

► Planning Commission had done commendable work

NITI would give a new push to development: Chauhan

• OUR STAFF REPORTER
BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan has welcomed the formation of NITI.

He said that change was the eternal law of nature. Nature abhors stagnation and stability, beyond a certain extent. Any individual, society or nation that is not amenable to change ceases to grow. There must be changes at national level in the context of global changes.

The Chief Minister said that India woke up to a new dawn of development, based on cooperation and democratic values in the New Year on January 1. This epoch-changing development has taken place in the form of the National Institute for Transforming

India (NITI) replacing the Planning Commission of India.

In 1952, the then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru set up the Planning Commission of India. It was the right decision in the right direction in view of the circumstances and requirements of that time for the all-round development of the nation. Post-independence, the Commission played a crucial role in development of the nation through the Five Years Plans. The

Commission acquitted itself well in planning, formulating and implementing schemes. However, over the decades, especially after economic liberalisation in 1991, the existence of the Planning Commission started outliving its existence. In democracy, differ-



ent states are ruled by different political parties. It was increasingly being felt that the Planning Commission had become a tool of the powers that be at the centre to serve their interest by showing prejudices, slants and aversions against states. Discrimination in funds allocations was also experi-

enced by states for these reasons.

He said that the Planning Commission had started showing lack of democratic ethos in its functioning. The discussions held by the Commission with Chief Ministers had been reduced to a mere ritual. Schemes were formulated at the Centre and sent to the states for implementation. While formulating the schemes the specific geographical, social, economic, historical and cultural requirements of the states were not taken into account. It is a major factor responsible for desired fruits of development not reaching the masses. I have been maintaining at different fora that just as one single medicine cannot cure all diseases, there cannot be a

fit-for-all scheme or programme for all states. This is particularly true about centrally sponsored schemes.

The most important thing about the NITI set up by our innovative Prime Minister Narendra Modi to replace the Planning Commission is that it preceded comprehensive consultations with all the Chief Ministers.

Its Governing Council includes all Chief Ministers of States and Lt. Governors of Union Territories. This would give new direction and momentum to the development of states, Chauhan said.

Another special feature of the new dispensation is that it provides for constitution of Regional Councils to resolve contentious interstate issues. This would

remove the bottlenecks in development and the states while pushing up their own development would contribute more actively and promptly to development of the nation.

The NITI would facilitate planning at village level, which is very important. In Madhya Pradesh we have already done it. We have Master Plans all the villages in place in consultation with the villagers. The Action Plans accommodate their suggestions and advices.

The process of execution of these Action Plans has already started. I am happy that this process is being introduced across the country. This would help harness the available resources for development of villages in a more efficient manner, the Chief Minister hoped.