat	Elected village council
Zila Parishad	District-level body
Municipal Corporation	Body for large cities
73rd Amendment	Constitutional status to Panchayats
74th Amendment	Constitutional status to urban bodies
State Election Commission	Conducts local elections
State Finance Commission	Reviews local bodies' finances

Short Answer Questions

Q1. Why is local government important?

It allows people to solve local problems and participate directly in democracy.

Q2. When were the 73rd and 74th Amendments passed?

In 1992 (in force from 1993).

Q3. Name the three tiers of Panchayati Raj.

Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad.

Q4. What is the Gram Sabha?

Q5. How much reservation do women get in local bodies?

One-third of the seats.

Q6. Who conducts local body elections?

The State Election Commission.

Q7. How many subjects are in the Eleventh Schedule?

29.

Q8. Give one challenge facing local bodies.

Dependence on state and central grants for funds.

Long Answer Questions

Q1. Explain the main provisions of the 73rd Amendment.

Three-tier Panchayati Raj structure.

Gram Sabha in every village.

Elections every five years by State Election Commission.

Reservation: one-third for women, proportional for SC/ST.

29 subjects transferred; State Finance Commission.

Q2. Why do local bodies remain weak despite constitutional status?

States have not transferred all subjects and powers.

Limited own sources of revenue.

Heavy dependence on grants.

Bureaucratic dominance.

Lack of trained staff and awareness.

Q3. How has reservation in local bodies changed Indian democracy?

Lakhs of women entered elected office.

SC/ST representation increased at grassroots.

New leadership and confidence among marginalised groups.

Issues like water and health got more attention.

Challenges like proxy representation remain.

MCQs with Answers

1. Panchayati Raj got constitutional status by the(a) 42nd Amendment (b) 73rd Amendment (c) 74th Amendment (d) 52nd AmendmentAnswer: (b) 73rd Amendment

2. Urban local bodies are covered by the(a) 73rd (b) 74th (c) 61st (d) 44thAnswer: (b) 74th

3. Reservation for women in local bodies(a) one-fourth (b) one-third (c) one-half (d) noneAnswer: (b) one-third

5. Eleventh Schedule contains(a) 18 subjects (b) 29 subjects (c) 47 subjects (d) 12 subjectsAnswer: (b) 29 subjects

6. Local elections are conducted by(a) Election Commission of India (b) State Election Commission (c) Governor (d) CollectorAnswer: (b) State Election Commission

7. Twelfth Schedule relates to(a) Panchayats (b) Municipalities (c) languages (d) anti-defectionAnswer: (b) Municipalities

8. Gram Sabha consists of(a) elected members only (b) all adult voters of a village (c) officials (d) Sarpanch onlyAnswer: (b) all adult voters of a village

9. Term of local bodies(a) 3 years (b) 4 years (c) 5 years (d) 6 yearsAnswer: (c) 5 years

10. Large cities have(a) Nagar Panchayat (b) Municipal Corporation (c) Zila Parishad (d) Gram SabhaAnswer: (b) Municipal Corporation

Quick Revision Points

- Need for local government.
- History: ancient sabhas, 1882, DPSP.
- 73rd: three tiers, Gram Sabha, elections, reservations, 29 subjects.
- 74th: urban bodies, 18 subjects.
- State Election and Finance Commissions.
- Challenges: powers, funds, bureaucracy.

Chapter Summary

Local government brings democracy closest to people and helps solve local problems. In India, local bodies became constitutional institutions only through the 73rd and 74th Amendments of 1992.

The 73rd Amendment created three-tier Panchayati Raj with Gram Sabhas, regular elections and reservations, including one-third for women; the 74th did the same for urban bodies. State Election and Finance Commissions support them, but limited powers, funds and staff still restrict their effectiveness.

Exam Tips and PYQ Pattern

- 73rd vs 74th table is a sure question.
- Remember 29 and 18 subjects.
- Learn the three tiers in order.
- Mention one-third reservation for women.
- List challenges for long answers.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is this chapter in the 2026-27 CBSE syllabus?

Yes. It is part of the NCERT Class 11 Political Science textbook “Indian Constitution at Work”,

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What is the 73rd Amendment?

The 1992 amendment that gave constitutional status to Panchayati Raj institutions with a three-tier structure.

What is the difference between the 73rd and 74th Amendments?

The 73rd deals with rural Panchayats; the 74th with urban municipalities.

Conclusion

Local Governments shows democracy at the grassroots. Learn the amendment and tier tables, practise the Q&A here and save the free PDF for revision.

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Author Bio: Written and reviewed by the Nextoper Editorial Team, a group of CBSE political science educators who build chapter notes directly from the NCERT textbook and past board paper patterns.

Freshness Note: These notes follow the NCERT Class 11 Political Science (Indian Constitution at Work) textbook, Indian Constitution at Work (NCERT reprint 2026-27, rationalised syllabus), and the CBSE syllabus for the 2026-27 session. Last checked on 25 November 2026.