

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q17

"In contemporary development models, decision-making and problem-solving responsibilities are not located close to the source of information and execution defeating the objectives of development." Critically evaluate.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2025 · GS II · 15 marks · Governance and Policy

Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Core demand of the question

- **Explain the quoted failure:** decisions sit far from information and execution
- Show how Indian development missions, CSS and parallel bodies produce that gap
- Evaluate 73rd/74th, **2nd ARC** and recent centralisation honestly
- State when central decision-making is still justified

Revision summary

- **The quote names a split:** knowledge at the bottom, decisions at the top, execution in between.

CSS, SPVs and parallel bodies bypass 73rd/74th institutions that the Constitution empowered.

2nd ARC and Punchhi already diagnosed fragmentation of the local State.

The critique fits toilets, housing and MGNREGA planning; it fits less for vaccines, tax and defence.

- **Repair:** subsidiarity, untied local finance, elected control of SPVs, shared MIS with the Gram Sabha.

Introduction

Development works when the person who **knows the field** can **decide and do**. The quoted models do the opposite: a mission in Delhi designs a toilet, a dashboard in a secretariat scores it, and a contractual worker in the hamlet discovers that the pit hits rock. Information lives below. Authority lives above. Execution is asked to obey both and satisfies neither.

Body**The displacement of decision**

Centrally Sponsored Schemes write unit costs and guidelines for a continent. **Smart City SPVs**, societies and project-management units **bypass the municipality** that holds the drain map. **Parallel self-help and contractor chains** bypass the Gram Panchayat that holds the job card list. **2nd ARC** called this the **fragmentation of the local State**. **Punchhi** asked for a reduction of CSS. **73rd and 74th Amendments** tried to put the **11th and 12th Schedules** where the information is. Activity maps were notified and then starved of staff and untied money.

A district collector still signs what a ward member cannot. That is not always tyranny; it is often **the only office that exists. The critique still holds: NITI dashboards** can punish a State for a definition that the village never saw.

Critical evaluation

The quote is **largely true** for livelihoods, local water, housing typologies and school language. **PM-JANMAN** will fail if PVTG housing is a standard Delhi packet. **MGNREGA** works better where the Gram Sabha plans the shelf of works - the original design - and worse where a software-only demand is uploaded from town.

It is **not always true** for **immunisation cold chains, tax bases, defence, and macro-stability**. Some information is national (a virus, a bond market). **GST** cannot be set in every taluk. The error is to treat **every** development problem as a national mission with a photo-op.

- **COVID-19 showed both:** ICMR and the Union ran tests and vaccines; **municipal tracing and panchayat isolation centres** succeeded where they were trusted. Kerala's local governments and some eastern panchayats used proximity; others waited for a portal.

Repair

Subsidiarity: default to the lowest competent tier. **Untied 15th FC local grants** were a start. **Activity mapping with officers** (not only functions on paper). **Kill parallel SPVs** or put them under the elected council. **Let the Gram Sabha see the same MIS** the secretary sees. Central standards can remain for **rights and minimums** (food, cash floor, school years); **design and procurement** should sit near the soil.

The objectives of development - capability, voice, a usable asset - are defeated when the file cannot hear the well.

Flow diagram

Local information -> Should decide
Delhi mission -> Execution
Local information -> broken link Delhi mission
73 74 FC grants -> Local information

Conclusion

When decision, knowledge and work are split across Delhi, the district and a contractor, development becomes compliance. The 73rd and 74th Amendments named the repair. Missions and SPVs have often undone it. Keep national minima; return design to the place that holds the information.

Facts & figures

11th and 12th Schedules

Lists of panchayat and municipality functions; still weakly matched with staff and money.

2nd ARC

Recommended local process redesign and warned against multiplying parallel implementing societies.

15th FC local grants

Tried to put more rule-based money into rural and urban local bodies, a partial correction of mission-only finance.

WRAP Exams · Write. Read. Analyse. Practice. · <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/gs-2/2025/in-contemporary-development-models-decision-making-and-problem-solving-responsibilities-are-not-located-close-to-the-source-of-information-a/> · ask@wrapexams.com · wrapexams.com

WRAP Exams