

- 3 JAN 2015

Chouhan praises NITI, says foundation of true federal structure laid

HT Correspondent

✉ editorbhopal@hindustantimes.com

BHOPAL: Chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the constitution of National Institute for Transforming India (NITI) has laid the foundation of a true federal structure that would go a long way in meeting the developmental challenges of India.

The CM welcomed the new body, which has replaced the Planning Commission, through his blog post and Twitter account. Chouhan said that India has woken up to a new dawn of development based on cooperation and democratic values on January 1, 2015.

He said that the Planning Commission was set up in 1952 by the then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. It was a right decision in view of the circumstances and requirements of that time. The Commission gave a very good account of itself in planning, formulating and implementing schemes to a great extent.

However, over the decades, especially after economic liberalization in 1991 the Planning Commission started losing its relevance. In democracy different states are ruled by dif-



IT PROVIDES FOR CONSTITUTION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS TO RESOLVE CONTENTIOUS INTER-STATE ISSUES. THE BODY WOULD FACILITATE PLANNING AT VILLAGE LEVEL, WHICH IS VERY IMPORTANT. THE INITIATIVE HAS ALREADY STARTED IN MP

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN, CM

ferent 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 prej-

udices, slants and aversions against states. Discrimination in funds allocations was also experienced by states for these reasons.

The CM 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. While formulating the schemes, the specific geographical, social, economic, historical and cultural requirements of the states were not taken into account. This was a major factor that prevented desired fruits of development from reaching the masses.

Chouhan said that the important point about constitution of NITI is that it has preceded comprehensive consultations with all the chief ministers. Its governing council includes all chief ministers and lieutenant governors of union territories.

The special feature of NITI is that it provides for constitution of regional councils to resolve contentious inter-state issues. The body would facilitate planning at village level, which is very important. In Madhya Pradesh, this initiative has already been taken, he said.