

‘India world leader in Biotechnology’

# Kathua emerging as North India’s StartUp nerve centre: Dr Jitendra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said here on Thursday that while India is emerging as world leader in Biotechnology, Kathua with North India's first Biotech Industrial Park is emerging as North India's StartUp nerve centre.

In his address at the inauguration of Biotech Startups Expo on "Emerging StartUp Trends in North India at Biotech Park, Kathua today, he said the Biotech ecosystem in the country is emerging at a rapid pace, with more than 6500 start-ups and 75 Bio-incubators set up by Department of Biotechnology (DBT) - Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).

Dr Singh informed that India's BioEconomy has experienced a remarkable surge of 29 percent, surpassing the significant milestone of \$100 billion. The BioEconomy has reached an impressive \$137.2 billion in 2022. Each month, India's BioEconomy has contributed \$11.4 billion to the national GDP, Dr Singh added. He



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh speaking after inauguration of Mega Expo "Emerging StartUp Trends in North India" by Vice President of India, Jagdeep Thakkar, at Biotech Industrial Park, Kathua.

said India's collective efforts and advancements in the biotechnology sector underscore the nation's potential as a global player in the field, he stated.

The Union Minister said the innovation ecosystem continues to flourish, and India aspires to become one of the top 5 Global Bio-manufacturing Hubs, and also among the top 10 biotechnology destinations globally. The rise of Biotech Startups is pivotal for the country's future economy. These start-ups have experienced remarkable growth, increasing from just about 50 in 2014 to over 6,756 in 2022, he said.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that as India moves forward, it is imperative that we now focus on the sustainability and scale up of the innovators and enterprises and continue to provide an enabling ecosystem to ensure that we can create a national and global impact. "The startups and companies are now getting recognized because of their efforts towards the betterment of the society. We have come a long way in nurturing the talent pool, and providing opportunities to startups to seed, succeed and scale", the minister said.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, "The emerging Biotech ecosystem at Jammu has been supported to nurture the Innovation ecosystem in the UT of J&K. This Biotech Park at Kathua is scripting the emergence of a biotech start-up ecosystem. This has created a good platform for Industry-Academia collaborations."

The Union Minister said that now is the time to forge broader synergy among all professions to achieve the "Amrit Kaal" goals over the next 25 years. He stated that the next 25 years are very crucial for the country, and when India would be celebrating its 100 years of independence in 2047, the youth of Kathua

would be among the great contributors towards making India a 'Vishwa Guru'.

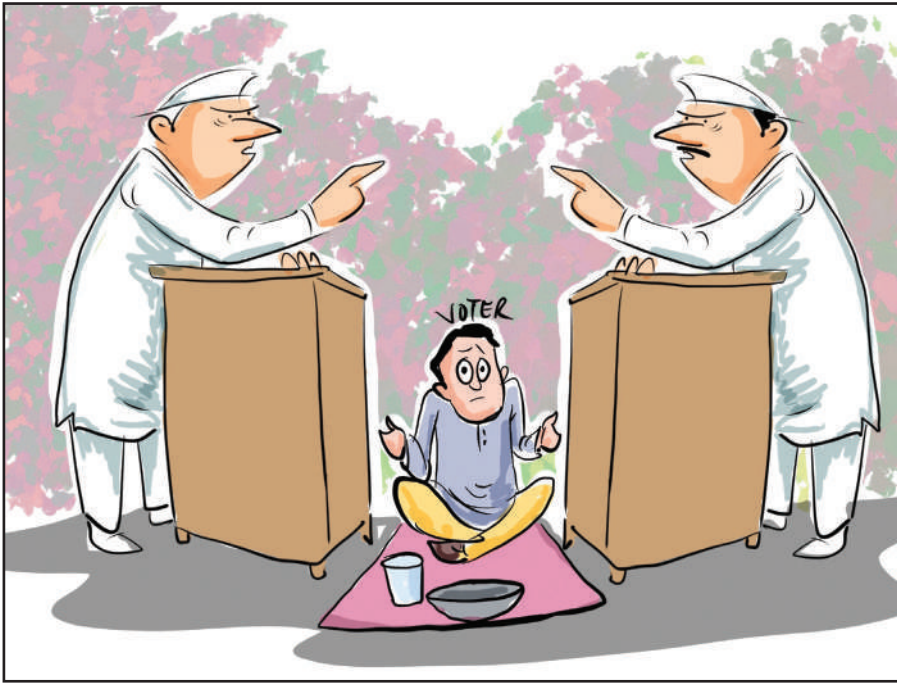
The Expo witnessed more than 200 delegates participating in the expo and 25 Biotech Startups that showcased their innovations in different areas of biotechnology. The participating Startups were engaged in solving local problems leveraging local resources such as medicinal plants, aromatic and essential oil-bearing plants for developing therapeutics.

The StartUp expo also witnessed

participation of increasing number of women entrepreneurs who showcased their products and technologies. At least 5 women led StartUps were present at the expo.

This one-day event also had closed-door interactions with Industry, academia, Scientists, Entrepreneurs and local Public Representatives.

Representatives from DBT, BIRAC, Autonomous institutes and the scientific community were also present at the event.



## CCI Jammu delegation calls on Nitin Gadkari

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A delegation of Chamber of Commerce & Industry Jammu led by its President Arun Gupta along with Anil Gupta, Sr. Vice President CCI, Rajeev Gupta, Jr. Vice President CCI, Manish Gupta, Secretary General CCI and Rajesh Gupta Secretary CCI called on Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Road, Transport and Highways at New Delhi and briefed him about the concerns regarding the proposed construction designs of Katra-Delhi express way especially Kunjwani to Narwal section and Kunjwani to Satwari section and submitted a memorandum.

Two of our senior members Devender Rana, Seh Parbhari BJP Himachal State Unit and Sham Lal Langer, Ex-Sr. Vice President CCI who were present at Delhi were requested by Arun Gupta to accompany the delegation. During interaction Arun Gupta said that Jammu & Kashmir is currently experiencing unprecedented development under your leadership. Massive infrastructure projects are transforming the Union Territory, contributing significantly to its overall growth and prosperity.

He also expressed that certain



CCI Jammu delegation calling on Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Road, Transport and Highways at New Delhi.

concerns and recommendations regarding the ongoing infrastructure development projects in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir; particularly the Katra Delhi Expressway. Arun Gupta drew the attention of the Minister to the proposed construction design of the expressway flyover between Kunjwani to Narwal, which includes the implementation of blind walls. While we acknowledge the importance of infrastructure development, we are concerned that the blind walls on both sides of the expressway may disrupt vital connections between shops, businesses, and residences.

The blind walls may not align with the current needs of the community and may cause inconvenience to residents, hinder emergency services, and impact the daily commutes of pedestrians.

About 6 kms away from the project starting point at 515 KM +000, a wholesale fruit market, mandi and garages for heavy vehicles, including body-building units of trucks and buses, are situated. The project will impact 502 commercial establishments (approx.), which include 365 shops, 10 Vehicle showrooms including Private Vehicles, Construction equipment along with their service centers, 37 godowns, 5 Schools, 65 office spaces, 7 Hospitals, 5 Malls, and 8 shops in sheds in both government and private structures. In addition to the commercial establishments, the impact of 65 shopkeepers are in great danger with the construction

of proposed flyover from Kunjwani to Satwari section, upto the Government College for Women in Gandhi Nagar, Jammu. Understanding the importance of these businesses in supporting the local community, we earnestly request your office to consider a slight shift of the flyover by 1.5 meters to save the livelihoods of atleast 45 shopkeepers. This adjustment would not only preserve the economic stability of these families but also showcase the government's commitment to supporting local businesses.

We trust that your esteemed office will consider our concerns and recommendations with the seriousness they deserve. Your intervention in these matters will undoubtedly contribute to the success of the Katra Delhi Expressway while ensuring the well-being of the local communities it serves.

Nitin Gadkari telephonic talked to the Chairman NHAI regarding the issues discussed in the meeting. He also assured that he will personally look into the issues and find out the solution regarding the above problems.. he also said that we are of the opinion that the general public should not be harassed while taking up the developmental projects.

The portion from Kunjwani to Narwal encompasses residential and commercial areas, and we believe that a community-friendly pillar-based design for the expressway flyover would be more suitable. Additionally, they said livelihood of 65 shopkeepers are in great danger with the construction

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## VBSY by Modi govt for welfare of weakest, neglected sections: Sham Lal



Vice-President, J&K BJP, Sham Lal Sharma listening to public issues.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: PM's 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' testifies the commitment of the Narendra Modi government to ensure the welfare of the weakest and the most neglected sections of the society, said Sham Lal Sharma, former minister and Vice-President, J&K BJP.

Sham Lal Sharma accompanied by BJP Secretary Vikas Choudhary and Incharge Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan Dil Bahadur Jamwal, listened to the grievances of a large number of people from different areas of Jammu province.

The visiting people, individually and in deputations, from Udhampur, Khushipura Srinagar, Tral Srinagar, Sungali Mandi Samba, Majalta Udhampur, Khour Akhnor, Doda, Batote, Sunderbani presented the issues like ownership rights of Ghaascharai land, family dispute, revenue record issue, repair of tube well, repair of Mark-2 handpump, review waiting list criteria of JKSSB, issue in Agricultural University and other issues were also presented in the grievances camp.

Sham Lal, while speaking on the occasion, said that only Bharatiya Janata Party works on the basic mantra of service to all and welfare of all. He said that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi

led Union government at the centre is working with the same principle in letter and spirit and has reached every person in the remotest village in these ten years. He said that the Prime Minister's 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' is another endeavour of Modi government to ensure that the public welfare schemes initiated by the government for the welfare of the specific groups and the sections reach the intended population and aid the socio-economic upliftment of the needy persons from those underprivileged sections.

Vikas Choudhary reiterated the commitment of the Modi government for the bright future of the youth stressing on the entrepreneurship avenues and said that the youth are already making the nation and their parents proud.

Dil Bahadur Singh Jamwal stressed that the senior party leaders are available to the public on the daily basis in the party headquarter, where people visit to get the best possible solutions to their issues.

Vikas Choudhary and Dil Bahadur Jamwal carried out the grievances camp proceedings and diazied the issues presented in the camp.

Sanjita Dogra, BJP Mahila Morecha President was also present on the occasion.

## DC Jammu devices SOPs for utility relocation to facilitate execution of dev works

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: District Development Commissioner Sachin Kumar Vaishya on Thursday chaired a meeting of key departments to formulate standard Operating Procedure for shifting utilities, thereby eliminating unnecessary delays and bottlenecks in the execution of developmental works.

The meeting brought together senior functionaries from Public Works, Jal Shakti, UEED and Power Development who discussed mutually agreeable solutions to overcome challenges related to shifting utilities and infrastructure assets to facilitate smooth execution of projects. The utility relocation entails: road excavation for the laying of pipelines, shifting of electricity poles for road widening and other similar works.

"Smooth execution of works requires cohesive interdepartmental coordination," remarked the DDC. "By fostering collaboration and prioritising public welfare, we can eliminate unnecessary hindrances, ultimately facilitating faster development."

Sachin emphasised a principle of minimal disruption. "Limited and judicious damage



DDC Sachin Kumar Vaishya chairing a meeting.

to existing utilities is acceptable only with immediate repairs," he stated, "and that too, with the presence and approval of concerned representatives and on mutually agreed terms." Prior information exchange was also highlighted as crucial to enabling departments to plan smooth relocations, minimising disruptions as the last resort.

To ensure comprehensive action, DDC Vaishya called for a compiled list of all critical interdepartmental issues related to utility relocation. This proactive approach aims to equip the authorities with a holistic understanding of existing bottlenecks, allowing for the development of targeted solutions.

Furthermore, each depart-

ment was given the opportunity to voice their specific challenges and the financial implications arising from delays caused by interdepartmental formalities. This open dialogue provided valuable insights for crafting streamlined procedures that address practical concerns alongside efficiency.

The meeting was attended by Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle Jammu Vivek Kohli, SE PWD North Jugal Kishore, SE PWD South Ashvani Kumar, Executive Engineer PHE Rural Ashish Khajuria, Ex En PWD R&B City East Satish Bhagat, Ex En R&B Nagrota Sunil Thussoo, Ex En R&B Akhnor Sunil Dogra, Chief Planning Officer Uttam Singh among others.

## Altaf Bukhari calls on HM; expresses anguish over Poonch civilian deaths

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party President, Mohammad Altaf Bukhari called on Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi on Thursday and expressed profound anguish over the deaths of three civilians in Poonch recently.

According to a party statement issued here, during the meeting, Altaf Bukhari urged the Home Minister to ensure that those involved in the deaths of three civilians in Poonch are brought to justice and given severe punishment.

He said, "People in Jammu and Kashmir are deeply hurt due to this incident. They seek justice. The individuals responsible must face receive severe punishment."

Bukhari also emphasised



JKAP President, Mohammad Altaf Bukhari calling on Union Home Minister Amir Shah in New Delhi.

that while dealing with militancy and terrorism, security agencies must ensure that no civilian deaths or human rights violations occur. Civilian killings cannot and should not be tolerated, he added.

"On this, the Home Minister assured Bukhari that it would be ensured that no civilian deaths occur in the future, and those responsible for the

recent deaths of three civilians will face the law of the land," the statement stated.

Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari also brought the issue of the ongoing power crisis in J&K to the notice of the Home Minister and sought an additional supply of electricity to address pressing needs during the harsh winter days in Jammu and Kashmir.

## KVK Kulgam installs automatic weather station at Pombay campus

## Farmers will receive early warnings about potential threats to their environment: Officials

■ SHAKEELA ANDRABI

SRINAGAR: In Kulgam, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) has taken a significant step towards empowering farmers and orchardists by installing an Automatic Weather Station at its Pombay campus. The installation of the weather station is part of the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP).

"The weather station has been installed mainly to benefit the farming community," KVK Pombay Kulgam Senior Scientist and Head, Manzoor Ahmad said.

He said the multifunctional weather station offers comprehensive real-time updates on various factors, including wind direction, temperature, humidity, wind speed, soil temperature, soil moisture, solar radiation, solar intensity and insights into

pest activity.

Highlighting the energy of the station, Manzoor emphasized that its main objective is pest detection and providing farmers with early warnings about potential threats to their environment.

He also mentioned that those who have registered with the Krishi Vigyan Kendra receive good-quality support in farming. Additionally, he added that in the event the spray is washed away by rain, it may lead to scab and fungal infections attacking the orchards.

"The proactive approach of the weather station enables farmers to make timely decisions, such as scheduling orchard sprays based on weather forecasts, preventing economic losses due to the high costs and labour associated with pesticides," he said.

The officer further

emphasised that the weather station is a government initiative, and people should benefit from such development.

"There are 29 HADP projects, and people should avail themselves of the benefits of these projects. Last time, we demonstrated a drone based on sensors. The drone automatically sprays the areas that require spraying," he said.

Manzoor said, the ability to measure soil moisture is another game-changer. He said precise information about soil moisture allows farmers to irrigate more efficiently, conserving water resources and preventing overwatering, which can damage crops.

He added, the AWS can monitor pest activity, further empowering farmers to implement targeted pest control measures and protect their crop.

has been a guiding force in propelling the ODOP initiatives in the region.

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, and Textiles, Piyush Goyal, extended congratulations to the Indian Missions Abroad, states and district awardees. He urged upon them to continue motivating others to promote ODOP products, benefiting local weavers, artisans, and farmers.

Piyush Goyal highlighted the efforts of Indian Missions Abroad in promoting ODOP during the G20 summit and expressed anticipation for the continued growth of the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Utsav in the coming years.

Union Minister of External Affairs, Dr. S Jaishankar, who is also the Chief Guest on the occasion, emphasized the significant role of ODOP in representing India's diversity on the global stage. He shared instances of presenting local ODOP products to global leaders during India's G20 Presidency, highlighting the initiative's impact on foreign policy, foreign economic policy and foreign commerce policy.

Dr. Jaishankar expressed confidence that ODOP would contribute towards stronger tourism in the coming years as more people become aware of the rich art, culture, and history associated with different regions of India.

Pertinently, JKTPO has been instrumental in promotion of ODOP and remains steadfast in its commitment to further boost these initiatives. A comprehensive activity plan, dedicated to promotion of ODOP products in Jammu and Kashmir, has been devised to further boost the ODOP with focus on products of each district. The JKTPO with the support of the government will take further proactive steps to foster growth and recognition of ODOP products in the region.