PREFACE

With the evolving era of globalisation, state as a unit of interaction is getting less prominence. In the endeavour to achieve global village day by day we are inviting more and more intervention into the sphere of state (including Municipal) domain. In such an intervenist world the idea of democracy, decentralisation, local self government, participation and empowerment have assumed a defining role. The broadening of the horizon of democracy and augmentation of popular participation has far reaching consequences in a confused webbing of civil societies. The rhetoric of participatory democracy through the structure of local self government has different manifestations world over. While in the western democracies and some of the developing countries it has assumed the role of the prime instrument of empowerment, in others it has led to a stronghold of conservatism, localism and radical bigotry. Hence it is essential to understand the contours and practices of local self government in a comparative perspective. The understanding of old democracies vis-a-vis new democracy and the manner of their appropriation of democratic spaces through local self governments can provide vital clues to the understanding and implementation of general model of local participation and governance. India with a long history of self government but with the recent adoption of constitutional marking can be contrasted with Russia for its new but instrumental structure of local self government as a means of empowerment. The work is organised into five chapters.

First chapter emphasises the importance of local self government and highlights the pros and cons of democratic decentralisation process. For better understanding various types of decentralisation have been described lucidly. The difference between local government and local self government is highlighted. The various systems of Local Self Government are discussed. The source of local self government i.e. European Charter of Local Self Government and World Charter of Local Self Government is clearly portrayed. Survey of Literature helps in better understanding of the concept. Besides, the objectives, methodology and Hypothesis of the study are given.

Second chapter discusses the history of local self government in Russia and India. The history of local self government in Russia includes pre-revolutionary period and post
revolution period. Each and every institution relating to local self government is discussed with its hierarchy and structure. The crude politics in the village with development of local soviet is special feature of the chapter. History of Russian local self government includes reforms up to the period of Gorbachev. In the same way Indian local self government includes five different phases. It starts with Vedic period and continues up to 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment act. Finally the chapter compares the factors that led to the development of local self government in both the countries.

In the third Chapter, first part deals with Russian local self government which focuses on fiscal autonomy, constitutional provisions, legal provisions, financial powers of local self government, delegation of specific revenue, expenditure assignment to regional government, relationship between federal and regional budgets through various types of explicit and implicit transfers, structure of local bodies and financial framework and cross regional budget equalization. In the second part the similar provisions relating to Indian local self government are discussed. The Federal Legislations of both the countries are analysed to understand the legal foundations of local self government. Finally the chapter summarises the findings by comparing the constitutional provision and provisions relating to financial autonomy of both the countries.

The fourth chapter analyses the functioning of local self government in the two countries. First section deals with the functioning of local self government in Russia including functioning of local government during Yeltsin and Putin periods, the relation between regional governors and deputies of local soviet, the frequent Federal reforms, conflict between local government and the regional government, the triangular relation between local, regional and federal government and various functional models of local self government. In the second section the functioning of local self government in India is described. It includes both rural and urban local self government. Finally a comparative study of functionalities between Russia and India is presented.

Fifth Chapter is the Conclusion. It gives overall findings of the research work
including suggestions to make the people of both the countries feel empowered.