
Standing Committee Report Summary

The North-Eastern Council (Amendment) Bill, 2013

- The Standing Committee on Home Affairs (Chairperson: Mr. Venkaiah Naidu) submitted its report on the North-Eastern Council (Amendment) Bill, 2013 on May 30, 2013. The Bill was introduced by the Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region in Rajya Sabha on March 11, 2013, and subsequently referred to the Committee.
- The Bill seeks to amend the North-Eastern Council Act, 1971. The Act sets up the North-Eastern Council to ensure balanced and coordinated development among the north-eastern states.
- Key amendments include: (i) modifies composition of the Council to include one member of the Planning Commission; (ii) specifies term of office of members nominated by the President; and (iii) modifies Council's functions to include discussing and advising central and state governments on matters of common interest (related to economic and social planning, transport, etc.).
- The Standing Committee recommended that the Bill be passed. However, it reiterated certain suggestions it had made regarding the functioning of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region in its 170th Report on Demand for Grants (2013-14). It recommended that the government should review the functioning of the Ministry in light of its inadequate staff, infrastructural and technical support, etc. Measures should be taken to strengthen its functioning to ensure that it can coordinate effectively with other Ministries (in implementing projects for the north-eastern region), and can complete its projects on time.

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