

**NITI AAYOG'S INDEX**

# Gujarat tops states on water management

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**NEW DELHI:** Despite the ongoing water crisis in Gujarat, the state has topped the federal think tank NITI Aayog's composite water management index released on Thursday.

Jharkhand is the worst performer, leading a group of 15 states that perform poorly.

The report has predicted that by 2030, the country's water demand is projected to be twice the available supply, implying severe water scarcity for hundreds of millions of people.

Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra are behind Gujarat on the index, among states that have performed relatively well.

In the northeastern and Himalayan states, Tripura has been adjudged as the top state in 2016-17 followed by Himachal

**THE REPORT PREDICTS THAT BY 2030, INDIA'S WATER DEMAND WOULD BE TWICE THE SUPPLY CURRENTLY AVAILABLE, INDICATING SEVERE SCARCITY FOR MILLIONS**

Pradesh, Sikkim and Assam.

The think tank ranked all states across nine broad sectors with 28 different indicators covering various aspects of ground water, restoration of water bodies, irrigation, farm practices, drinking water, policy and governance, NITI CEO Amitabh Kant said.

According to a 175-page report on the index released by Minister for Water Resources Nitin Gadkari, Jharkhand, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are

worst performing states in water management.

"In terms of incremental change in index (over 2015-16 level), Rajasthan holds number one position in general states and Tripura ranks at first position amongst North Eastern and Himalayan states," the report said.

The report said India is suffering from the worst water crisis in its history and millions of lives and livelihoods are under threat.

"Currently, 600 million Indians face high to extreme water stress and about two lakh people die every year due to inadequate access to safe water," it said, adding that the crisis is only going to get worse.

According to the report, 52 per cent of India's agricultural area remains dependent on rainfall so the future expansion of irrigation needs to be focused on last-mile efficiency.