

Southern States Concern on 15th FC's Decision

What is the issue?

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- The 15th Finance Commission will be using data from 2011 census for the devolution of taxes.

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- Few states have expressed concern over the decision as it would result in lower resource allocation.

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What is the role of the Finance Commission?

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- The Finance Commission is a constitutional body created to address issues of vertical and horizontal imbalances of federal finances in India.

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- The Finance Commission is appointed every five years and consists of a chairman and four other members.

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- The constitutional mandate of the Finance Commission is \n

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1. To decide on the proportion of tax revenue to be shared with the States

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2. The principles which should govern the grants-in-aid to States.

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3. Responsibility to make recommendations on various policy issues, as and when they arise.

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- The recommendations made by the Finance Commission are advisory in nature and, hence, not binding on the Government.

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What is the significance of census in Finance Commission?

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- The population figure derived from the census is used for calculating the devolution of taxes to the states.

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- However not the entire amount of taxes to be disbursed is based on the population but only a certain percentage of the funds.

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- [In the case of the 14th Finance Commission](#), that was 25%.

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- The 1971 census recorded an increase in population compared to the previous censuses and to counter the issue of growing population family planning methods were introduced.

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- The 42nd Amendment picked the 1971 Census data as base for all calculations and froze it till 2001 Census.

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- This is to equalise the shares and safeguard the states actively undertook the family planning programme.

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- In 2001, the 84th Amendment further extended that to the first Census after 2026, which will be the Census of 2031.

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What are the concerns of the states on this move?

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- Northern states like Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Bihar have more than doubled their population in the intervening years.

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- Whereas southern states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala have had relatively slower growths in population with an exception of Andhra Pradesh.

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- The usage of the 2011 Census is being opposed for the same reason the usage of 1971 Census was made mandatory.

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- Which made sure states that have worked on population control do not lose out on benefits.

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- Thus according to the southern states the decision of the 15th FC to use the

2011 census data is seen as discriminatory and affects the federal structure.

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Source: The Hindu

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