



Western Zonal Council

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The 24th meeting of the Western Zonal Council, to be **chaired by Union Home Minister, will be held in Panjim (Goa) on August 22, 2019.**

- Speedy investigations into sexual assault cases, a comprehensive security plan and improved security at railway stations will top the agenda of the meeting.
- The council, functioning under the aegis of the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)'s Inter-State Council Secretariat**, comprises **Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and the Union Territories of Daman and Diu, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.**
- The previous meeting of the council was chaired by the then Home Minister in April, 2018 at Gandhinagar (Gujrat).

Zonal Council

- The **Zonal Councils** are **the statutory (and not the constitutional) bodies.** They are established by an Act of the Parliament, that is, **States Reorganisation Act of 1956.**
- The act divided the country into **five zones (Northern, Central, Eastern, Western and Southern)** and provided a zonal council for each zone.
- While forming these zones, several factors have been taken into account which include: **the natural divisions** of the country, the **river systems** and **means of communication**, the **cultural and linguistic affinity** and the requirements of **economic development, security and law and order.**
- Each zonal council consists of the following members:
 - Home Minister of Central government.
 - Chief Ministers of all the States in the zone.
 - Two other ministers from each state in the zone.
 - Administrator of each union territory in the zone

- In addition to the above Zonal Councils, a **North-Eastern Council** was created by a **separate Act of Parliament—the North-Eastern Council Act of 1971**.
Its members include **Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Tripura and Sikkim**.
- These are **advisory bodies** that will discuss and make recommendations with regard to any matter of common interest in the field of economic and social planning between the Centre and States.

Source: TH