

ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ: DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: _____

President

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: _____

The Hindu

ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE : 24/11/2019

Governors' role vital for healthy federalism: Kovind

President, PM stress role in bringing administration closer to the people

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President Ram Nath Kovind on Saturday said Governors had a very important role in the country's constitutional system, particularly in the context of cooperative and healthy competitive federalism.

In his inaugural address at the two-day Conference of Governors and Lieutenant Governors, the President said Governors could use their constitutional powers to improve the lives of tribal people. He said the development and empowerment of tribal people was linked to inclusive growth and internal security.

"The Governors' role becomes even more important when we are emphasising on cooperative federalism and healthy competitive federalism in the interest of progress of the country," the President said.

Service function

"Ultimately, we all work for the public and we are also answerable to them," he said, adding that a Governor's role was not only limited to the protection and preservation of the Constitution but was also to remain per-

sistent in the service and welfare of people of their States.

Addressing the inaugural session, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated that the institution of the Governor had a special role to play in realising a cooperative and competitive federal structure.

He said due to their administrative structure, the Union Territories could emerge as a role model in terms of development.

Mr. Modi said the Governor's role in bringing the administrative machinery closer to the people and showing them the correct path would become even more important in the coming days.

"As we celebrate 70 years of the framing of the Indian Constitution, Governors and State governments should also work towards highlighting the service aspects of the Indian Constitution, in particular the duties and responsibilities of the citizens. This will help to bring about participatory governance in the truest sense," the Prime Minister said.

For tribal welfare

"As we celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Governors and Lt. Governors can utilise this occasion to project the abiding relevance of Gandhian thoughts and values, an important bedrock of our Con-

stitution," he said, adding that in their roles as Chancellors of universities, Governors could help inculcate the values of nation-building among the youth and inspire them towards greater achievements.

The Prime Minister urged the Governors to work towards the uplift of underprivileged sections, including the Scheduled Tribes, minority communities, women and the youth.

Mr. Modi said the 50th edition of the Conference would see innovative and detailed discussions on tribal issues, reforms in agriculture, Jal Jeevan Mission, New Education Policy and Governance for 'Ease of Living'.



High-level meet: President Ram Nath Kovind with Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah at the Governors' meet. ■PTI