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Title: The Minister of Tribal Affairs and Minister of Panchayati Raj laid a statement regarding constitution of a task force to address the issues regarding scheduling of communities as Scheduled Tribes and related matters.

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA DEO): Madam, over the years, there have been a large number of proposals for scheduling of communities as Scheduled Tribes. Government of India on 15.6.1999, further amended on 25.6.2002, has laid down the modalities for determining the claims for inclusion in, exclusion from and other modification in the Orders specifying lists of SCs/STs. According to these modalities, only those proposals, which have been recommended and justified by the concerned State Government, and concurred with by the Registrar General of India (RGI) and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST), are to be considered for amendment of legislation.

The proposals have been processed in this Ministry according to the approved modalities. However, a final conclusion could not be reached on many of the proposals on account of complex factors such as spelling differences, phonetic variations, migrants issues, ethnographic/justification issues.

I would like to inform the House that I have constituted a Task Force under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Tribal Affairs, to address the issues regarding scheduling of communities, and make a report on its findings.

The task force will examine the various observations of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST), Registrar General of India (RGI) and claims of State Governments, in respect of proposals for inclusion of communities in the STs list(s), and with regard to the existing criteria/system/procedure of inclusion/exclusion of communities; and suggest measures, if needed, for improving and streamlining the system and procedures.

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