



Public Affairs Forum of India

Press Release

Innovation in transport and indigenous capabilities are future areas for country's growth: **Shri. Nitin Jairam Gadkari**

- **The Minister talked about areas to minimise cost of imports in aviation fuel through indigenous solution of bio-fuel**
- **The Minister highlighted priorities on identifying and developing innovative models aimed to solve India's water challenges**

New Delhi, September 14, 2018: The government will look to the private sector to contribute and partner in areas related to building greater infrastructure, especially in the area of waterways, according to **Shri. Nitin Jairam Gadkari, Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Shipping and Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation in the Government of India**, while inaugurating PAFI's (Public Affairs Forum of India) 5th National- The 2018 India Public Affairs Forum.

He was seeking greater private participation in the upcoming waterway that the government is developing between Varanasi and Allahabad, which will be expanded to help companies export to neighbouring countries in the East. Shri Gadkari said that the cost of using the waterways would be far more competitive than what is currently available through the train or road route.

Shri Gadkari emphasised the need to innovate, developing indigenous solutions and adoption of technology for finding solutions to several issues that the country is facing today including the rising cost of fuel. He said that import cost of aviation fuel can be solved through use of indigenously produced bio-fuel for the aviation industry.

Quoting Gandhiji's adage that this country belongs to rural India, Hon'ble minister, Shri. Nitin Jairam Gadkari, said, "Rural development is crucial to the well-being of the overall Indian economy and the Government of India's priority is the upliftment of rural infrastructure, and providing quality education, clean drinking water and employment opportunities. Agriculture is an area that faces water challenges and we are working towards harnessing our resources by building dams and different kinds of innovative models for effective water conservation."

The biggest agenda for the country today is to create a new paradigm that meets the aspirations of young population. This requires vision and the ability to create policies and responses that adopts a bottom-up approach so that the impact is felt by a large section of the population. No development can be achieved till all stakeholder's work in tandem.

Speaking on the potential of country's youth, Shri Gadkari said, "Our future is related with knowledge which is best defined as a combination of Science, technology, research and innovation. These together with the speed to develop and deliver are the new strengths that the country will bank on. Conversion of knowledge into wealth is the practical vision of the country."

Congratulating the team of PAFI for their contributions, Shri. Gadkari said, "The people at today's forum- CEOs, business owners and public affairs professionals, can play a critical role in identifying solutions to India's import costs. Institutions like PAFI can inspire youth of the country to contribute in nation building by giving them appropriate reason to partner in country's success."



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Speaking at the inaugural address, Mr. Hari S Bhartia, Past President, CII & Co-Chairman & Founder, Jubilant Bhartia Group, said, "Building trust across the stakeholders continues to be of paramount importance not just in our country but globally. Today, it is the need for companies to be seen as authentic and transparent and through this strengthen their engagement with stakeholders. This new scenario of connecting with stakeholders calls for a paradigm shift where businesses move away from quarter to quarter focus to something which is long term."

Applauding efforts of PAFI, Mr Bhartia said, "For me PAFI is a *network of networks*. The people in public affairs are those who help the founders, the CEOs and us, understand and remember that the business is not just about making profit but also about engaging with the stakeholders."

At the inaugural dinner on 13th September 2018, **Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, National Institution for Transforming India, NITI Aayog** said, "In the last four years, amount of work current government has done to improve governance, structural reforms, rapid growth with reasonable macroeconomic stability, is significant. India has now come to a sweet spot. PAFI enshrines the culture that we want to develop in the country in business and commerce and its relations with the government."

With the theme of "**Public Affairs: The New Paradigm**", PAFI's 5th National Forum focused on the direction and fulfilment of the Government's several initiatives and various strategies corporates need to adopt for an effective advocacy, public policy & public affairs programme and engagements.

This year, **PAFI completes 10 years of service in fields of Advocacy, Public Policy and Public Affairs.** Some of the key issues & policies the Forum deliberated on include Ease of doing Business, Make in India programme, 2019 Elections, Government Policies & Frontier Technologies, Global Geopolitical Outlook, India's Economic Outlook, Global Trade Issues etc.

Some of the eminent speakers at the forum include: Shri. Ramesh Abhishek, Secretary, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion; Shri. C K Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India; Shri. Shyam Saran, Former Foreign Secretary Government of India; Ambassador V S Seshadri, Former Vice Chairman, Research & Information System for Developing Countries (RIS); Nadir Patel, High Commissioner of Canada in India; Alok Chaturvedi, Director General Directorate General of Foreign Trade; Mr. Richard van der Merwe, Vice Chairman & Managing Director, Bayer CorpScience Ltd; Mr. Puneet Dalmia, Managing Director, Dalmia Bharat Group; Mr. Shardul Shroff, Executive Chairman, and Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co.; Shihab Ansari Azhar, Senior Private Sector Specialist, World Bank amongst several others.

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Press contact:
Lakshmi Kanchaan
+91 9810244727
lakshmi.kanchaan@pafi.in