

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:652

ANSWERED ON:03.08.2011

SPECIAL CATEGORY STATUS TO STATES

Choudhary Shri Bhudeo; Rama Devi Smt. ;Singh Shri Radha Mohan;Yadav Shri Ranjan Prasad

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) the name of the States which have been granted special category status;
- (b) the reasons/ criteria for according special category status;
- (c) the date and year when these States were given special category status;
- (d) whether some of the States particularly Bihar, have sought special category status;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES (DR. ASHWANI KUMAR)

(a): The States which have been granted Special Category Status by National Development Council (NDC) are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura and Uttarakhand.

(b): 'Special Category State' status has been granted to some States that are characterized by a number of features necessitating special consideration. These features include hilly and difficult terrain, low population density and/or sizeable share of tribal population, strategic location along borders with neighbouring countries, economic and infrastructural backwardness and non-viable nature of state finances. States under this category have a low resource base and are not in a position to mobilize resources for their developmental needs even though the per capita income of some of these states is relatively high. Moreover, a number of these states were constituted out of the former small Union Territories or districts of some other states, necessarily involving creation of overheads and administrative infrastructure that was out of proportion to their resource base.

(c): The issue of Special Category Status came up at the time of approval of the Gadgil Formula at the meeting of the National Development Council (NDC) held in April, 1969. Out of the 17 States, 14 States were brought under the Gadgil Formula. The remaining 3 States namely Assam, Jammu & Kashmir and Nagaland were given special consideration. Subsequently, some other States were granted Special Category Status when they attained statehood. These were Himachal Pradesh in 1970-71, Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura in 1971-72, Sikkim in 1975-76, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram in 1986-87 and Uttarakhand in 2000-01.

(d), (e) & (f): There have been requests for grant of Special Category Status from Governments of Goa, Orissa, Rajasthan and Bihar. In case of Goa, Planning Commission came to a finding that Goa, being a socially advanced State, did not qualify the criteria for a Special Category State. In general, it is the considered view of the Planning Commission that for any State seeking Special Category Status on account of State specific problems, it would be more appropriate to provide Financial Assistance/ Additional Central Assistance (ACA) etc. as has been the practice so far, on a case to case basis. The "status quo" position should be maintained on the list of Special Category States. The requests of the States for Special Category Status, therefore, have not been considered feasible. In case of Bihar, however, following receipt of a fresh memorandum, it has been decided that an Inter-Ministerial Group would look into the matter.