

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2746**

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 5TH AUGUST, 2025/ SRAVANA 14, 1947 (SAKA)

MEETINGS OF ZONAL COUNCIL

†2746. DR. SAMBIT PATRA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of meetings of the Zonal Councils held between 2014 and 2025 and the key outcomes thereof;

(b) the action plan prepared by the Government through the Zonal Councils for the elimination of child malnutrition, strengthening of the cooperative movement, women empowerment and increasing the income of panchayats, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether there is any plan under consideration of the Government to make the Zonal Councils more effective and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

(SHRI NITYANAND RAI)

(a): 63 meetings of the Zonal Councils and their Standing Committees have been held between 1st January, 2014 till 31st July, 2025, in which wide ranging issues sponsored by State Governments/ UT Administrations and Central Ministries/ Departments have been discussed in detail, and appropriate recommendations have been made with the aim of resolving or achieving progress over such issues in a cooperative spirit.

(b): Issues pertaining to elimination of child malnutrition, strengthening of cooperative movement, women empowerment and increasing the income of panchayats have been discussed in meetings of Zonal Councils, wherein status of progress as well as points of concern and action on these issues have also been discussed. Accordingly, agenda on 'addressing malnutrition among girl children through Poshan Abhiyan' has been regularly discussed in meetings of all Zonal Councils and their Standing Committees since January 2023; agenda on strengthening cooperative movement titled 'sahkar se smriddhi - strengthening cooperative movement in the country' has been discussed in meetings of all Zonal Councils and their Standing Committees since August 2023; agenda related to women empowerment including those pertaining to speedy investigation in cases of rape and sexual offences under POCSO Act against women and children, and status of implementation of the scheme for Fast Track Special Courts for timely trial of such cases, have been discussed in meetings of all Zonal Councils and their Standing Committees since January 2022; and agenda related to increasing income of panchayats has been discussed in the 25th meeting of the Central Zonal Council held on 24.6.2025 as well as in its Standing Committee before that.

(c): In view of Zonal Councils providing an effective statutory forum to State Governments/ UT Administrations and Central Ministries/ Departments for discussion in a cooperative spirit, over the issues they sponsor, and for making of appropriate recommendations with the aim of resolving or achieving progress over such issues, the numbers of the meetings of Zonal Councils and their Standing Committees, as well as the number of issues discussed therein, have seen a substantial increase over the past years.
