

Need to empower Bodoland Territorial Region and other Autonomous District Councils under Sixth Schedule to the Constitution-Laid

SHRI JOYANTA BASUMATARY (KOKRAJHAR): The Constituent Assembly and the recommendations of the Bordoloi Committee, the Government recognises that the primary purpose of the Sixth Schedule was to address regional aspirations, protect the identity, culture, customs and traditional institutions of tribal communities, and reduce socio-economic disparities in the hill and tribal areas of the North Eastern region. But despite successive peace accords and constitutional and statutory arrangements, there continues a significant gap in socio-economic development indicators between many Sixth Schedule areas like Bodoland Territorial Region and the others of their parent States. It is high time for the Government to take steps to create a clear, transparent and non-ad-hoc framework for Finance Commission-linked transfers and other grants-in-aid to Sixth Schedule Councils, so that grants under Article 275(1) and take steps to amend Article 280 and make provisions to send fund direct to the Autonomous District Councils. The other devolution mechanisms are not subject to temporary freezes or discretionary, piecemeal packages. I demand from the Government to provide additional powers to the Bodoland Territorial Region and other Autonomous District Councils under paragraph 3B of the Sixth Schedule.