

Examiner number
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Despite several measures taken by successive finance commissions, municipal finance in India has not yielded the expected results. In this context, discuss in what ways the 15th Finance Commission can promote municipal finance in India.

The 73rd and 74th amendment were made mainly to empower the local bodies politically and financially. But the same was not achieved till date. Even though the state government have been directed by the earlier Finance Commission to empower the local bodies through different steps. The local governments were not decentralised since the state has the power to decide what should be decentralised.

The two major reasons for non-decentral empowerment of local governments (ULB) financially is that the state government is not interested to release significant cash power to the urban local bodies and a fear of political rivalry.

The Finance Commission may allocate grants to states based on certain benchmark for achieving decentralisation in Urban local bodies. It may also provide certain performance grants based on its

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ability to meet its Salary bill from its own revenue. In order to achieve this financial decentralisation has to be done i.e devolution of tax. It should also promote municipal bonds which helps the ULB to raise Capital.

As on date there is no institutional check to devolve municipalities (ULB). Hence the finance commission should propose a reward for states for undertaking decentralisation and penalties for the others.