

Fifth Regional Consultative Meeting on “Ease of Doing Research & Development (R&D)” held at Science City, Ahmedabad

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NITI Aayog held the Fifth Consultative Meeting on “Ease of Doing Research & Development (R&D)” hosted by GUJCOST at Science City, Ahmedabad on 12-13 August 2025, bringing together over 110 participants, the heads of academic institutes and research institutions, and policymakers, to deliberate on strategies for strengthening India’s research and innovation ecosystem. The meeting aimed to build consensus on reducing procedural barriers, increasing access to knowledge resources, enhancing institutional competitiveness, increased emphasis on translational research, and fostering a more enabling environment for R&D in the country.



The meeting began with a welcome address by Dr. Narottam Sahoo, Advisor and Member Secretary, GUJCOST. Prof. Vivek Kumar Singh, Senior Adviser, NITI Aayog, highlighted the need for structural reforms, agile regulations, and stronger institutional frameworks to enhance R&D in India. Ms. P. Bharathi, IAS, Secretary, DST, Gujarat, reaffirmed the state’s commitment to building a robust research ecosystem aligned with the Prime Minister’s vision of *Viksit Bharat*. Dr. Nilesh Desai, Director, SAC–ISRO, announced a 12-day space science outreach programme for ‘National Space Day’ and stressed the need for a streamlined R&D environment. In his keynote, Dr. R.A. Mashelkar, former DG, CSIR, assessed the R&D landscape, identified key gaps, and suggested actionable strategies for progress.

Dr. V. K. Saraswat, Member, NITI Aayog, delivered the closing address on the 2nd day, underscoring the urgency of transforming India’s research institutions into globally competitive entities. He called for institutional benchmarking, simplification of compliance procedures, and stronger academia-industry linkages to enable a high-impact research culture. He emphasized that reducing friction across the research lifecycle is

central to advancing national scientific goals and achieving self-reliance in critical technology areas.

The two-day consultative meeting centered on comprehensive deliberations around key themes such as strengthening the R&D ecosystem, enhancing funding and regulatory frameworks, and improving access to knowledge resources. Discussions focused on understanding existing institutional structures and processes, identifying gaps, and exploring strategies to address them, with a strong emphasis on administrative agility and regulatory responsiveness. Participants underscored the critical need to reinforce foundational enablers, including streamlined funding mechanisms, robust research infrastructure, and simplified regulatory procedures. The dialogue highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts and translational research in unlocking India's full research and innovation potential.

The consultative meeting reaffirmed NITI Aayog's sustained commitment to fostering a globally competitive, innovation-driven research ecosystem. Insights and recommendations emerging from the discussions will inform the development of a national strategy aimed at improving the ease of doing R&D in India, ultimately positioning the country as a more attractive destination for researchers, innovators, and international collaborations.

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