

## **ZONAL MEETING: POLITY**

**NEWS:** Zonal Meeting of Ministry of Women and Child Development chaired by Union Minister, Smt. Annpurna Devi will be held at Kevadia tomorrow

### **WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?**

The Ministry of Women and Child Development convened a Zonal Meeting in Kevadia to review key schemes like Mission Shakti, Vatsalya, and Poshan 2.0, fostering Centre–State cooperation through digital tools and grassroots innovations. It aligns with the cooperative framework of Zonal Councils aimed at resolving inter-state issues and sharing best practices.

#### **Context: Zonal Meeting on Women and Child Development (WCD)**

- The **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD)** is conducting a **Zonal Meeting on 12th July 2025** at **Kevadia, Gujarat**.
- The aim is to **enhance Centre–State collaboration** and review progress on flagship schemes focused on women and child welfare.

#### **Purpose of the Zonal Meeting**

- **Strengthen coordination** between the Central Government and State/UT administrations.
- **Evaluate implementation performance** and bottlenecks of key WCD schemes.
- Encourage **cross-learning and replication of best practices** among participating states.
- Ensure alignment of social development with technology and environmental goals.

#### **Participating States/UTs (Western Zonal Region)**

- **Gujarat**
- **Maharashtra**
- **Madhya Pradesh**
- **Rajasthan**
- **Goa**
- **Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu**

#### **Key Schemes Under Review**

##### **1. Mission Shakti**

- Umbrella scheme for the **safety, security, and empowerment of women**.
- Comprises two sub-schemes:
  - **Sambal:** Focuses on women's safety and grievance redressal (e.g., one-stop centres, helplines, fast-track courts).

- **Samarthya:** Focuses on women's economic empowerment, skill development, and livelihood support.

## 2. Mission Vatsalya

- Dedicated to **child protection services**, including:
  - **Institutional and non-institutional care**
  - **Foster care, sponsorship, and adoption services**
  - **Childline (1098) and Juvenile Justice support mechanisms**
- Aims to create a **child-centric ecosystem** through community participation and family strengthening.

## 3. Saksham Anganwadi & Poshan 2.0

- Integrated nutrition and early childhood care programme.
- Focus on:
  - **Modernising Anganwadi centres (AWCs)**
  - **Using digital tools** like the **Poshan Tracker** for real-time service monitoring
  - **Tackling malnutrition and anaemia** among children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers

## Technoogical & Governance Innovations Discussed

### 1. Technology Integration

- Use of **Face Recognition Systems (FRS)** for identity verification and efficient service delivery.
- **Digital dashboards** and mobile apps to improve tracking and transparency.

### 2. Grassroots Innovations

- States presented successful models from districts for **cross-learning**.
- Highlighted convergence with other flagship schemes (e.g., health, sanitation, livelihoods).

### 3. Social–Environmental Convergence

- Innovative campaign like “**Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam**” showcased — promotes planting a tree in the name of one's mother, blending **environmental consciousness with social symbolism**.

## Zonal Councils: Constitutional and Functional Framework

### 1. Legal Basis

- Created under **Sections 15–22 of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956.**
- **Jawaharlal Nehru** proposed their creation during the State reorganisation debates (1953).
- Objective: Promote **cooperative federalism** and resolve **inter-State issues** in a structured manner.

## 2. Types of Zonal Councils and Member States

<b>Zonal Council</b>	<b>Member States/UTs</b>
<b>Northern</b>	Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, J&K, Delhi, Chandigarh
<b>Central</b>	Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand
<b>Eastern</b>	Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Sikkim
<b>Western</b>	Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu
<b>Southern</b>	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry
<b>North Eastern Council (NEC)</b>	Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura

## 3. Composition of Zonal Councils

- **Chairman:** Union Home Minister (ex-officio)
- **Vice-Chairman:** Chief Minister of one of the member States (rotates annually)
- **Members:**
  - Chief Ministers and Administrators of States/UTs
  - Two Ministers from each State, nominated by the Governor
- **Advisors and Officials:**
  - One nominee from **NITI Aayog**
  - **Chief Secretaries and Development Commissioners**
  - A **Permanent Standing Committee** of Chief Secretaries prepares agendas and reports

## 4. Functions of Zonal Councils

- Promote **inter-State cooperation and regional integration**
- Resolve issues related to:
  - **Border disputes**
  - **Water sharing and irrigation**

- **Transport connectivity and infrastructure**
- **Internal security coordination**
- Foster discussions on:
  - **Economic and social planning**
  - **Public health and education**
  - **Implementation of central schemes** at state/district levels
- Act as platforms for **sharing successful models and innovations** among states

## **Conclusion**

The Zonal Meeting at Kevadia highlights the government's emphasis on **collaborative federalism** to improve the delivery of critical women and child development services. Integrated with the institutional mechanism of **Zonal Councils**, such initiatives aim to **bridge regional gaps**, enhance governance, and deliver **impact-driven development** through coordination, innovation, and decentralised decision-making.

Source: <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2143912>