

## INDIA POLICY FORUM 2026

August 5-7, 2026

NCAER, T-2 Auditorium,  
11, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi 110002

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### Wednesday, August 5, 2026

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7:00 pm

**Pre-Conference Dinner**

The Oberoi Hotel

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### Thursday, August 6, 2026

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8:45 am

**Registration and Coffee/Tea**

9:00–9:15 am

**Welcome Remarks**

**Suresh Goyal**, Director General, NCAER

9:15–9:25 am

**Lighting of the Lamp**

#### Session 1

9:25–9:45 am

**IPF Keynote Address**

**Nandan Nilekani**, Co-Founder and Chairman, Infosys; Chairman, NCAER Governing Board

#### Session 2

9:45–11:15 am

**Economic Reforms, Growth Agenda, Ease of Doing Business, and Deregulation**

Chair: **S. Mahendra Dev**, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister

Speakers: **Ajay Shah**, Senior Research Fellow and Co-founder, XKDR Forum  
**Akshay Jaitly**, Founding Partner, Trilegal

Discussants:

- (1) **Devesh Kapur**, Starr Foundation Professor of South Asia Studies, Johns Hopkins University
- (2) **Pravin Krishna**, Chung Ju Yung Professor of International Economics, Johns Hopkins University
- (3) **Rana Hasan**, Director, Centre for Economic Growth of States, NCAER; formerly Regional Economic Advisor, South Asia Department, Asian Development Bank

11:15–11:35 am

**Coffee/Tea**

#### Session 3

11:35–12:00 noon

**Address & Release of the IPF 2025 Volume**

Release of the *IPF 2025 Volume*

Panel:

- (1) **Manish Sabharwal**, Co-founder, TeamLease Services and Vice Chairman, NCAER Governing Board
- (2) **Franziska Ohnsorge**, Chief Economist, Asia, The World Bank
- (3) **Anil K. Sharma**, Secretary and Operations Director, NCAER
- (4) **Karthik Muralidharan**, Tata Chancellor's Professor of Economics, University of California, San Diego; Non-resident Senior Fellow, NCAER

(5) **Pravin Krishna**, Chung Ju Yung Professor of International Economics, Johns Hopkins University

12:00–12:30 pm      Keynote Address  
**Ashok Lahiri**, Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog

**12:30–1:30 pm      Lunch**

**Session 3**

1:30–3:00 pm      **India's Development Dreams: A Macro-structural Perspective**

Speakers:      Chair:      **Poonam Gupta**, Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India  
**Alok Johri**, Professor, McMaster University  
                                         **Amartya Lahiri**, Professor, University of British Columbia

Discussants:  
(1) **Aurélien Kruse**, Lead Economist, The World Bank  
(2) **Soumyakanti Ghosh**, Group Chief Economic Advisor, State Bank of India

3:00–3:15 pm      **Coffee/Tea**

**Session 4**

3:15–4:15 pm      **Talk**

Chair:      **Manish Sabharwal**, Co-founder, TeamLease Services; Vice Chairman, NCAER Governing Board

**Lecture on State-driven reform Agenda**

**Arvind Panagariya**, Professor of Economics, Columbia University; formerly, Chairman, 16<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission

**Technological, Institutional and Policy Innovations in Era of Significant Global Changes: Lessons from History and Prospects for the Future**

**Arunava Majumdar**, Dean, Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability, Stanford University

**Session 5**

4:15–5:30 pm      **Evolving Role of Think Tanks in Evidence-based Policymaking**

Chair: **Rajendra Pawar**, Chairman and Co-founder, NIIT

Panel:  
(1) **Suresh Goyal**, Director General, NCAER  
(2) **Poonam Gupta**, Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India  
(3) **Shekhar Shah**, Chair of Academic Advisory Council and Board Member, Indian School of Public Policy; and Advisory Board Member, Centre for Development Economics and Sustainability, Monash University  
(4) **Suman Bery**, Former Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog  
(5) **Rakesh Mohan**, President and Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress  
(6) **Shashanka Bhide**, Honorary Senior Advisor, NCAER

5:30–6:10 pm      **Coffee/Tea**

**6:15 pm      All attendees will be seated**

**Session 6**

6:30–7:45 pm

**CD Deshmukh Lecture**

Chair: **Manish Sabharwal**, Co-founder, TeamLease Services and Vice Chairman, NCAER Governing Board

Speaker: **Nirmala Sitharaman**, Hon'ble Minister of Finance; and Minister of Corporate Affairs, Government of India

6:30 pm Arrival **Suresh Goyal**, Director General, NCAER

6:35–6:40 pm Introduction **Manish Sabharwal**

6:40–7:00 pm Lecture: **Viksit Bharat: Our Ambition and Destiny**  
**Nirmala Sitharaman**, Hon'ble Minister of Finance; and Minister of Corporate Affairs, Government of India

7:00–7:35 pm Q&A **Manish Sabharwal**

7:35–7:40 pm Vote of Thanks **Suresh Goyal**

**7:45 pm Drinks & Dinner at NCAER Campus**

**Friday, August 7, 2026**

8:45 am

**Registration and Coffee/Tea****Session 7**

9:00–10:30 am

**Macro Perspective of Bihar's Development: Achievements, Unfinished Agenda, and the Way Forward**

Chair: **Arvind Panagariya**, Professor, Columbia University; formerly, Chairman, 16<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission

Speakers: **Ratna Sahay**, Professor, NCAER  
**Santosh Kumar Gautam**, Professor, University of Notre Dame  
**Aakash Dev**, Fellow, NCAER

Discussants:

- (1) **Karthik Muralidharan**, Tata Chancellor's Professor of Economics, University of California, San Diego; Non-resident Senior Fellow, NCAER
- (2) **Pratyaya Amrit**, Chief Secretary, Bihar (TBC)

10:30–10:50 am **Coffee/Tea**

**Session 8**

10:50–12:15 pm

**Is Food Processing the Missing Link in Development?**

Chair: **Avinash Purushottam Das Joshi**, Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing

Speaker: **Shoumitro Chatterjee**, Assistant Professor, Johns Hopkins University

Discussants:

- (1) **Mekhala Krishnamurthy**, Associate Professor, Ashoka University
- (2) **Shilpa Aggarwal**, Associate Professor, Indian School of Business
- (3) **Harish Damodaran**, National Editor, *The Indian Express*

**Session 9**

12:15–1:30 pm

**Talk: Industry Innovation and allied sectors**

Chair: **Ashish Dhawan**, Founder, TCF; Member, NCAER Governing Board

Keynote: **Anuradha Thakur**, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs

Speaker: **Ufuk Akcigit**, Arnold C. Harberger Professor of Economics, University of Chicago

**1:30–2:15 pm Lunch**

**Session 10**  
2:15–3:45 pm

**The Persistence of Contract Labour: Evidence from Indian Manufacturing**

Chair: **Vandana Gurnani**, Secretary, Ministry of Labour

Speakers: **Rahul Singh**, Assistant Professor, SP Jain Institute of Management and Research  
**Vidhya Soundararajan**, Assistant Professor, Centre for Advanced Financial Research and Learning (CAFRAL)

Discussants:

- (1) **Farzana Afridi**, Visiting Professor, NCAER; Professor, Indian Statistical Institute, Delhi
- (2) **Ritam Chaurey**, Assistant Professor, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University
- (3) **Radhicka Kapoor**, Senior Employment Specialist, Decent Work Team for South Asia, International Labour Organization (ILO)
- (4) **Reshma Anand**, Regional Director, Ford Foundation

3:45–4:00 pm

**Coffee/Tea**

**Session 11**  
4:00–5:30 pm

**Panel: Growing Impact of AI and DPI**

Moderator: **Manish Sabharwal**

Panel

- (1) **V. Anantha Nageswaran**, Chief Economic Advisor, Government of India
- (2) **Jean-Louis Arcand**, Professor, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (TBC)
- (3) **Ravi Bapna**, Curtis L. Carlson Chair Professor in Business Analytics and Information Systems, University of Minnesota
- (4) **Shankar Maruwada**, Co-founder and CEO, EkStep Foundation/Co-founder and CEO, Centre for Digital Public Infrastructure
- (5) **Sanjay Jain**, Director – Digital Public Infrastructure, Gates Foundation

5:30–6:00 pm

**Coffee/Tea**

**Session 12**  
6:00–7:30 pm

**TN Srinivasan Memorial Lecture (Title TBD)**

Chair: **Suman Bery**, Former Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog

Speaker: **Chang-Tai Hsieh**, Phyllis and Irwin Winkelried Distinguished Service Professor of Economics and PCL Faculty Scholar, University of Chicago

7:30–7:45 pm

**Vote of Thanks**

**Anil K. Sharma**, Secretary and Operations Director, NCAER

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**8:00 pm**

**Dinner**

## Workshop on Policy Dialogues on Advancing State Capacity in Governance, Public Finance and Sustainable Growth

To provide a platform for policymakers, researchers, academicians, and State Governments to deliberate on key policy challenges and opportunities in strengthening state capacity for achieving the vision of *Viksit Bharat @2047*, this workshop aims to facilitate evidence-based discussions on improving governance, public finances and promoting sustainable growth. It will also encourage knowledge sharing, dissemination of global best practices, and foster collaboration between governments, academia, and research institutions to support informed policymaking.

9:30–9:45

**Inaugural Opening Remarks, CEO NITI Aayog**

9:45–10:00

**Keynote Address, Ashok Lahiri, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog**

10:00–10:15

**Address by, Suresh Goyal, Director General, NCAER**

### Session 1

10:30–11:30 am

**State Governance and Finances**

Chair **Arvind Panagariya**, Professor, Columbia University; formerly, Chairman, 16<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission

Panel

- (1) **Alok Johri**, Professor, McMaster University
- (2) **Amartya Lahiri**, Professor, The University of British Columbia  
Topic of presentation to be indicated (10 min)
- (3) **Ravi Bapna**, Curtis L. Carlson Chair Professor in Business Analytics and Information Systems, University of Minnesota  
Governance challenges in context of technology (10 min)
- (4) **Suresh Goyal**, Director General, NCAER  
Asset Monetisation (10 min)
- (5) Closing Remarks by Chair (10 min)

### Session 2

11:40–12:30 pm

**Industrial Policies**

Chair and Moderator: **Franziska Ohnsorge**, Chief Economist for Asia, The World Bank

Panellists:

- (1) **Nagesh Kumar**, Director and Chief Executive, Institute for Studies in Industrial Development
- (2) **Laveesh Bhandari**, President and Senior Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress (CSEP)
- (3) **Shekhar Aiyar**, Director and Chief Executive, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)
- (4) **Chang-Tai Hsieh**, Phyllis and Irwin Winkelried Distinguished Service Professor of Economics and PCL Faculty Scholar, University of Chicago
- (5) **Anil K. Sharma**, Secretary and Operations Director, NCAER

**12:30–2:00 pm Networking Lunch**

### Session 3

2:00–3:10 pm **SDGs – Mapping Budgetary Expenditure to Outcomes**

Chair **R. Balasubramaniam**, Member, NITI Aayog

Panel:

- (1) **Rajib Kumar Sen**, PD (SDG)  
Setting the context

**(2) Santosh Kumar Gautam**, Professor of Development and Global Health Economics,  
University of Notre Dame  
Topic of presentation to be indicated

**(3)**  
Topic of presentation to be indicated

**(4) Sonalde Desai**, Professor and Director, NCAER-National Data Innovation Centre (NDIC)  
Topic of presentation to be indicated

#### **Session 4**

3:10–4:00 pm

**Valedictory: A representative from the State Government - to be Identified  
On key takeaways from the conference**

**(1) K.V. Raju**, Member, NITI Aayog  
Topic to be decided

**(2) Manish Sabharwal**, Co-founder, TeamLease Services; Vice Chairman, NCAER  
Governing Board

**Vote of Thanks, Suresh Goyal**, Director General, NCAER

4:00–5:30 pm

**Networking High Tea**