



Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah to chair 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council on 20th August 2026 in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu

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With the spirit that strong states make a strong nation, the Zonal Councils provide a systematic mechanism and an important forum for dialogue and discussion on issues affecting two or more states or the Centre and the states

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प्रविष्टि तिथि: 19 AUG 2026 2:35PM by PIB Delhi

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah will chair the 31st meeting of the Southern Zonal Council (SZC) on 20th August 2026 in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu. The Southern Zonal Council comprises the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, and the Union Territories of Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep.

Under Sections 15 to 22 of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, five Zonal Councils, including the Southern Zonal Council, have been established. Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, is the Chairman of the Southern Zonal Council, and the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Shri C. Joseph Vijay, is Vice-Chairman. The Chief Ministers of the member states serve as the Vice-Chairman of the Council by rotation. The 31st meeting is being organized by the Inter-State Council Secretariat, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, with the Government of Tamil Nadu as the host. It will be attended by the Chief Ministers/Lieutenant Governors/Administrators of the member states and Union Territories of the Southern region, along with two senior ministers from each state. The Chief Secretaries/Advisors and other senior officers of the State Governments, as well as senior officers of the Central Government, will also participate in the meeting.

The Zonal Council has also constituted a standing committee at the level of Chief Secretaries. Issues proposed by the states are submitted for discussion before the Zonal Council's standing committee and after deliberation there, the remaining issues are placed before the Zonal Council meeting for consideration.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has envisioned 'TEAM BHARAT' for the nation, on the basis of cooperative federalism, and the Zonal Councils are making significant contributions in this direction. These councils function on the conviction that strong states build a strong nation. They provide a structured mechanism for dialogue and discussion on issues affecting two or more states—or the Centre and the states—thereby serving as a platform to foster mutual cooperation. Under the leadership of PM Modi, Zonal Council meetings have evolved into a powerful platform for finding solutions through dialogue.

The role of the Zonal Councils is advisory in nature. However, over the past few years, these Councils have proved to be an important factor in fostering healthy bond of mutual understanding and cooperation across various regions. With the cooperation of all State Governments, Central Ministries and Departments, a total of 69 meetings of the various Zonal Councils and their Standing Committees have been held in the last approximately 12 years, since June 2014 till now.

The Zonal Councils provide an excellent forum for resolving issues and disputes and making progress on them between the Centre and the member States/Union Territories, among the member States/Union Territories, and within the region. These Councils also discuss broad issues of national importance, which include the implementation of Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) for the speedy investigation and early disposal of cases of rape against women and children, as well as issues related to education, among others. In addition, various issues of common interest at the regional level are covered, such as issues related to the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, issues concerning important projects related to water sharing, the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin), issues related to civil aviation, and several other issues.

RK / RR / PR / PS

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