

Call for abstract and paper for the seminar
on
**25 Years of Decentralised Governance in India:
Progress, Issues and Ways Forward**

It is 25 years since historic legislations on decentralised governance were passed in India. In the last 25 years, the service delivery at the local level is sought to be done through decentralised governance, and this may have resulted in good development outcomes in both rural and urban areas. In order to examine the progress that decentralised governance has made in India and the impact of democratic decentralisation on development outcomes, the Centre for Decentralisation and Development (CDD) at the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) will be organising a seminar on “**25 Years of Decentralised Governance in India: Progress, Issues and Ways Forward**”. This seminar, with funding support from the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, will be organised in the **last week of August 2018 at ISEC, Bengaluru, Karnataka**. The seminar coordinators are: Prof. D Rajasekhar, Prof. M Devendra Babu and Dr. R Manjula.

Objectives of the seminar

The main objective of this seminar is to take stock of developments since the introduction of decentralization reforms and the extent to which the service delivery has improved at the local level. The specific objectives are to:

- take a critical look at the progress that India has made in the quality of decentralized governance (inclusive governance, functioning institutions, fiscal devolution);
- analyse the impact of decentralized governance on the service delivery and development outcomes;
- identify emerging issues in the democratic decentralization in India; and,
- provide suggestions and recommendations for strengthening of democratic decentralisation in India.

The five major themes of the seminar are:

- Inclusive governance
- Functioning of the institutions
- Fiscal decentralisation
- Impact of decentralisation on poverty reduction
- Urban local governments

The sub-themes that are planned to be covered in the seminar are as follows.

- Working of grama sabhas, ward committees, standing and other sub-committees
- Decentralisation and leadership development
- Administrative, financial and functional decentralisation
- Decentralised planning and outcomes
- Decentralisation and poverty reduction
- Decentralised government and best practices
- State Panchayat Raj Acts: Strengths and Weaknesses
- Decentralised governments vs. Parastatal agencies/ authorities
- Functioning of federations of panchayat members and their influence on policy/ strengthening PRIs
- Role of Member of Legislative Councils (MLCs) (those elected by PRI members) in strengthening PRIs.

We invite interested researchers to present papers addressing themes identified for the discussion in the seminar. Qualitative papers based on empirical research will be preferred. The selection of abstracts and papers for presentation will be done by a screening committee. The important dates in connection with the submission and selection of abstracts and papers are the following:

Abstract (not more than 500 words) submission:	7th May 2018
Intimation on the selection of abstract for preparation of paper:	16th May 2018
Submission of the full-length paper:	16th July 2018
Intimation of selection of submitted paper for presentation:	23rd July 2018

Researchers who intend to present their papers need to submit an abstract of not more than 500 words. Abstract should broadly include the research question, methodology, likely contribution to the field of knowledge and relevant literature.

The abstracts should be submitted in the following format:

- Title of paper - Name(s) and affiliations of Authors
- Main theme and sub-theme of the seminar
- Objective of the paper
- Methodological and/or Conceptual approach adopted
- Key findings
- Bibliography
- Keywords
- Contact details for corresponding author(s)

It is proposed to bring out the selected papers as an edited volume through a reputed publisher.

The contributors of the papers will be provided free accommodation and boarding in ISEC guest house. In view of the limited travel budget, selected contributors from outside Bengaluru will be reimbursed travel fare as per the ISEC rules. In the case of co-authored papers, travel support will be provided to one author.

Those interested to contribute papers are encouraged to submit abstracts to Prof. D Rajasekhar by email to: cddseminars@gmail.com