

Restructuring the District Collector's Role

Why in news?

The Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy has brought out a book, "From Rule by law to the Rule of Law", with a sub-title "25 Reforms to Decolonise India's Legal System".

What does a District Collector (DC) or District Magistrate (DM) do?

The position of District Collector was created by Warren Hastings in 1772.

- **Functions** - As per the 15th report of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC), a DC or DM has the following roles.
- **Revenue**
 - Chief revenue officer - Assessment, collection and recovery of land rent dues
 - Manager of land - Rent, acquisition, tenancy and tenure
 - Decides on revenue land disputes
- **Keeper of the peace**
 - District head of the executive magistracy
 - Overall supervision of law and order and security
 - Licensing and Regulatory Authority (such as Arms Act)
 - Conduct of elections
 - Disaster management
 - District Magistrate
 - Issue detention orders/custody warrants under special security or anticrime laws
 - Supervisory authority responsible for proper management of jails and remand/juvenile homes
 - Appointment of public Prosecutors
- **Development**
 - District Development Officer
 - Coordinates between all departments
 - Public service delivery
 - Chief Information and Grievance Redressal Officer
 - Coordination between political representatives in the district
- **Interface between the political and the executive**
 - Eyes and ears of the Government
 - Keeping balance between political groups
 - Interaction with civil society
 - Balance between PRI structure and MLA/MP structure
 - Called upon to arbitrate in matters of unrest and conflict
- **Article 50** of the Constitution states that the State shall take steps to separate the



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