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Decentralisation of Democracy – The Best Option to Develop Grassroots People in a Developing Country.

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In a diverse & a large nation like India; it is a fact that central government cannot sufficiently supply the essentials of our people. Local self government is the best device which senses the requirement of people and accordingly responds to. If the total benefits are to be shifted to the people or local leader, then undoubtedly, it must be directed by local power in the manpower of local people. That is the core of real decentralization of power structure and a true democracy & of Panchayati Raj. Precisely, Democratic decentralization defined as the transfer of powers and resources from upper to lower tier in political governance.

“Devolution, or democratic decentralization, occurs when resources, power, and often tasks are shifted to lower-level authorities who are somewhat independent of higher authorities, and who are at least somewhat democratic¹”(Manor 1999).

Democratic decentralization stands for, not just the establishment of a small number of institutions & inspiring the existing one to ferment with the increasing needs of developing administrative structure but it should be more beneficial than that. The primary aim of the democratic decentralization is to broaden the idea of people and widening the authority as well autonomy of the people dwelling in the grassroots level.

“Democratic decentralization is the development of reciprocal relationships between central and local governments and between local governments and citizens. It addresses the power to develop and implement policy, the extension of democratic processes to lower levels of government, and measures to ensure that democracy is sustainable. Democratic decentralization incorporates both decentralization and democratic local governance.²”

1. The Political Economy of Democratic *Decentralization*. Authors/Editors: James Manor. Published: *March 1999*

2 Democratic Decentralization, Camille Cates Barnett, Ph.D. Henry P. Minis Jerry Vansant

G.Shabbir Cheema and Dennis A.Rondinelli, in their book *Decentralization and Development*, have enumerated the following advantages of decentralization:

Democratic decentralization makes very close contact and smoothing relationship between government official/representative and population of grassroots level.

- Possibility of Tailor-made plans as per the requirements of heterogeneous regions and groups.
- Access of National policies is possible in the remote region from the Capital.
- It will ensure greater representation of political, religious, ethnic and tribal groups in development decision-making that could lead to greater equity in allocation of resources.
- It makes the local institution capable by developing their managerial and technical skills.
- To officials would be relieved of routine jobs and devote time to more important jobs.
- It will institutionalize good coordination between government official and local people..
- It will ensure the involvement of the citizens and barter of information.
- Influence of the elite people in the rural area has been reducing.
- Democratic decentralization shows the way for innovative and creative administration.
- It will give a great opportunity to the local people for executing, monitoring and evaluating healthier than the central government agencies.
- Maximum participation of the rural people will ensure to improve the political stability.
- Local people will get a chance to apply their own decision.

Considering the political, administrative and fiscal decentralization, the three volume study, 2000A, 2000B and 2000C of World Bank declared India as the best performer internationally in terms of political decentralization but as far administrative decentralization is concerned, India ranked close to the terminal.

With the founding of local self-government at the grass-root level/ a major attempt has been undertaken for the decentralization of power from Central to State and state to the district and finally to the citizenry of the lower tier.

Democratic decentralization is a global event because many countries are taking special initiative to decentralize the political and administrative power to the grassroots level. In India, 73rd and 74th amendments are the most remarkable amendment that compels the central government to transfer their power to the people of local level. A substantial facet of these amendments is to bring out the new generation leadership at the very grassroots level from women and marginalized sections like SC/ST/OBC of the society. The

Amendments have played a creative role to bring substantive democracy at remote level.

Our scholars & political stalwarts had ratified a constitution that was not in favor of the desires of the father of the nation. Now we are at the door of a great crisis about our creation at the dawn' of Independence. Leaders gave the utmost concentration of centralized power that made the people slaves. In 67 years, of course, for all ills in our democracy. It was pointed out that the concentration of power at the center was responsible and it could be removed by handing over powers to grass root establishment.

In the framework of democratic decentralization in Rural Local self Government (Panchayati Raj) structure in India outstanding feature is that the persuade of the State Government is kept at a minimum and decentralization of power is pretty strong. Despite the ability structure, are to some extent, still under the hand of elite society, those who have held this power by the merit of their link with the political leadership?

People are more concerned about political power. Decentralization of political power is not a complete decentralization. Decentralization of economic power along with political power is required to make the complete decentralization. It implies there is no value of political power without decentralizing the economic power. Transferring resource mobilization & management are the vital parts in Panchayati Raj system. Though villages had rich resource potentials, but alas they are still mortified by the traditional elite society and political leaders with the help of officials.

The continuing contradictory policy of the government after independence has confused people on the unitary hand, we are talking about the decentralization of political power; on the other hand our central government is looking for globalization & liberalization.

It is really hard to realize the contradictory policy of government, i.e. of decentralization of power and globalization of economic system. There are many primary works are to be given priority by the countries like Primary education/ primary health/ sanitation/ village industry, which are the basic administrative units of the village Panchayat system. All these basic units should be checked by the Panchayat bodies, and then, in this regard state government should give privilege to panchayat bodies of transferring the revenue table.

Instead of providing reservation in the educational Institution and government services, ST/SC/OBC /women should be given an opportunity to understand their responsibility in the society. They should see their role and should likewise read that their responsibility is parallel to people from the upper cast and accordingly they should act fast to interpret their task to preserve the society from deprivation.

It helps in bridging the gap between the masses and the administration. Operating as the basic units for performing their own job, they bring forth the spirit of self-functioning and self-generating attitudes which operate a long way in the process of nation-building

Decentralization governance is the most important device to provide the strength of the democracy. Decentralization governance looks to involve local people from the very grass root level and inspire them to form a self-help group. It likewise provides an opportunity to the local peoples' participation and representation in the democratic arena.

This Governance also helps people for interactive policy making that occurs in all types' organization like governmental or non-governmental or in grassroots organization. It also motivates all participates in decision-making and to act upon issues and finally suggest alternatives. Hence there is no doubt that decentralized governance is invariably thought to the alternative strategy, which is to be the people-centered, participatory and bottom-up development mechanism.

Decentralization governance also makes people realize about the democratic mechanism and its functioning. In this instance, grassroots people will receive the right to take part in policy making and its proper implementation. It is already understood that the local people can comprehend their problems and necessary solution. It also provides a mechanism approachable to the different conditions and encountered from place to berth. The Successful poverty implementation program is possible solely with the help of Decentralization governance because this governance inspires poor people to take part in politics and will give them an opportunity to fork over their problems.

In the context of the Third World, decentralized governance has special significance because the target group of development in the Third World is the poor people. The World Bank Report indicates that all about 12 of the 75 developing countries with more than 5 million inhabitants have implemented some form of decentralization, with varying degrees of financial and political power. Parallel to these developments establishing legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms for people's participation at the local levels have been developed in countries like Philippine, India, Honduras, Bolivia, Namibia, Uganda, Tanzania, Brazil and Nigeria. Many countries like India have embarked on constitutional amendments to strengthen the process of decentralization. The seventy-third and seventy-fourth constitutional amendments in India have sought to create a new tier in country's governance structure by giving constitutional sanction to panchayats and urban local bodies. The amendments provide a long list of functions to be devolved on the local self governments, both urban and rural. These amendments have institutionalized peoples' participation through gramsabhas and ward committees.

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