

NITI Aayog organises a Two-day Consultative Meeting on Ease of Doing Research and Development (R&D) on 27th – 28th May, 2025, hosted by Raj Bhawan, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

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A Two-day Consultative Meeting was held at the Raj Bhawan (Governor House), Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, on 27th – 28th May, 2025, under the Chairpersonship of the Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Smt. Anandiben Patel, and Dr. V.K. Saraswat, Member, NITI Aayog. The meeting brought together Vice Chancellors of Universities, Directors of leading research laboratories, and Heads of various Research Institutions under the major scientific Central Government Ministries/ Departments for an in-depth dialogue on strengthening India's Research and Development (R&D) ecosystem.

The event was graced by the presence of Smt. Anandiben Patel, Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh; Dr. V.K. Saraswat, Member, NITI Aayog; Dr. N. Kalaiselvi, Director General, CSIR & Secretary, DSIR; Dr. Sudhir M. Bobde, Additional Chief Secretary to the Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh; Prof. Vinod Kumar Singh, President, The National Academy of Sciences, India; and other distinguished dignitaries from various scientific ministries and departments. The meeting witnessed participation from over 50 laboratories, research institutions, and universities, reflecting an inclusive representation from India's scientific and academic community.

In her address, the Hon'ble Governor emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts between academia, government, and industry to unlock the country's full scientific and technological potential. Dr. V.K. Saraswat reiterated the commitment of NITI Aayog to enabling structural reforms and creating a more agile, innovation-friendly policy environment. Prof. Vivek Kumar Singh, Senior Adviser, NITI Aayog, presented details of the comprehensive exercise on 'Ease of Doing R&D' being taken up by NITI Aayog.

The discussions focused on identifying systemic challenges impeding the growth of a robust research culture in India. Participants raised critical issues, including the highly bureaucratic nature of the R&D approval system. Concerns were also expressed over the low national expenditure on R&D, delays in fund disbursements, and procurement bottlenecks in acquiring specialized scientific equipment. The lack of private sector engagement in research, along with time-consuming ethical and regulatory clearances, was highlighted as further impediments to scientific progress. Stakeholders pointed to the ongoing brain drain, driven by better career prospects, infrastructure, and funding opportunities abroad. To address these systemic challenges, NITI Aayog is undertaking a comprehensive exercise to identify and resolve key barriers within the Indian R&D landscape, with a particular focus on government-funded institutions and laboratories. This initiative aims to streamline processes, improve fund flow mechanisms, enhance accountability, and create an enabling environment that fosters innovation and collaboration.

The meeting concluded with a shared understanding of the urgency of reform and the need to develop actionable strategies to overcome these persistent challenges. Recommendations and insights from this consultation will be compiled and actionable insights will be brought out for corrective actions.

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