

1. DISCUSS THE SALIENT FEATURES OF 73 RD AMENDMENT ACT, 1992.

The Seventy-third Amendment Act, 1993 is a significant landmark in the evolution of grassroots democratic institutions in the country. It transforms the representative democracy to participatory democracy.

The salient features of the Act are:

Gram Sabha: It provides for a Gram Sabha as the foundation of the panchayati raj system. It comprises persons registered in the electoral rolls of a village within a Gram Panchayat.

Three-tier System: The Act provides for a panchayat at village, intermediate and District level respectively barring states which have less than 20 lakh of population.

Election of Members and Chairpersons: It provides for the direct election of the members. However, the chairpersons of panchayat at intermediate level and district level are to be appointed by and from amongst the elected members thereof.

Reservation of Seats: The Act provides for the reservation of seats for SC and ST in proportion to their population in the panchayat area. It also provides reservation of one-third seats for women of all categories. It also authorizes the state legislature to reserve seats for backward classes.

Duration of Panchayats: It provides for a five-year term of office to panchayats at every level. In case of dissolution, the act provides for compulsory election within six months from the date of such dissolution.

Disqualification: A member of Panchayats shall be disqualified under law provided by the state legislature.

State Election Commission: It provides for a separate body called State Election Commission for superintendence, direction and control of elections to the Panchayats at every level. The State Election Commissioner is appointed by the Governor of the state and can be removed in the manner a high court judge is removed.

The act confers necessary powers and authorities to the Panchayats for effective functioning. It has also devolved creation power of taxation to the Panchayats and assigned with certain grants sanctioned by state legislature. 29 functional items have been given to Panchayats under Eleventh Schedule.