

Brief on Zonal Councils

There are five Zonal Councils which are statutory bodies set up under the States Re-organization Act, 1956 to provide a common meeting ground to the States and UTs in each zone for resolution of inter-state and regional issues, fostering balanced socio-economic regional development and building harmonious Centre- State relations. The Zonal Council meetings are chaired by the Union Home Minister. The Chief Ministers and two Ministers from the member States are the members in each Zonal Council. In case of UTs, there are two members from each UT.

Each Zonal Council has set up a Standing Committee consisting of Chief Secretaries of the member States of the respective Zonal Councils. The Standing Committees meet from time to time to resolve the issues or to do necessary ground work for further meetings of the Zonal Councils. Senior officers from the NITI Aayog (erstwhile Planning Commission), Central Ministries and State Governments are associated with the meetings depending upon necessity.

Meetings of Standing Committees and Zonal Councils

Considering the great potential of this forum in resolving regional and inter-state issues through cordial discussions, the present government reviewed the work of Zonal Councils in 2014 and instructed the Inter State Council Secretariat to reactivate the Councils and convene regular meetings. The Zonal Councils have now been reactivated and the meetings of the Zonal Councils and their Standing Committees are being conducted regularly since then.

During the period 2014-19, 14 meetings of the Zonal Councils under the Chairmanship of the Hon'ble Union Home Minister and 19 Standing Committee Meetings under the Chairmanship of respective Chief Secretaries have been held as detailed below:

Details of meetings of Zonal Councils held from 2014 to December, 2019		
Name of the Zone	No. of the Meeting	Date & Place of the Meeting
Eastern Zonal Council	21 st	16.1.2015 (Patna)
	22 nd	27.6.2016 (Ranchi)
	23 rd	1.10.2018 (Kolkata)
Western Zonal Council	21 st	29.9.2015 (Panaji)
	22 nd	21.10.2016 (Mumbai)
	23 rd	26.4.2018 (Gandhinagar)
	24 th	22.8.2019 (Panaji)

Northern Zonal Council	27 th	25.4.2015 (New Delhi)
	28 th	12.5.2017 (Chandigarh)
	29 th	20.9.2019 (Chandigarh)
Southern Zonal Council	26 th	12.12.2015 (Vijayawada)
	27 th	28.12.2016 (Thiruvananthapuram)
	28 th	18.9.2018 (Bengaluru)
Central Zonal Council	20 th	19.1.2015 (Lucknow)
	21 st	24.9.2018 (Lucknow)

Details of meetings of Standing Committees held from 2014 to Decembe, 2019

Name of the Zone	No. of the Meeting	Date & Place of the Meeting
Eastern Zonal Council	8 th	7.11.2014 (Patna)
	9 th	29.1.2016 (Ranchi)
	10 th	21.12.2017 (Kolkata)
	11 th	23.10.2019 (Patna)
Western Zonal Council	8 th	2.12.2014 (New Delhi)
	9 th	22.3.2016 (Panaji)
	10 th	24.8.2017 (Mumbai)
	11 th	23.1.2019 (Goa)
Northern Zonal Council	16 th	27.11.2014 (New Delhi)
	17 th	26.5.2016 (Srinagar)
	18 th	24.3.2018 (Jaipur)
Southern Zonal Council	8 th	19.11.2014 (Hyderabad)

	9 th	14.10.2016 (Thiruvananthapuram)
	10 th	28.11.2017 (Bengaluru)
	11 th	27.9.2019 (Chennai)
Central Zonal Council	10 th	31.10.2014 (New Delhi)
	11 th	22.9.2015 (Raipur)
	12 th	4.8.2016 (New Delhi)
	13 th	11.10.2019 (Naya Raipur)

Some of the important issues discussed in these meetings have been Bringing Green Revolution to the East Zone; Issues relating to Fisheries, Productivity of Livestock & Poultry; Measures to combat Left Wing Extremism (LWE) etc.; Issues relating to Security of Marine Fishermen and Coastal Security; Issuance of biometric identity cards to marine fishermen and card readers, bringing back fishermen belonging to Gujarat languishing in Pakistani Jails; Steps to check pollution in Damanganga and Kolak Rivers due to discharge of untreated effluents from the industries located in the Vapi Industrial Area of Gujarat; Stamp Duty on Imports; Problem pertaining to parking in JN Port; Issues relating to Input Tax Credit on Natural Gas etc.; Sharing of Water & Power among the Northern States; Curbing pollution in Delhi from neighboring States; Need to check smuggling of drugs and illicit firearms etc.; Improvement of airport infrastructure; Steps to increase housing stocks in the country under the GoI policy “Housing for All-2022”; Need to increase density of roads and upgradation of existing highways, etc.; Allocation of funds for relocation of villages outside Protected Areas; Insulation of Power Lines in forest areas; Bundelkhand Package – pending release of funds by GoI to States against committed liabilities; Uniformity in allocation of funds in proportion to SCs/STs for scholarship for all the courses; Containing Maoists activities in tri-junction area of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka; High Speed Rail Corridors and introduction of Peninsular Tourism trains etc.; Joint efforts for export of fruits, flowers and vegetables from the States; Contamination of water in Canals of Rajasthan off-taking from Harike Barrage; and Setting up of 27 Mini Hydel Power Projects by Punjab on Bhakra Main Line with Generation capacity of 63.75 MW, Implementation of Direct Benefit Transfer, Speedy investigation of cases of sexual offence/rape against women and children, Use of UIDAI database for verifying antecedents of Marine fishermen in the high seas etc.