

Sixteenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding setting up of Pradesh council with executive power in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

SHRI BISHNU PADA RAY (ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS): Presently A and N Islands is UT governed by the Hon'ble LG, Chief Secretary and group of officers. As far as political set up is concerned, we have 70 Gram Panchayats, 7 Panchayat Samitis (Block level), 2 Zilla Parishads, 1 Municipal Council and one Member of Parliament.

There is no adequate political set up in the Islands to represent people voice at the ground level. Presently the officers concerned decide the fate of people in their own way due to lack of democratic set up. The people's representatives are toothless.

Earlier, in 1979, a 30 member indirectly elected Pradesh Council was constituted by promulgation of the Andaman and Nicobar (Administration) regulation, 1979 to advise the Administration. The Pradesh Council was in existence from 1985 to 1995. The set up of Pradesh Council was advisory in nature but to some extent helpful at least to address pity local issues. But after the 73rd and 74th amendment to the Constitution in 1994, this system was also abolished.

There is a long pending demand of the people as well as all the political parties which was reflected in our election Manifesto many times in the past, that there should be a Pradesh Council with executive power in A and N Islands to address the aspiration of the people and take decisions in many matters which now come to the Ministries in Delhi causing delay in many projects and decisions by amending the Andaman and Nicobar (Administration) regulation, 1979 and changing its nature from 'advisory' to 'executive'.

A and N Islands is a small place and after the introduction of 3-tier system of Panchayati Raj, there are overlapping of works and power in many cases.

I, therefore, urge the Government to set up Pradesh Council with executive power in A and N Islands.