



NATIONAL LEGISLATORS' CONFERENCE 2023, BHARAT

राष्ट्रीय विधायक सम्मेलन 2023

16th, 17th, 18th June 2023

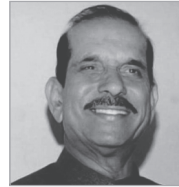
PATRONS & GOVERNING COUNCIL



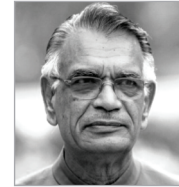
Smt. Sumitra Mahajan
Former Speaker,
Lok Sabha



Smt. Meira Kumar
Former Speaker,
Lok Sabha



Shri. Manohar Joshi
Former Speaker,
Lok Sabha



Shri. Shivraj Patil
Former Speaker,
Lok Sabha



REPORT OF VISIONING EXERCISE

07 November 2022 | Constitution Club, New Delhi

SUPPORTED BY



VIBRANT DEMOCRACY
FOR VIBRANT **भारत**

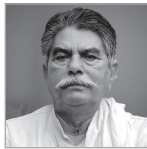
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS



Devesh Chandra Thakur
Chairman,
Bihar Legislative Council



A. N. Shamseer
Speaker
Kerala Legislative Assembly



Awadh Bihari Choudhary
Speaker
Bihar Legislative Assembly



Biman Banerjee
Speaker
West Bengal Legislative Assembly



C. P. Joshi
Speaker
Rajasthan Legislative Assembly



Gian Chand Gupta
Speaker
Haryana Legislative Assembly



Girish Gautam
Speaker, Madhya Pradesh
Legislative Assembly



Kultar Singh Sandhwan
Speaker
Punjab Legislative Assembly



Nimaben Acharya
Speaker
Gujarat Legislative Assembly



Rabindra Nath Mahato
Speaker
Jharkhand Legislative Assembly



Rahul Narwekar
Speaker
Maharashtra Legislative Assembly



Ram Niwas Goel
Speaker
Delhi Legislative Assembly



Ritu Khanduri Bhushan
Speaker
Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly



Satish Mahana
Speaker
Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly



D. H. Shankaramurthy
Former Chairman
Karnataka Legislative Council



K. Swamy Goud
Former Chairman
Telangana Legislative Council



Mohammad Haroon Rashid
Former Chairman
Bihar Legislative Council



Ramraje Naik Nimbalkar
Former Chairman
Maharashtra Legislative Council



Brij Behari Lal Butail
Former Speaker
Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly



Charnjit Singh Atwal
Former Speaker
Punjab Legislative Assembly



Chotisuh Sazo
Former Speaker
Nagaland Legislative Assembly



Dilip Walse Patil
Former Speaker
Maharashtra Legislative Assembly



Dinesh Oraon
Former Speaker
Jharkhand Legislative Assembly



Govind Singh Kunjwal
Former Speaker
Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly



Abu Taher Mondal
Former Speaker
Meghalaya Legislative Assembly



Hitendra Nath Goswami
Former Speaker
Assam Legislative Assembly



K. R. Suresh Reddy
Former Speaker, Andhra Pradesh
Legislative Assembly



Kavinder Gupta
Former Speaker, Jammu &
Kashmir Legislative Assembly



M. B. Rajesh
Former Speaker
Kerala Legislative Assembly



Mata Prasad Pandey
Former Speaker
Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly



Nabam Rebia
Former Speaker, Arunachal
Pradesh Legislative Assembly



Nadendra Manohar
Former Speaker
Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly



P. Sreeramakrishnan
Former Speaker
Kerala Legislative Assembly



Prem Chand Aggarwal
Former Speaker
Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly



Sitasaran Sharma
Former Speaker
Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly



Uday Narain Choudhary
Former Speaker
Bihar Legislative Assembly



V. Vaithilingam
Former Speaker
Puducherry Legislative Assembly



Vijay Kumar Sinha
Former Speaker
Bihar Legislative Assembly

RESEARCH ADVISORY



N. Gopalaswami
Chairman
Ex. Chief Election Commissioner



Om Prakash Rawat
Ex. Chief Election Commissioner



V. S. Sampath
Ex. Chief Election Commissioner



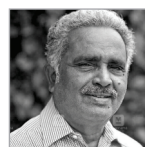
Sunil Arora
Ex. Chief Election Commissioner



Sushil Chandra
Ex. Chief Election Commissioner



Vivek K. Agnihotri
Ex. Secretary General, Rajya Sabha



P. D. T. Achary
Ex. Secretary General, Lok Sabha



Anoop Mishra
Ex. Secretary General, Lok Sabha

The first high-powered visioning conclave for the National Legislators Conference, 2023 was organized on 7th November 2022 at the Constitution Club in New Delhi. It was attended by National leaders of all major political parties, Speakers, former Speakers, Chairpersons, former Chairpersons, former civil servants, and members of academia and civil society. The seed thought of the historic National Legislators Conference can be traced back to the inception of MIT School of Government in Pune in 2005. Over the years, the School has hosted numerous events of National and International importance including the Bharatiya Chhatra Sansad, the National Teachers Congress, the National Women's Parliament, and the Sarpanch Sansad.



The commencement of the visioning conclave began with the ringing of the bell of democracy. It was followed by a welcome address by **Shri N. Gopalswami**, former Chief Election Commissioner of India. He also felicitated all the dignitaries and set the ball rolling with his seed thoughts on the subject. He opined that India must look back in history to regain a spot of honor in the comity of nations. By the end of the 17th century, India's share of the World GDP was around 30%. By the time the British left, it was less than 2%. Since 1947, the nation has made noteworthy efforts despite numerous challenges. He expressed his conviction that the National Legislators Conference will emerge as one such platform that will guide our nation to its cherished destiny.

A team from MIT School of Government, Pune put forward the perspective about the NLC. India is a mother of real democracy and the elevation of Shri Rishi Sunak to the Prime Ministership of Britain is a notable example that proves critics such as Mr. Winston Churchill - wrong regarding the governance capability of Indians. To motivate and train the youth to join politics, the MIT School of Government was initiated by Shri Rahul Karad, and former Chief Election Commissioner, Shri T N Seshan mentored this noble initiative. The School of Government gave birth to mega-platforms such as Bharatiya Chhatra Sansad, National Women's Parliament, Rashtriya Sarpanch Sansad, National Teachers' Congress, etc. These platforms are galvanizing the

youth, women, teachers, and grassroots rural leaders for their vibrant participation in democratic processes. The concept of NLC has emerged out of deliberations on these platforms for more than a decade now. The NLC is to emerge as a continuous, apolitical, and inclusive deliberate body inclined to discuss issues of inclusive development, and electoral reforms via open discussions. The NLC will reaffirm a sense of national integration amongst the legislators, and encourage the healthy exchange of ideas, and good practices. This novel and noble platform will be a reaffirmation of our faith in democracy and constitutional values that will continue to be a beckon of light for people around the World.

The welcome address and concept remarks were followed by the playing of a concept film on the proposed National Legislators Conference to stimulate further discussion between the dignitaries at the visioning conclave.

Expressing his ideas about the National Legislators Conference, **Shri Rahul Karad**, initiator, MIT School of Government, Bharatiya Chhatra Sansad, the National Teachers Congress, the National Women's Parliament, and the Sarpanch Sansad, opined that Bharat's democracy must be strengthened to fight "communalism, criminalization, casteism, and corruption." Reminding the delegates about the presence of politically neutral platforms in other developed countries, he emphasized the need for the National Legislators Conference for scripting the "Story of Bharat."



Smt Sumitra Mahajan, former Speaker, Lok Sabha, and Patron, National Legislators Conference, contended that there is a need to train political leaders to deliver their constitutional duties. She argued, for instance, that the behavior of our lawmakers in the Legislative Assemblies is a cause for concern. The legislature cannot function without discipline and decorum. There is, therefore,

an urgent need to train our legislators on the one hand, and empower the Presiding Officers to punish disruptors on the other. This, according to her, was one of the numerous issues that the National Legislators Conference could address. Defining criteria for participants of the National Legislators Conference, separate sessions for underdeveloped States, and separate sessions for women participants were some other ideas placed before the delegates by Smt Sumitra Mahajan.

Smt Meira Kumar, former Speaker, Lok Sabha, and Patron, National Legislators Conference, described the National Legislators Conference as a “*Kranti*.” She expressed that India is considered a benchmark by World renowned institutions such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association for its democratic governance. However, she reminded the delegates that “our national diversity, demography, and geography are not challenges but a way for us to analyze how well and accurately we are able to implement the ideals espoused by our constitution.” Referring to M.K. Gandhi’s talisman (*Antyodaya*), she argued that the National Legislators Conference should streamline our objectives and embolden our vision of a “*Shashakt Bharat*.”

Shri Shivraj Patil, former Speaker, Lok Sabha, and Patron, National Legislators Conference, expressed his faith in the National Legislators Conference. He highlighted the strength of India’s democracy by reminding the delegates of our secular credentials. According to him, “India’s neighboring countries could not sustain the democratic spirit and that is the reason for their current state.” He emphasized the need for good legislative practices and cited numerous examples from the past to stress his point further.



Following the seed addresses of all Patrons of the Conference, the theme brochure on the “National Legislators Conference” was unveiled by the dignitaries. This was followed by a Press Conference and an Open House Discussion conducted by Shri N. Gopalswami in which he addressed questions about the dates, venue, theme, and number of participants in the Conference.

In the visioning conclave, the delegates expressed their views on pressing issues that could become the subject of discussions in the National Legislators Conference. There was unanimity on the theme and it was agreed that the topics should focus on reforming the institutions of democracy for effective, efficient, and timely delivery of services to the common man.

Shri Vivek Agnihotri, former Secretary General, Rajya Sabha contended that the participants of the National Legislators Conference must represent diverse geographies, political parties, genders, and social backgrounds. Topics such as discipline and decorum inside the legislature, and fixing the minimum number of Assembly sessions could be discussed during the Conference.

Shri Dinesh Chandra Rawat stressed the need to educate voters to improve their participation in the nation's electoral process. He expressed that India's democracy can be strengthened by creating a pool of informed voters.

Shri Gian Chand Gupta, Speaker, Harayana Legislative Assembly cautioned that the success of the National Legislators Conference lies in focused deliberations on pressing issues that are common to all the States. He suggested that the Conference should discuss ongoing topics such as State Funding of Elections, Simultaneous Elections, and training for legislators at all levels.

Shri Charanjit Atwal, former Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha and former Speaker, Punjab Legislative Assembly, expressed that "Education for All" and "Parity in development of States" should be taken up for discussion in the National Legislators Conference. His suggestions were also seconded by other delegates in the conclave.

Shri Vijay Kumar Sinha, former Speaker, Bihar legislative Assembly suggested that politics and politicians have attracted unreasonable criticism. Political leaders are also the subject of character assassination and malignancy. Thus, it is essential to improve the image of politics and politicians in the eyes of ordinary Indians. He also suggested that the Citizens must be made aware of their rights and duties. These topics could be discussed at the National Legislators Conference.

Shri Mohammad Haroon Rashid, former Chairman, Bihar Legislative Council argued that the only way to improve the image of politics in India is by shifting the focus from "politics of Chair to politics of Nation." For him, the Constitutional duties of the legislators must be made the focus of the National Legislators Conference.

Shri kavinder Gupta, former Deputy Chief Minister, Jammu, and Kashmir opined that the National Legislators Conference should be harnessed as a platform to discuss "social reforms and development for all countrymen." The outcome of the conference could be compiled and the recommendations can be presented to the Prime Minister.

Shri Sushil Chandra, former Chief Election Commissioner of India agreed with the views expressed by other Speakers. He emphasized that 15 to 20 topics could be thoroughly discussed and recommendations can be compiled to enhance the quality of the Conference. The topics could include education and health facilities, effective utilization of Question Hour and Zero Hour, and framing questions to be raised in the legislature.

Shri P.D.T. Achary, former Secretary general, Lok Sabha expressed his concerns about the declining sanctity of Parliament. He urged the delegates to discuss Freedom of speech for legislators and secular thinking during the National Legislators Conference.

Shri Shrikant Bharatiya, Member of the Maharashtra Legislative Council pointed out that Members representing backward regions or reserved Constituencies record limited participation in the legislatures. He asserted that the National Legislators Conference should emerge as a platform where first-time legislators, and SC, and ST legislators should be given adequate opportunity to express themselves openly and freely.

Shri Avinash Dharmadhikari, Director, Chanakya Mandal highlighted that the National Legislators Conference must emerge as a platform for discussing “Democracy for India and Indian Democracy for all.” He urged the delegates to conduct politically neutral deliberations on emerging technology, climate change, and India’s GDP growth vis-à-vis our neighbors.

Shri Nanik Rupani, former President, Indian Merchants Chamber expressed that technology is playing an important role in shaping our societies. However, the sphere of politics and politicians is the last to embrace such changes. He expressed his desire that the National Legislators Conference should emerge as a platform for discussing “technology as a tool of governance and development.”

Following the addresses by the delegates, the website for the National Legislators Conference was launched by the dignitaries in the Conclave. The website has been designed to facilitate live updates and information about the National Legislators Conference.



To express his words of gratitude, **Shri Rahul Karad** delivered the vote of thanks, and contended that the National Legislators Conference will emerge as an independent forum in the coming years, and the roadmap for Bharat @ 2047 will be envisaged with the collective efforts of all the committed citizens, thought leaders, academia, industry experts, the civil society, Non-Governmental Organizations, and last but not the least, the political leaders.