

- (b) if not, the reasons for not providing the funds to the State, so far;
- (c) whether the development of the State would be adversely affected due to plan funds being not available in time; and
- (d) if not, in what manners?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) to (d) Funds are released to States under Central Assistance to State and UT Plans. The releases under the Central Assistance to State Plans (CASP) is made by the concerned Ministries/Departments for the various schemes. During 2016-17 (upto 20.07.2016), releases under Central Assistance to State Plans is ₹ 830.92 crore for Uttarakhand.

#### **Revisiting NITI Aayog concept**

763. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that NITI Aayog has failed to be either a think tank or an advisory body since its inception;
- (b) if so, whether Government would revisit the NITI Aayog concept; and
- (c) if not, the areas where NITI Aayog has made an impact and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) No Sir, NITI Aayog has been performing its role as a think tank or an advisory body since its inception. NITI Aayog, as per defined role in setting up of its resolution, believes in cooperative federalism recognizing that strong States make a strong nation. The aim is to progress from a stage when the Centre decided development policies to a truly federal Government wherein States are equal partners. There are two important aspects of cooperative federalism, (i) developing National Development Agenda jointly by the States and the Centre, and (ii) developing State perspective for advocacy with Central Ministries. NITI Aayog is performing its role as advisory body in a persuasive manner and through series of consultations at various levels on all development matters. A few examples of cooperative federalism, where impact of NITI Aayog has been established; are (i) setting up of 3 Sub-Groups of Chief Ministers on rationalization of CSSs (ii) Swachh Bharat Mission and (iii) Skill Development. The States have participated in the deliberations and came forward with their views. The same is true for both the Task Forces set up under Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog on

Agriculture Development and Elimination of Poverty in India. Besides above, NITI Aayog has worked out detailed contours of the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and Self Employment & Talent Utilization (SETU). Also, advice on specific policy issues have been provided to the States and Union Ministries/Departments, wherever sought for.

#### **Reforms in power sector**

764. SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of reforms initiated by Government in power sector since 2014;
- (b) what has been the performance of State power utilities during the last three years;
- (c) whether States with highest losses are those where tariffs fail to cover average costs;
- (d) if so, the details in this regard, State-wise; and
- (e) the steps taken to correct the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) Ministry of Power, Government of India has all along facilitated reforms through act, policies, regulations and guidelines made thereunder. Since 2014 Government has taken many initiatives for reform in the Power Sector. In this regard, comprehensive amendments have been carried out in the Tariff Policy notified on 28.01.2016 which envisages the optimum utilization of generating assets, promotion of hydro power generation, strengthening of distribution system, reduction of regulatory uncertainties and promotion of renewable energy.

To promote transparency, Government has launched "DEEP (Discovery of Efficient Electricity Prices) e-Bidding Portal" for procurement of Power through transparent process of e-Bidding. In this regard, the guidelines for short term procurement of power have also been revised by the Government.

Government of India has also launched Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana (UDAY) on 20.11.2015 for financial and operational turnaround of State-owned Power Distribution Companies (DISCOMs). The scheme aims to reduce interest burden, reduce the cost of power, reduce power losses in distribution sector and improve operational efficiency of DISCOMs.