



# DR. RAM MANOHAR LOHIYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW

**Prof. Gurdeep Singh**  
Vice Chancellor  
Chief Patron

## Coordinators

Dr. Aparna Singh

Amandeep Singh

Isha Yadav

Malay Pandey

Dr. Mitali Tiwari

Shahsank Shekhar

## Center for Human Rights

National Seminar

On

**Two Decades of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment  
Act (Panchayat Raj): Experiences, Issues, Challenges and  
Opportunities with Special Reference to**

**Uttar Pradesh**

**February 5-6, 2016**

Dear Sir/Madam,

It is a matter of immense pleasure for us to inform you that our University is organizing a two-day National Seminar on “**Two Decades of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act (Panchayat Raj): Experiences, Issues, Challenges and Opportunities with Special Reference to Uttar Pradesh**” on 05<sup>th</sup> & 06<sup>th</sup> February 2016. We extend our cordial invitation to you to participate in the Seminar as an esteemed speaker and present a paper on any one of the sub-themes mentioned in the Concept Paper. We are enclosing herewith the concept paper; the sub-themes mentioned therein are only indicative. Your paper should be related to the broad theme of the Seminar. Kindly send your consent as soon as you receive this invitation and send your abstract by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and the full-length paper by 30<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Needless to mention that besides hospitality by the Institution, we will bear travel expenses of the selected paper presenters only as per university rules. For all correspondence write to organizing secretary (e-mail ID: [cfhrmlnu@gmail.com](mailto:cfhrmlnu@gmail.com)). You may also request your colleagues to take part in the seminar.

Thanking you

*Yours Sincerely*

**Dr. Sanjay Singh**

**Organizing Secretary**

Center for Human Rights

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya National Law University

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## **73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act (Panchayat Raj): Experiences, Issues, Challenges And Opportunities with Special Reference to Uttar Pradesh**

Governance in democracy works when citizens and the most marginalized people have the capability to ask questions, seek accountability from the state and participate in the process of governance. Democracy becomes meaningful when people can shape the state and the state, in turn, creates enabling social, political, economic and legal conditions wherein people can exercise their rights and achieve freedom from fear and want. Democracy involves dignity, diversity, dissent and development. Unless the last person can celebrate his or her sense of dignity, exercise democratic dissent and involve themselves in the process of governance and development, democracy becomes an empty rhetoric. Accountable and people-centred governance can provide an operational framework for making democracy work. Governance is a political process involving exercise of different forms of power (social, political, economic, legal and administrative) within various institutional arenas. The real challenge in a democratic process is to ensure that the process of governance does not get subverted or appropriated or controlled by economic and political elites who control the institutions of government or powerful market forces.

Decentralization is a much-debated issue in India and other countries with federal system of governance. There are different arguments for and against decentralization. However, the arguments in favor of decentralization outweigh those against it because of the inherent potential of democratization in the decentralized federal system through proper empowerment of people at the grassroots level. Deepening of democracy is an ideology as well as institution in the post-colonial societies like India. India has got long history of the functioning of institutions at the grassroots for the existence and continuation of the social inequalities for centuries together. The institution of panchayat raj in its rejuvenated form seeks to achieve the objectives of democratic decentralization to accelerate socio-economic development and usher in equity and social justice. The enactment of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act in 1993 and the subsequent state wise panchayat raj acts in India has brought to frontline significance of grassroots democratic processes.

The execution of the Act was made mandatory for all the Indian states and panchayats have been provided a constitutional status. A special chapter has been added to the Indian Constitution on Panchayats. The 73rd Amendment Act has provided uniformity and formal structure to these traditional institutions of self-governance for the sake of their effective functioning. The 73rd Amendment Act has initiated a fundamental restructuring of governance and administrative system of the country, based on the philosophy of decentralization and power to the people. This experience has brought the lesson that the success of the new panchayat raj system largely depends on the congruence of perception and commitment of people, their leaders and the officials, about the role to be played by them in the new system.

After almost two decades, panchayat raj in India has been a matter of debate and speculation about its performance and impact. All the major states have completed at least four rounds of panchayat elections. Almost three million people including more than one million women and a sizeable number of SCs/STs took part in these elections. The sizeable presence of under privileged and poor as representatives through reservations in the grassroots political institutions is a landmark development in the rural politics of the country. The experience of the states is extremely rich and provides vital insights into the process of institutionalizing panchayat raj. Looking in to the relevance of new system, it is important to evaluate the ground reality and potentiality of the panchayat raj system in Indian States, particularly Uttar Pradesh which has shown a consistent performance with respect to the rural grassroots democratic institutions. The issues of people's participation through gram sabha; representation of marginalized sections of society; women's participation in panchayats; working of panchayats; panchayats and bureaucracy; devolution of powers; financial status of panchayats; decentralized planning are of prime concern for debate. The crucial significance is also of the principle of accountability and regular social auditing of the performance and transparency in the form of information pertaining to all the activities of panchayats.

Keeping this background in view, Centre for Human Rights, Dr. Ram ManoharLohiya National Law University, Lucknow is organizing a ***“National seminar on “Two Decades of 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act (Panchayat Raj) : Experiences, Issues, Challenges and Opportunities with Special Reference to Uttar Pradesh”*** to discuss threadbare the multi-faceted issues related to panchayats in Uttar Pradesh. It will be aimed to understand the macro and micro dynamics of decentralized governance in Uttar Pradesh. This will help to find out the issues, challenges, opportunities and problems of governance at the grassroots level. It is important to note that the panchayat elections are due in the second half of this year and the preparation are going on for this. This is the right time to organize the seminar with the aim to bring all the stakeholders at the same platform where they can share their experiences and bring useful suggestions to make the grassroots institutions more participative and efficient.

## *Sub-Themes*

- **Response of the State Government to the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act: Devolution of Funds, Functions and Functionaries**
- **Panchayat Elections and Emerging Profile of Representatives: Changing Power Structure, Leadership and Social Settings**
- **Empowerment of Marginalized Section (Women, Dalits and Tribals) and their Participation**
- **Community Assertion for Participation in Planning, Convergence, Implementation and Monitoring**
- **Transparency and Accountability, Decentralized Planning and Finance**
- **Emerging Conflicts between Public Representatives, Bureaucrats, Local Bodies and Civil Society**
- **Society Organizations and Parallel Bodies, Capacity Building Initiatives and their Problems**

## **Paper Submission Details:**

Papers on the aforesaid themes are invited from interested scholars and professionals. Abstracts (400 words) should reflect a judicious blend of theoretical rigour and compelling empirical evidence and must clearly mention the theme and methodology. Abstract and paper should be sent electronically to [cfhrmlnl@gmail.com](mailto:cfhrmlnl@gmail.com). The last date for submission of Abstract is 15th January 2016.

Last date for submission of Full Paper will be 30th January 2016 (typed in Times New Roman, maximum 5000 words).

Presentation: Selected papers will be presented in different technical sessions followed by discussion.

Publication: Accepted papers would be published in form of Seminar Proceedings to be released along with Souvenir at the time of Seminar. The Department is in touch with some leading publishing house for the publication of some selected papers of the seminar in the form of a book.

## **Registration Fee:**

Registration fee for all the participants is Rs.1000/- per head. Cheque or draft should be drawn in favour of **Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya National Law University** payable at Lucknow. Registration fee would cover Seminar Kit, meals and photocopies of circulated papers/CD of papers presented in the seminar. The organisers will make efforts to provide modest accommodation to outstation participants subject to availability of the same in University guest house/ hostels of the University. Lucknow city has a number of good hotels with the tariff varying from Rs. 500 for a Non AC single room upwards. Participants willing to stay in hotels and pay for the same may contact the Organising Committee for bookings at least 15 days in advance.

## **Important Dates:**

**Seminar Dates: 5-6 February 2016**

**Abstract Submission Date: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

**Full Paper Submission Date: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

## **Seminar Organizing Committee**

**Prof. Gurdeep Singh**  
**Vice Chancellor**  
*Chief Patron*

### **Members**

Dr. A. K. Tiwari

Dr. V. Visalakshi

Dr. A.P.Singh

Dr. Manish Singh

Dr. K.A.Pandey

Dr. Vandana Singh

Dr. R.K. Yadav

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Mr. P.K. Gautam

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