

Transforming 115 backward districts across the country**Transforming 115 backward districts across the country****First Meeting of Prabhari Officers on 24th November**

In keeping with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a New India by 2022, Government has embarked upon a major policy initiative for the rapid transformation of 115 backward districts across the country. Senior Government officials in the rank of the rank of Additional Secretary and Joint Secretary have been designated as Prabhari Officers or the in-charge to coordinate the efforts of the Centre and the states in addressing the specific developmental needs of the districts.

The First meeting of the Prabhari Officers entrusted with the responsibility to co-ordinate the efforts of the Centre and the States towards rapid transformation of 115 backward districts across the country will be held tomorrow on Friday, the 24th November. Cabinet Secretary, PKSinha will chair the meeting with the CEO of the NITI Aayog, Amitabh Kant. Secretaries of key Ministries would also attend this session. Home Secretary will also brief the Prabhari Officers. Among the 115 backward districts, 35 are affected by Left Wing Violence. Shortly after this event, meeting of representatives of the State Governments and Prabhari officers is being organised to ensure that transformation of backward district in India is carried out by a dedicated team of Central and State governments.

Background:

The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given a Vision for a new and vibrant India by 2022, the year when India celebrates its 75th year of Independence. Inclusive development and improving the liveability of all are integral part of this vision. One of the initiatives in this regard is to make a dramatic improvement in overall socio-economic development of backward districts. The strategy envisaged is to adopt a focussed approach, ensure convergence of efforts of the Central, State and local Government and establish a real time monitoring mechanism to focus on outcomes that matter to common people in these districts beside giving rise to a virtuous cycle of economic development.

A total of 115 districts have been identified for this purpose on the basis of objective criteria. Such criteria include education, health, nutrition basic infrastructure like rural road connectivity, rural household electrification, access to potable water and individual

toilets etc. These districts include 35 districts which are affected by violence by Left Wing Extremists. Besides, while selecting these districts, it has been ensured that Ministries of Government of India, implementing social sector Scheme would select at least one most backward districts in every State for extending the reach of the programme in different part of the country. Improvement in one district is likely to spur similar growth in neighbouring districts through demonstration effect.

Under this initiative, for all these 115 districts, senior level Government officers (Additional Secretary/Joint Secretary) have been nominated as Prabhari officers. It has been envisaged that using their experience, these officers would form a team with representatives of the State Governments and would also act as a bridge between Centre and the State. States have been accordingly requested to nominate senior level functionary for each district. States are the main drivers of this program.

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