

NITI lays foundation of true federal structure in devpt process for transforming India: CM

■ Staff Reporter

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 in the development process of transforming India. In his blog and twitter the Chief Minister said the new dispensation would go a long way in meeting the developmental challenges of India.

The Chief Minister said that India woke up to a new dawn of development based on co-operation 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.

Chouhan said that in 1952, the then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru set up the Planning Commission of India was the right decision in the right direction in view of the circumstances and requirements of that

time for all round development of the nation. Post independence the Commission played a very crucial role in development of the nation through the Five Years Plans. 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 liberalisation in 1991 the existence of the Planning Commission started outliving its existence. In democracy different 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 experienced by states for these reasons.

The Chief Minister said that the Planning Commission had started showing lack of democratic ethos in its functioning. The discussions held by the Commission with Chief Minister

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 not reaching desired fruits of development to 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.

Chouhan said that 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 develop-

ment of States.

The Chief Minister said that another special feature of the new dispensation is that it provides for constitution of Regional Councils to resolve contentious inter-state 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.

Chouhan said that the NITI would facilitate planning at village level, which is very important. In Madhya Pradesh we have already done it. We have Master Plans of all the villages in place. These plans have been chalked out 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.