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Government of India**

Lok Sabha passes the Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill, 2019

"Minimum Government, Maximum Governance" – Rationale behind the Amendment

Administrative Convenience, Speedy Development and Effective Implementation of Central and State Government Schemes to be the Focus: Shri G. Kishan Reddy

New Delhi, November 27, 2019

Lok Sabha passed the Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (Merger of Union Territories) Bill, 2019 today. Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Shri G. Kishan Reddy addressed the Lok Sabha and said that the bill has been brought to provide for merger of union territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, in view of the policy of the Government to have "Minimum Government, Maximum Governance". This would bring about administrative convenience, speedy development and effective implementation of central and state government schemes.

Shri Reddy said that both the Lok Sabha seats would remain intact and there will be no change in the status of Group III and IV employees. The merged entity would be governed under the jurisdiction of the Bombay High Court, he added.

Informing about the rationale behind bringing the amendment, Shri Reddy said that the Union territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu share a lot in terms of administrative set up, history, language and culture. The Secretaries to various Departments, Chief of Police and Chief Conservator of Forest of the both Union territories are common and the officers of All-India Services posted by the Ministries of Home Affairs, Environment and Forests serve both these territories as per their work allocation. Further, the policies and development schemes in various sectors including Tourism, Industries, Education and Information Technology are similar.

Besides these, the Minister stated that there are two secretariats and parallel departments which consume infrastructure and manpower in each Union territory. The Administrator, Secretaries, and Heads of certain departments functions in both the Union territories on alternate days affecting their availability to people and monitoring functioning of subordinate staff. The subordinate employees of both the Union territories are separate. Further, various departments of the Government of India have to co-ordinate with both the Union territories separately, causing duplication of works.

Having two separate constitutional and administrative entities in both the Union territories leads to lot of duplicity, inefficiency and wasteful expenditure. Further, this also causes unnecessary financial burden on the Government. Besides these, there are various challenges for cadre management and career progression of employees. Availability of more officers and infrastructure would help in more efficient implementation of flagship schemes of the government, the Shri Reddy said.

The Bill, inter alia, provides for better delivery of services to the citizens of both Union territories by improving efficiency and reduction in paper work; reduction in administrative expenditure; bringing uniformity in policies and schemes; better monitoring of schemes and projects; and, better management of cadres of various employees.

VG/SNC/VM