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1 Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution (Source: The Hindu)

The Sixth Schedule (Articles 244(2) and 275(1)) provides for autonomous administrative arrangements in certain tribal areas of the North-East.

- It seeks to protect the distinct culture, customs, and governance practices of tribal communities while ensuring their integration within India.

Applicability

- **States covered:** Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram.
- Tribal areas within these states are declared Autonomous Districts.
- The Governor has the power to:
  - Increase or decrease the area of districts.
  - Create new districts or regions.
  - Alter boundaries.

Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)

- **Composition:** 30 members (26 elected + 4 nominated by Governor).
- **Tenure:** 5 years.
- Regional Councils for smaller tribes.
- **Powers of District Councils**
  - Legislative: Laws on land, forests, agriculture, village administration, customs, marriage/divorce, inheritance. Require Governor's assent.
  - Executive: Manage schools, markets, health centres, roads, ferries.
  - Judicial: Tribal courts for cases involving tribals.
  - Financial: Levy taxes on land, markets, professions, vehicles; get grants from Consolidated Fund of India.

Governor's Discretion

- Can modify or annul acts of Parliament or State Legislature in Sixth Schedule areas.
- Has power to assume control of administration in case of breakdown.

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2 Cloud Seeding (Source: The Hindu)



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3 Karakoram Range (Source: The Indian Express)

Karakoram Range

A Trans-Himalayan Mountain System

At a Glance

- **Location:** Northernmost part of India and adjoining Pakistan and China
- **Type:** Young fold mountain (part of the Trans-Himalaya)
- **Extent:** ~500–800 km (NW–SE)
- **Average width:** 100–200 km
- **Highest peak:** K2 (8,611 m) – 2nd highest in the world

Location & Extent

- Runs from the Pamir Knot (West) to the Tibetan Plateau (East).
- Lies between the Indus Basin (South) and the Tarim Basin (North) (China).
- Indian part is in **Ladakh** (UT).



Origin & Geology

- Formed by the collision of the Indian Plate with the Eurasian Plate.
- Composed mainly of crystalline rocks (granite, gneiss) with igneous intrusions.
- Geologically young, rugged and highly glaciated.

Major Features

- Extremely high and rugged peaks (K2, Broad Peak, Gasherbrum I & II).
- Largest concentration of glaciers outside the polar regions (e.g., Siachen, Baltoro, Biafo).
- Sharp ridges, deep valleys and high-altitude deserts.
- Sparse to alpine vegetation (lesser than Himalaya).

Climate

- Cold desert type climate.
- Long, severe winters and short summers.
- Very low precipitation (mostly as snow).
- High altitude, low temperature and strong winds.

Major Peaks



- **K2 (8,611 m)**
- Gasherbrum I (8,080 m)
- Broad Peak (8,051 m)
- Gasherbrum II (8,035 m)

Significance

- Global mountaineering hub.
- Major source of glaciers feeding the Indus River system.
- Strategic importance (Siachen region, India–Pakistan–China interface).
- Rich in cold-desert biodiversity (e.g., snow leopard, ibex).

