

# 7 GOVT & POLITICS



“Those who chose to boycott must introspect whether not attending the NITI Aayog meeting is in consonance with the spirit of cooperative federalism”

— ARUN JAITLEY, Union Finance Minister

**NITI AAYOG MEETING**

## Non-BJP CMs oppose land Bill changes

### 12 Chief Ministers skip meet; allies also cautious on Bill

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Wednesday struggled to forge a consensus among chief ministers for his government's move to amend the existing Land Acquisition Act, even as 12 chief ministers skipped the meeting convened by him to discuss the issue.

While chief ministers like Nitish Kumar and Arvind Kejriwal squarely opposed any move to dilute provisions of the 2013 Act, even allies like Punjab CM Parkash Singh Badal and J&K CM Mufti Mohammad Sayeed advised caution in acquiring land without consent of the farmers.

While the Lok Sabha passed the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Amendment) Bill, 2015, it got stuck in the Rajya Sabha. A parliamentary panel is currently scrutinising it.

Most of the dissenting chief ministers conveyed to the government that in case it fails to forge a consensus on the bill, then the states should be allowed to enact their respective legislation and the Centre should vet them.

Vice-Chairman of the NITI Aayog Arvind Panagariya had recently urged states to liberalise their land use policy and introduce transparent land leasing laws to facilitate industrialisation and investments.

The 12 Chief Ministers skipped the meet either in protest or citing engagements.

Chairing a two-hour long meeting of the governing council of the NITI Aayog comprising chief ministers, Modi argued that the Centre and states must join hands to end poverty as

“political deadlock” over land acquisition is seriously impacting development in the rural areas including creation of schools, hospitals, roads and irrigation projects.

“Political considerations should not come in the way of a solution that would facilitate development of the rural areas, and greater prosperity for the farmers,” he told them.

While West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee boycotted the meet citing her opposition to the proposed dilution of some provisions in the bill, her Tamil Nadu counterpart J Jayalalithaa and Orissa CM Naveen Patnaik skipped the meeting citing other engagements.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar told the meet that his government is opposed to any attempt to dilute, nullify or tamper with the letter and spirit of the 2013 Act in its original form.

“Vociferously opposed any dilution of the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act (LARR) 2013 at the NITI Aayog meeting today,” Kumar tweeted after the meet.

Among the NDA allies, Punjab CM Parkash Singh Badal said that the “Land Bill 2015 has triggered concerns within the farming community” in his state.

While arguing that land acquisition should be left to the states, he stressed the need for land owners' consent and social impact assessment for all acquisitions.

A source said that Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed emphasised the need to forge a consensus on the issue and give greater freedom to the states in pursuing national objectives, but in sync with their respective conditions.

Chief ministers of BJP-ruled states — Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Gujarat — contended at the meet that amending the existing law would be in larger public interest.



Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar with Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of the NITI Aayog meet in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

**WHAT BJP CMs SAID**



“The amendments will be in larger public interest and will contribute to generating employment opportunities and creating welfare schemes”  
Raman Singh, CHHATTISGARH

“It is a progressive piece of legislation that would open new vistas of development... The existing provisions (of the land Act) had become redundant in view of the emerging developmental aspirations of the people”  
Vasundhara Raje, RAJASTHAN



“It empowers states to expedite rural and infrastructure development... Land acquired should be allowed to be retained till the full life cycle of the project”  
Devendra Fadnavis, MAHARASHTRA

“The proposed amendments are well-considered and practical. Our government supports the measures that would reflect our motto of Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas” — Anandiben Patel, GUJARAT

**ABSENT**

**ALL THE 9 CHIEF MINISTERS OF CONGRESS-RULED STATES** — Kerala, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram

**WEST BENGAL:** Mamata Banerjee was in Burdwan where she held her 100th administrative meeting

**UP:** Akhilesh Yadav was in Lucknow. He reviewed security arrangements ahead of Eid celebrations

**TAMIL NADU:** J Jayalalithaa sent a letter to the PM

**MAMATA: WE ARE FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVE LAND POLICY**

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who did not attend the NITI Aayog meet in New Delhi to discuss Modi government's contentious land Bill, on Wednesday said her government was already following an “alternative” land acquisition policy as it “cannot wait indefinitely for the Centre to come up with its land acquisition policy”. Speaking in Burdwan, she said her government had been able to complete various projects through direct land purchase after holding negotiations with the land owners. “We have taken the people into confidence while acquiring land.” PTI

**JAYA RAISES AUTONOMY OF STATES, FARMERS' INTEREST**

While she did not attend the second meeting of the NITI Aayog Governing Council in New Delhi on Wednesday due to “other pressing official work”, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa asked the Centre not to go ahead with the new land Bill. In her letter to the PM, she raised objection to some of the provisions in the Bill, including the clauses related to social impact assessment and consent of land owners. She said the Centre's move to replace the 1894 land Act encroached on the legislative competence of state governments. ENS

**TRIPURA CM**

### ‘Safeguards have been weakened’

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

WHILE HE did not boycott the NITI Aayog Governing Council meeting convened by Prime Minister Narendra Modi like most of his other non-NDA counterparts, Tripura Chief Minister Manik Sarkar did not mince any words in opposing the BJP government's proposed amendments to the Land Acquisition Act. Addressing the meeting, he said the amendments proposed by the BJP government had weakened many of the “minimal safeguards” in the 2013 Act.

The 2013 Act, he added, had emerged through long deliberations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee and a consultative process involving different political parties, farmers' organisations, rural poor and other concerned individuals. “Despite some limitations, the land Act of 2013 had certain principles enshrined in it to ensure some protection for the farmers and dependents on land and safeguard the food security concerns of the country. The amendments proposed weaken each one of these minimal safeguards. They are a step backwards towards the framework of the Land Acquisition Act of 1894,” he said.

He added that the amendment to exempt areas like defence, rural infrastructure, affordable housing, industrial corridors and infrastructure projects “reinstates the Eminent Domain or the power of the state to forcibly acquire land without the owner's consent”.

## There will be flood of land litigations: Kejriwal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, JULY 15

DELHI CHIEF Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday questioned the Centre's spirit of cooperative federalism at the meeting of chief ministers during the Niti Aayog meet. Kejriwal also said his counterparts from other states had complained that the CBI was being “misused” and used for “arm-twisting.”



Kejriwal on Wednesday. PTI

In a note that the Chief Minister's office released hours after the meeting, Kejriwal said: “BJP government's changes to the 2013 Land Acquisition Act through ordinances had nullified its gains, which was a product of years of protracted struggle and ‘unprecedented’ consultations. The BJP had then wholeheartedly supported the legislation with the current Speaker of Lok Sabha, the then chairperson of the parliamentary standing committee, openly supporting the provisions of this Act. However, the recent ordinances passed for amending this legislation have nullified all the gains of the 2013 Act,” he said.

He further said, “The notion that the 2013 legislation will result in cessation of development of this country is incorrect. Also, the argument that this will result in waste of time is flawed. On the contrary, if government tries to snatch the land from farmers, it will lead to litigation running into years,” he said.

“The ACB, which was being effectively used to curtail corruption in Delhi, has been captured by paramilitary forces. The elected government of Delhi and its CM cannot make any appointments... You cannot govern the country while sitting in Delhi and therefore the spirit of federalism is of utmost importance,” Kejriwal said.

**PRAYER MEETING**



**Mrs. Malti Devi**  
Wife of Shri Rishidev Ram passed away on July 5, 2015. Her demise is deeply mourned by her family and friends. The Prayer/Tervi will be held on July 17, 2015 (Friday) at 10 am at 20, Sunrise Society, D Block Vikaspuri, New Delhi-18.

**In Grief:**  
Vijay and Shobha (Son and Daughter-in-law)  
Virendra and Alka (Son and Daughter-in-law)  
Manju and Vijoy (Daughter and Son-in-law)  
Harshit, Vidisha, Ishita, Shubhangi, Ajitesh, Varish (Grandchildren)

22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> September 2015 | India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

Anandiben Patel  
Chief Minister, Gujarat

Mamata Banerjee  
Chief Minister, West Bengal

Shivraj Singh Chouhan  
Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh

**THEIR PORTFOLIO OF ACHIEVEMENTS HOLDS SKOCH SMART GOVERNANCE AWARD IN A PLACE OF PRIDE**

Names are listed alphabetically as per first name

**HOW DO YOU MEASURE UP?**

SMART GOVERNANCE MATRIX	CITIES/URBAN LOCAL BODIES/ PRIs	CENTRAL / STATE GOVERNMENTS			
	CATEGORIES	CATEGORIES			
		FINANCE & REFORMS	SECTORS	SOCIAL	E-GOVERNANCE
Governance	GDP	Agriculture	Education	Services Delivery	
e-Governance	Fiscal Performance	Industry	Health	Grievance Redressal	
Infrastructure	Labour Reforms	Rural Development	Women & Child Development	Service Level Agreement/Act	
Mobility & Transportation	Land Reforms	Services	SC/ST	Move to Cloud & Mobility	
Social Sector	De-Centralisation	Knowledge-based Industries	Disability	e-Payments	
Water & Waste Management	GST Readiness	MSMEs	Minorities including sexual minorities	Ease of Doing Business	
Electricity		Infrastructure	Public safety & Security	Transparency	
Reforms		Power	Job Creation	Public Procurement	
Service Delivery		Transportation	Skill Development		
Finances			Environment & Sustainability		
Policing & Public Safety			Food Safety		

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