



Grants for Rural Local Bodies of West Bengal

Why in News?

The Union Government has released [the Fifteenth Finance Commission \(XV FC\) Grants](#) for [Rural Local Bodies in West Bengal](#) during the Financial Year 2024-25.

Key Points

- **Grant Disbursement:**
 - The Union Government disbursed **the second installment of Untied Grants** amounting to Rs 694.4446 crores.
 - These **funds will support 21 District Panchayats, 326 Block Panchayats, and 3,220 Gram Panchayats.**
- **Utilization of Grants:**
 - **Untied Grants:** [Panchayati Raj Institutions \(PRIs\)](#)/Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) will use these funds for location-specific felt needs, as per **the 29 Subjects** under [the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution](#), excluding salaries and establishment costs.
 - **Tied Grants:** These funds will be utilized for essential services, including:
 - **Sanitation and maintenance of ODF status**, covering household waste management, human excreta treatment, and fecal sludge management.
 - Drinking water supply, rainwater harvesting, and water recycling to ensure water security in rural areas.
- **Role of Government Ministries:**
 - The Ministry of Panchayati Raj and [the Ministry of Jal Shakti](#) recommend the release of XV FC Grants to States for Rural Local Bodies.
 - The Ministry of Finance subsequently disburses these funds in two installments per Financial Year.
- **Impact of the Grants:**
 - Strengthens rural local governance by **enhancing financial resources at the grassroots level.**
 - Improves **accountability and transparency** in fund utilization.
 - **Promotes self-reliance** in villages, enabling local bodies to address critical infrastructure and service needs effectively.

15th Finance Commission

- The **Finance Commission (FC)** is a **constitutional body** that determines the method and formula for **distributing the tax proceeds between the Centre and states**, and among the states as per the constitutional arrangement and present requirements.
- Under **Article 280 of the Constitution**, [the President of India](#) is required to constitute a Finance Commission at an interval of five years or earlier.
- The 15th Finance Commission was constituted by the President of India in November 2017, **under the chairmanship of NK Singh**. Its recommendations will cover a **period of five years from the year 2021-22 to 2025-26.**

Eleventh Schedule

- The Eleventh Schedule, added by **the 73rd Amendment Act in 1992**, contains provisions that outline **the powers, authority, and responsibilities of Panchayats (rural local governments)**.
- It places as many as **29 functions within the purview of the Panchayati Raj bodies including agricultural extension, land improvement, implementation of land reforms etc.**

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