

**Press Information Bureau  
Government of India**

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**Curtain Raiser – 24<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Eastern Zonal Council at Bhubaneswar on 28<sup>th</sup>  
February, 2020**

**New Delhi, February 27, 2020**

The 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Eastern Zonal Council, comprising of the States of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal, is scheduled to be held on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 at Bhubaneswar.

The Union Minister for Home Affairs, Shri Amit Shah will chair this meeting. Chief Minister of Odisha, Shri Naveen Patnaik, is the Vice-Chairman and host. Chief Ministers of Bihar, West Bengal and Jharkhand respectively, Shri Nitish Kumar, Ms. Mamata Banerjee and Shri Hemant Soren, will also participate. The Chief Ministers will be accompanied by two Cabinet Ministers from each State, as members of the Council, and Chief Secretary & other senior officers of the States. Secretaries/Additional Secretaries and other senior officers of the Central Government will also attend the meeting. Last meeting of the Eastern Zonal Council was last held in Kolkata on October 1, 2018.

The upcoming meeting of the Eastern Zonal Council will deliberate upon nearly 4 dozen issues which *inter alia* include inter-State water issues, power transmission lines, royalty on & operationalization of coals mines, land & forest clearance of rail projects, investigation of heinous offences, cattle smuggling across country's borders, lack of telecom & banking infrastructure in remote areas, petroleum projects, sharing pattern on centrally collected revenues etc. With such senior level participation of political leadership and officers, a large number of issues are likely to get resolved by consensus in the meeting.

Five Zonal Councils were set up in the year 1957 under Section 15-22 of the States Reorganization Act, 1956. The Union Home Minister is the Chairman of each of these 5 Zonal Councils and Chief Minister of the host State, to be chosen by rotation every year, is the Vice-Chairman. Two more Ministers from each State are nominated as Members by the Governor. The Council takes up issues involving Centre and States, and among Member-States falling in the Zone and thus provide a forum for resolving disputes and irritants between them.

The Zonal Councils discuss broad range of issues, which include boundary related disputes, security, infrastructure related matters like road, transport, industries, water and power etc., matters pertaining to forests & environment, housing, education, food security, tourism, transport, etc.

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**VG/SNC/VM**