

Dr Jitendra convenes meeting of Northeast Technology Institutes, emphasises enabling ecosystem

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

WOKHA: Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, and MoS in the Prime Minister Office, Dept. of Space and Atomic Energy chaired a high-level joint meeting of all the Technology institutes operating in the Northeast, along with key departments of the State government, here today.

During the meeting, Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized the recent breakthroughs achieved in the region due to an enabling ecosystem fostered by the Government's strong inclination towards science, technology, and innovation. He reiterated the importance of not limiting scientific advancement to central areas but expanding it actively into peripheral and remote regions - particularly the Northeastern states, which hold immense untapped potential.

Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted the rich biodiversity of the region and identified agriculture and allied sectors, along with tourism and film



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh chairing a high-level joint meeting of all the Technology institutes operating in the Northeast, along with key departments of the State government at Wokha, Nagaland on Tuesday.

production, as key focus areas for sustainable growth.

Praising Wokha District, the Minister noted its success under the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme with Banana cultivation, which has brought national recognition to the area. "This model can be scaled to a larger commercial level, boosting the local economy while showcasing the region's unique strengths," he said.

The Minister further shared that a 15-day nationwide saturation campaign for flagship government schemes is being launched, aimed at achieving maximum reach and inclusion. Reflecting on the trans-

formative changes of the last decade, he pointed out that youth from Nagaland and Manipur are now actively recruited into aviation and hospitality industries, which was unthinkable earlier. "In fact, the recent tragic air crash in Ahmedabad included two young girls from Manipur - a solemn reminder of how far the region has come," he said with emotion.

Dr. Jitendra Singh praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's consistent prioritization of the Northeast, sharing that the PM has visited the region over 70 times since 2014. "His goal was to break both mental and physical barriers that distanced the region from the mainstream," Dr. Jitendra Singh remarked.

The Minister urged youth and women to take leadership roles. "In the Northeast, women have always led - from managing fish markets to running households. Now is the time to form self-help groups, generate livelihood, and build confidence," he said. He recalled that women scientists led missions like Chandrayaan, Aditya-L1, and others - adding that in the Northeast, the culture of women leadership is already embedded.

Concluding the meeting,

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that India's economic rise to the top three economies globally will be fuelled by unexplored and underexplored regions like the Northeast, aligning with the goal of a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

The meeting was attended by Nagaland MLA Dr. Chumben Murry, Advisor to the Chief Minister, and senior officials from premier scientific institutions under the Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Earth Sciences, and Survey of India, among others.



PM Modi's visit to Cyprus sends a strong message to Turkey, World: Gaurav

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JAMMU: BJP J&K Spokesperson Gaurav Gupta has hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's historic visit to Cyprus as a masterstroke in India's evolving foreign policy, asserting that it sends a strong and unambiguous message to Turkey and the global community.

"After 23 years, an Indian Prime Minister has visited Cyprus - and the timing is far from coincidental," said Gupta. "In the wake of Turkey's overt support to Pakistan during Operation Sindoor, PM Modi's visit to a nation long grappling with Turkish occupation is a bold assertion of India's strategic posture. It signals that India is no longer hesitant to call out expansionism and interference."

Gupta underlined the significance of the Prime Minister's presence near the UN-controlled Green Line - the demarcation separating the Republic of Cyprus from the Turkish-occupied north - describing it as a "silent yet potent diplomatic signal." He added, "If Turkey continues to raise Kashmir on international platforms, India has every right to raise Northern Cyprus. The message is clear: we will respond to provocation



with strategic precision."

He further highlighted Cyprus's unwavering support to India on critical global issues - from Kashmir and counter-terrorism to UN reforms - calling the bilateral bond a model of mutual respect and partnership.

On the economic front, Gupta termed the announcement of Eurobank's new representative office in Mumbai as a "transformational step" that will deepen business linkages between India and Europe. "Cyprus is positioning itself as a vital gateway for Indian enterprises entering the EU market. This move will facilitate smoother capital flows and foster greater Indo-European economic convergence," he said.

Gupta also emphasized Cyprus's strategic role in the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC),

viewing the island nation as a future logistical and financial hub in the corridor. "As India works toward a Free Trade Agreement with the EU by 2025, Cyprus's presidency of the European Council in 2026 could be a game-changer. Their support will be invaluable," he noted.

Energy security was another critical area addressed by Gupta, who pointed out Cyprus's emerging role in natural gas exploration in the Eastern Mediterranean. He called for deeper collaboration in energy exploration, investment, and long-term partnership, as India seeks to diversify its energy sources and ensure future resilience.

The visit reached a ceremonial high point when President Nikos Christodoulides conferred Cyprus's highest civilian honour - the Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III - upon Prime Minister Modi. Gupta described this as a moment of profound national pride. "This is not just a personal honour for the Prime Minister - it is a tribute to 1.4 billion Indians, to our shared values of democracy and peace, and to India's rising global stature under Modi Ji's visionary leadership."

PM Modi, in a gracious ges-

ture, dedicated the award to the people of India and to the enduring friendship between India and Cyprus. His official statement read:

"Humbled to receive the 'Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III' of Cyprus. I dedicate it to the friendship between our nations."

Concluding, Gaurav Gupta remarked, "PM Modi's visit to Cyprus is more than a diplomatic milestone - it's a message to the world. It reflects a confident New India that engages globally on its own terms, defends its interests unapologetically, and envisions a secure, prosperous world driven by mutual respect."

ADGP Armed promotes 88 police personnel

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SRINAGAR: ADGP Armed J&K Anand Jain on Tuesday issued promotion orders of 88 Police Personnel having their lien and seniority with J&K Armed Police. Among the 88 promotions, 32 Head-Constables were promoted to the rank of ASI, and 56 Selection Grade Constables to the rank of Head-Constables. The promotion orders to this effect were issued by Armed Police Headquarters J&K Srinagar after the Departmental Promotion Committee headed by DIG Armed/TR Range Jammu found them fit for next promotions in light of prescribed promotion norms. The DPC headed by Vinod Kumar Dy. Inspector General of Police Armed/IR Range Jammu as its chairman comprised of Mumtaz Ahmad, Commandant, IRP-12th Bn. Sandeep Wazir, AIG, (Pers) PHQ J&K, Anita Sharma, Commandant, IRP-1st Bn., Abrar Ahmad Choudhary, SSP, Commandant IR-14th Bn. and Anil Dev Jamwal CPO, APIHQ J&K. The ADGP Armed in his congratulatory message wished good luck to the promotees and their respective families. The Addl. Director General of Police Armed J&K hoped that the newly promoted personnel shall continue to demonstrate discipline, hard work and dedication towards their respective assignments and always come-up to the expectations of people of the J&K.

Dr Rohit greets CCI President Arun Gupta on re-election victory

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JAMMU: Senior politician Dr. Rohit Gupta today visited the office of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry to personally congratulate its President, Arun Gupta, on his recent re-election.

During the meeting, Dr. Gupta extended warm greetings to Arun Gupta and his entire team, praising their outstanding victory which, he said, clearly reflects the deep trust and confidence the trader community has placed in their leadership.



Senior politician Dr. Rohit Gupta extending greets to CCI President Arun Gupta.

He commended the Chamber's consistent efforts in addressing business concerns and promoting economic growth in the region. Dr. Gupta also assured his continued support for the welfare of the trader community and emphasized the need for collaborative efforts between political leadership and trade bodies to foster development.

Arun Gupta expressed his gratitude for the encouraging words and reaffirmed his commitment to serving the business fraternity with greater zeal and transparency in the coming term.

Commissioner JMC visits Rajendra Bazar to address civic issues



Commissioner JMC, Dr. Devansh Yadav during visit to Rajendra Bazar.

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JAMMU: Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), Dr. Devansh Yadav on Tuesday visited Rajendra Bazar (Ward No. 5) today on an invitation from the Market Association. The purpose of the visit was to assess the civic issues being faced by traders and the general public in the area and to discuss developmental needs.

During the interaction, members of the Market Association apprised the

Commissioner about various issues being faced by them. They emphasized the need for improved sanitation, requesting for regular cleaning of drains and thorough maintenance of the market lanes. Additionally, the members highlighted the necessity of accessible drinking water facilities amid rising temperature. While water coolers have been installed by JMC, the association requested that water purifiers also be added to ensure the availability of

clean drinking water. They also demanded the repair and maintenance of street lights in the area to ensure public safety and convenience.

Dr. Yadav reiterated JMC's commitment to improving civic amenities and working in collaboration with local stakeholders for the betterment of the city. He issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned for taking prompt action to resolve the issues. Dr. Yadav assured the members of the association that their grievances would be addressed at the earliest.

Health Officer, JMC, Dr. Vinod Sharma, Executive Engineer Division-1 Rajesh Kumar and Executive Engineer, Electricity, Simarpal Singh besides, President of market association Krishna Lal Gupta, Chairman Arun Gupta and a large number of locals were also present.

Satish inaugurates key road projects, distributes relief kits, felicitates meritorious students in Akhnoor

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JAMMU: In a significant step towards infrastructure development and community welfare, Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science and Technology, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, and ARI & Training, Satish Sharma on Tuesday inaugurated key road macadamization works under the PMGSY and PWD schemes in the Akhnoor region.

As part of the developmental initiatives, the Minister inaugurated the PMGSY road from Chowki-Choura to Ghar Majoor village, covering a length of 8.150 km, constructed at an estimated cost of Rs. 1.40 crore. Additionally, he flagged off the macadamization of the PWD road from Panya to Bindigala, a project approved at an estimated cost



Transport Minister, Satish Sharma inaugurating key road macadamization works.

of Rs. 4.67 crore, with an allotted cost of Rs. 3.30 crore, spanning 3.5 km. In a compassionate outreach effort, free ration kits were distributed among residents of Panchayat Gigrial, Block Khour, who were recently affected by border firing and disturbances. The initiative was

executed in collaboration with the Impact Guru Foundation (IGF), a reputed NGO actively working in conflict-affected areas. On the occasion, a special felicitation ceremony was organized at Kohinoor Restaurant, Akhnoor, to honour meritorious students of the

Chamb Constituency who scored above 90% in recent board examinations.

The Minister presented appreciation certificates and mementoes to the achievers, acknowledging their hard work and motivating them to continue excelling in academics.

During his visit, the Minister also interacted with various local deputations, who brought forth issues related to damaged roads, drinking water shortages, and other civic concerns.

Minister Sharma patiently listened to the grievances and assured timely redressal through active coordination with the concerned departments, emphasizing that public welfare remains a top priority. The Minister was accompanied by Sub-Divisional level Officers, and prominent citizens.

SDD unveils HSDP for mega skilling of JK populace

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SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir is all set to embark on a transformative journey in skill development with the unveiling of Holistic Skill Development Plan (HSDP), a comprehensive strategy aimed at creating a future-ready workforce and fostering sustainable economic growth.

The plan was presented on Tuesday to Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, which outlines the ambitious goals and strategic interventions across various sectors.

Present on the occasion were ACS, Higher Education Department; Principal Secretary, School Education; Secretary, Skill Development Department (SDD); MD, Skill Development Mission besides Director, Skill Development along with other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary emphasized that the true impact of the plan lies in its effective implementation at the grass-roots level. He underscored the

need for seamless coordination between the Education and Skill Development department, terming it essential for the plan's successful execution.

Highlighting the significance of skill development, Dulloo stated that it is a cornerstone for securing sustainable livelihoods for the people. He further noted that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 offers a clear roadmap to guide this transformative mission.

Reviewing the Department's progress under schemes like PM Vishwakarma and PMKVY, the Chief Secretary asked the officials to go beyond basic training. He stressed the importance of complementing skill-building efforts with distribution of toolkits and access to credit linkages to truly empower the beneficiaries and enhance their livelihood opportunities.

ACS, Higher Education Department, Shantmann, in his remarks, made out that a lot of transformative work had been done to link the education



Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo chairing a meeting at Srinagar on Tuesday.

sector with the vocational courses to enhance employability of the students. He acknowledged that the department has a greater role to play in view of the objectives set under NEP-2020 and this skilling plan as well.

Principal Secretary, SED, Ram Niwas Sharma, also gave his inputs about the time bound implementation of the skilling plan besides ensuring about the seamless coordination with SDD in making the strategy to achieve these goals without facing any hindrance. Secretary, SDD, Kumar

Rajeev Ranjan, while highlighting the plan informed that J&K has strengthened its skilling infrastructure to a larger extent in the past few years. He revealed that there are currently 54 Government ITIs offering 71 trades with enrolment of 12,600 admissions taken against a capacity of 12,832 students. Similarly, the region has 22 Government Polytechnics offering 18 trades with an intake capacity of 3,275 students and corresponding enrolment of 3,200 admissions in 2024, he added. The main focal point of this

meeting was the discussion on the Holistic Skill Development Plan (HSDP) created by the department, envisioning empowerment of every individual with relevant skills, entrepreneurial mindset and livelihood opportunities, leading to sustainable employment and enterprise creation.

The plan delineates four tracks of skilling program: Skilling for School Explorer (Age 14-18) which focuses on early vocational exposure and foundational skills. This is followed by Skilling for Career Launch-Pad (Age 18-22)

which envisages equipping the students with job-ready certifications and entrepreneurial orientation.

The 3rd path comprises of 'Skilling for Job & Entrepreneurship Accelerator' (Age 22-35) enabling youth to choose between employment, entrepreneurship or competitive exams. The fourth one is 'Skilling for Livelihood Enabler' (Age 35-59) which would support re-skilling for sustainable livelihoods and promote home-based/self employment.

The key challenges identified in HSDP implementation were set in the shape of the skilling ecosystem in J&K facing weak placement linkages, lack of upskilling pathways, limited access to skilling, poor delivery, outdated curriculum and lack of industry feedback.

The plan simultaneously proposed interventions propelled by the force of 4 E's engine constituting the Establish, Enrich, Execute and Empower strategy. The

first engine aims at establishing institutional support by strengthening the J&K Skill Development Mission, industry engagements, district skill planning and establishing a J&K Skills University as a central hub with model ITIs/Polytechnics as nodes.

The Enrich part focuses on curriculum upgradation, aligning the training content with market demand. It also encompasses adopting model curricula, introducing priority sector tracks for new-age skills (AI, ML, Green Economy) and building 21st-century life skills and digital competencies. The Execute part focuses on efficient delivery by improving trainee mobilization, manpower management (trainer identification and capacity building), enhancing experiential learning through apprenticeships and dual system of training and providing structured offline placement support.

The whole strategy is envisaged to empower by building the enabling ecosystem

throughout J&K. This pillar of the strategy also features developing the Mission YUVA App as a one-stop platform, implementing a Skills Passport system and facilitating the financing for skilling through loan schemes and vouchers.

Other focused initiatives constitute engaging Village-Level Skill Mitras/YUVA Saathis, who are trained volunteers at the Panchayat level to mobilize youth and link them with the schemes. For artisans and weavers, it envisions 'Mission Artisan 2047', a dedicated vertical to preserve and modernize traditional crafts.

About the implementation, it was set out that the strategy will involve a multi-tier approach at Block, District and Divisional levels, ensuring convergence of UT and Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

The plan also emphasizes diverse training modes, including satellite campuses, online skilling, classroom training and mandatory on-the-job training.