

PM chairs first meeting of Governing Council of NITI Aayog
8th February 2015

PM to "TEAM INDIA":

- **Let us forge a model of cooperative, competitive federalism; chart a common course to progress and prosperity**
- **Our biggest challenge still is how to eliminate poverty. Let us expedite the process of growth**
- **Forgetting all our differences, let us focus on the cycle of Investment, growth, job creation and prosperity**
- **Will move away from "one size fits all" schemes; forge a better match between the schemes and the needs of states**
- **Regional Councils under NITI Aayog can catalyse joint projects across member states**
- **States must fulfil their role in promoting shared national objectives**

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, today called upon all Chief Ministers to work with the Centre to forge a model of cooperative federalism, whereby the Centre and the States – TEAM INDIA - can come together to resolve differences, and chart a common course to progress and prosperity.

Chairing the first meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog, the Prime Minister described this meeting as one which had the potential to bring about historic changes. He said the Governing Council of NITI Aayog would help advance the national cause "as we jointly define it." Noting that India cannot advance without all its states advancing in tandem, the Prime Minister said the idea was to bring up all states together in the spirit of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas. He added that he envisioned different states competing with each other in promoting governance initiatives, in a spirit of "cooperative, competitive federalism."

Shri Narendra Modi said that the world has started looking at India differently, but "our biggest challenge still is how to eliminate poverty." He said jobs cannot be created, and poverty cannot be removed without growth. Therefore, he added, "first and foremost we should aim at a high rate of growth."

The Prime Minister noted that projects are often held up for want of timely decisions, and a project can get stuck at any stage in any forum. He said this prevents the people from getting benefits of the projects, and also leads to cost escalation. He requested the Chief Ministers to give personal attention to such factors which slow down projects. He urged all Chief Ministers to focus on the cycle of Investment, growth, job creation and prosperity. He also suggested that an officer be identified in the state governments to monitor and ensure a smooth resolution of the pending issues so as to expedite the project implementation.

The Prime Minister emphasized that the Centre wished to empower the states with finances, with technology and knowledge so that they are able to plan better and execute even better.

Shri Narendra Modi said that Cabinet Resolution setting up NITI Aayog provides for the appointment of Regional Councils with specific mandates for specific time periods. He hoped that these councils could help forge cooperation among two or more states facing a common set of problems or amicably settle disputes that delay progress. He said these councils could catalyse joint projects involving travel, transportation and tourism across member states.

The Prime Minister also expressed hope that through the mechanism of the NITI Aayog, India could move away from "one size fits all" schemes, and forge a better match between the schemes and the needs of the states. He said that for federalism to work well, states must also fulfill their role in promoting the shared national objectives. He said that the critical element for cooperative federalism to flourish is that states commit to the path they choose within the context of the shared national objectives and then deliver on that commitment.

Reflecting on the role of NITI Aayog as a think-tank, the Prime Minister said he sees great scope for states to learn from each other, work together among themselves and with the Centre. He said best practices can be shared among states, and a portal can be created through which state functionaries share their experiences.

The Prime Minister noted that in the last two and a half decades, the Indian economy has been transforming itself from a planned to a market economy. He called upon the gathering to deliberate on how the planning process should be reshaped.

"Our focus on Good Governance is the need of the hour," the Prime Minister said, adding that "whatever we do it should be well thought, it should be well-executed and it should have desired outcome."

The interaction was coordinated by Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley, and the opening remarks for the meeting were made by Shri Arvind Panagariya, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog.

PM focuses on Team India, as vision of cooperative competitive federalism to take National Development Agenda ahead

Governing Council of NITI Aayog meets

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi today chaired the first meeting of the Governing Council of the newly constituted NITI Aayog.

NITI Aayog has been set up on 01st January, 2015 replacing Planning Commission. The resolution constituting NITI which lays down inter-alia its objectives and structure, stands notified by the Government. As per this notification NITI Aayog comprises the Prime Minister as the Chairperson, its Governing Council comprising the Chief Ministers of all the States and the Lt. Governors of the Union Territories, experts, specialists and practitioners with relevant domain knowledge and a full time organizational frame work.

The full time organizational frame work comprises in addition of the Prime Minister as the Chairperson, Vice-Chairman, full time Members, part-time Members, ex-officio Members, a Chief- Executive Officer and a Secretariat.

Shri Rajnath Singh-Home Minister, Shri Arun Jaitley-Finance Minister, Shri Suresh Prabhu-Railway Minister, Shri Radha Mohan Singh- Agriculture Minister have been appointed as ex-officio Members. In addition, Shri Nitin Jairam Gadkari- Road Transport and Highways Minister, Shri Thaawar Chand Gehlot-Social Justice and Empowerment Minister and Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani- Human Resource Development Minister have been nominated as special invitees.

The Government has appointed Dr. Arvind Panagariya as Vice-Chairman and Shri Bibek Debroy and Dr. V.K. Saraswat as full time Members. Smt. Sindhushree Khullar has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of NITI.

It may be recalled that on 07th December, 2014, in his consultation, meeting of Chief Ministers of all the States and Lt. Governors of Union Territories, the Prime Minister had outlined the vision of forming Team India for working synergistically towards National Development Agenda.

In the meeting of the first Governing Council, the Prime Minister further elaborated on this vision which is an embodiment of the concept of cooperative federalism. On this theme, the Prime Minister further added that he favored healthy competition for development among States.

It was pointed out the most important responsibility of NITI Aayog relates to promoting cooperative federalism through structured support initiatives and mechanisms with the States on a continuous basis. The Centre, through this framework will be an enabler in the rapid progress of States through Cooperative Federalism. Various suggestions regarding structured mechanism for interaction based on specific focus issues and relative strengths of States were sought. Further, the views of the States on forming of Regional Council to address the specific issues.

PM announces constitution of three sub-groups within NITI Aayog; asks all states to set up two task forces under aegis of NITI Aayog

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has announced that the NITI Aayog would constitute **three sub groups**: of Chief Ministers on the following themes:

- **Sub-group to study the 66 Centrally Sponsored Schemes and recommend which to continue, which to transfer to states, and which to cut down.**
- **Sub-group to recommend how NITI Aayog can promote skill development and creation of skilled manpower within states.**
- **Sub-group to decide on institutional mechanisms to be evolved, and technological inputs, for ensuring that commitment to Swachh Bharat becomes a part of our life in perpetuity.**

In his concluding remarks at the first meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog, the Prime Minister also asked all states to create **two task forces** under the aegis of the NITI Aayog One task force would focus on poverty alleviation, and the other would focus on future development of agriculture in the state, and how the Centre can assist the state in this regard.

The members of the sub-groups will be decided later, after Chief Ministers indicate their preferences.

The Prime Minister urged all states to use the upcoming school vacations as an opportunity to build and upgrade toilets, so as to ensure that the target of toilets for all schools is achieved. He also suggested that a portion of the funds under the MPLAD and MLALAD schemes can be earmarked for cleanliness-related activities, until 2019.

The Prime Minister appreciated the team spirit shown by all participating Chief Ministers in the thoughts and vision expressed by them during the meeting.