

# The Rise of the Panchayati Raj Institutions as the Third Tier in Indian Federalism: Where the Shoe Pinches

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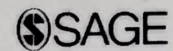
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## Abstract

The idea of forming a two-tier federal structure in India gathered considerable momentum after the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League came together through a Pact in 1916. But the concept of the third tier which was mooted in the Constituent Assembly through the incorporation of panchayats in the Directive Principles of State Policy after detailed deliberation began receiving attention after the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution in 1992 which coincided with the paradigmatic shift in the policy of the Indian State. This Act signified in clear terms the intention of the State to strengthen the process of third tier federalism in India. This article seeks to critically examine the process of evolution of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) as a new tier in the Indian federal system, excluding the Fifth and Sixth Scheduled Areas. An attempt has also been made to analyse despite constitutionalisation of PRIs where the shoe still pinches and wherein lies the ray of hope.

## Keywords

The federal system, third tier, 73rd Constitutional Amendment, Gram Sabha, Decentralised Planning

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