

Dr Jitendra addresses Monaco Marine Meet, reiterates India's commitment to Blue Economy

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MONACO: Addressing the Monaco Marine Conference, Union Minister of Earth Sciences today reiterated India's commitment to a resilient Blue Economy and pointed out that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had spoken about it twice in his two consecutive Independence Day addresses.

In a symbolic show of global cooperation for ocean sustainability commemorating the "World Ocean Day" today, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh and Norway's Minister of International Development, Åsmund Grøyer Aukrust, jointly hosted a high-level event on Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) aboard the historic Norwegian tall ship Statsraad Lehmkuhl at the Port of Hercule in Monaco.

The event was attended by dignitaries including His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon of Norway, making it a significant diplomatic engagement spotlighting blue econ-



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and his Norwegian counterpart Minister posing for a group photograph with their respective delegations before the formal opening of the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Meet at Monaco on Sunday.

omy collaboration.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted India's strides in adopting Marine Spatial Planning as a key tool for sustainable ocean governance. "We believe MSP offers a science-

based framework for optimising ocean resources, protecting biodiversity, and ensuring coastal livelihoods," he said, reiterating India's commitment to a resilient blue economy backed by technology and inclusive decision-making.

The India-Norway MSP collaboration, under the Indo-Norwegian Integrated Ocean and Research Initiative, has already yielded visible outcomes. Notably, pilot projects in Puducherry and Lakshadweep have demonstrated the potential of MSP to tackle coastal erosion, manage biodiversity, and engage multiple stakeholders across sectors like fisheries, tourism, and conservation.

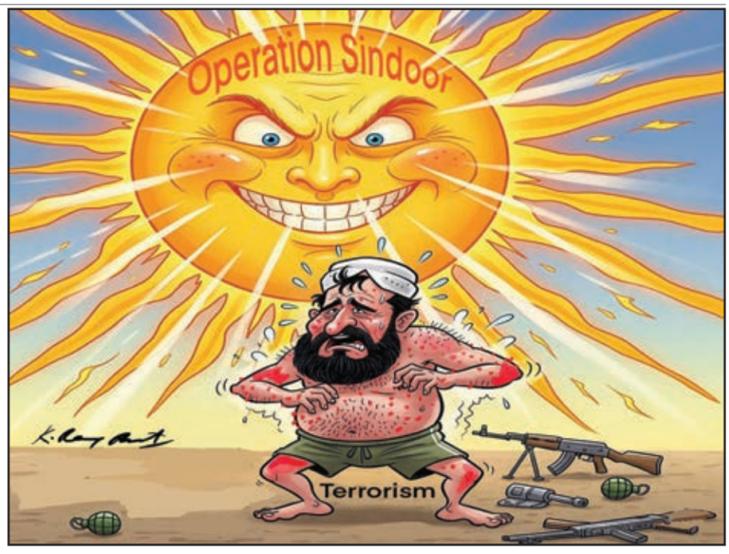
One of India's most notable achievements, Dr. Jitendra Singh said, is the launch of the SAHAV portal - a GIS-based decision support system now recognised as a Digital Public Good, to mark the international ocean day. "This tool empowers policymakers, researchers, and communities with real-time spatial data, enabling smarter planning and stronger marine resilience," he noted.

The Minister Jitendra Singh added that India aims to scale Marine Spatial Planning across its coastline,

reinforcing the nation's global leadership in sustainable ocean management. "Our science-driven, data-informed approach underscores India's vision for ocean governance that benefits both people and the planet," he said.

The presence of top-level Norwegian leadership underscored the importance both nations place on sustainable maritime cooperation. Bilateral meetings and joint initiatives like this are expected to pave the way for greater global coordination on marine issues, especially as climate change and economic pressures intensify the need for balanced ocean use.

"As India and Norway continue to chart a shared course toward a sustainable maritime future, today's event aboard Statsraad Lehmkuhl served as a fitting reminder: the health of our oceans depends not just on innovation, but on international collaboration," concluded Dr. Jitendra Singh.



Life's Simple 7-A Vision for a Heart-Healthy Nation: Dr Sushil



HoD Cardiology GMCH Jammu, Dr Sushil Sharma with his team examining patients.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: To strengthen their campaign further to aware the common populace about the ill effects of cardiovascular diseases Head Department of Cardiology GMCH Jammu Dr Sushil Sharma held a day long cardiac awareness cum health check up camp at Shri Vishwakarma Library and Research Center New Plot Jammu. The camp aimed to bridge the gap between medical advice and real-world implementation by making prevention approachable, affordable, and understandable to people from all walks of life. This initiative focuses on promoting the principles of "Life's Simple 7" (LS7)-a globally recognized framework created by the American Heart Association (AHA) for achieving optimal cardiovascular health.

While interacting with the people Dr Sushil Stated that cardiovascular disease (CVD) stands at the forefront as the leading cause of mortality across the globe. Yet, it remains one of the most preventable conditions through lifestyle modifications and timely intervention. India faces a growing epidemic of lifestyle diseases, with cardiovascular disease emerging as a leading cause of premature death. Sedentary lifestyles, increasing stress levels, poor dietary habits, and tobacco use have accelerated the burden of heart disease-even among younger age groups. Alarmingly, studies suggest that Indians experience heart attacks almost a decade earlier than their Western counterparts. This underscores the need for community-based prevention strategies that reach people before they enter the hospital system.

He emphasized that "Life's Simple 7" outlines seven modifiable health behaviors and factors that together form the cornerstone of heart disease prevention. Backed by decades of scientific research, these pillars offer individuals a practical and accessible guide to improving their heart health. Healthy Diet - A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and fish, with limited processed foods, sodium, and added sugars, supports vascular function and reduces plaque build-up. Physical Activity - Engaging in moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least 150 minutes per week strengthens the heart muscle, improves circulation, and controls weight. Maintaining a Healthy Weight - A normal body mass index (BMI) reduces the burden on the heart and lowers the risk of developing hypertension, diabetes, and dyslipidemia. Smoking Cessation - Smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease. Quitting smoking, even after many years, significantly improves cardiovascular outcomes. Blood Sugar Control - Avoiding hyperglycemia helps prevent damage to blood vessels and reduces the risk of developing type 2 diabetes and diabetic heart disease. Blood Pressure Management - Maintaining optimal systolic and diastolic blood pressures is crucial in reducing the risk of stroke, heart attack, and heart failure. Cholesterol Management - Keeping lipid levels in check prevents atherosclerosis and helps maintain clean, flexible arteries.

He added that the scientific credibility of Life's Simple 7 is well-established. A major review published in the European Journal of Preventive Cardiology analyzed data from nearly 2 million individuals across 59 studies. The findings were clear: the more LS7 criteria a person meets, the lower their risk of heart attack, stroke, and cardiovascular death. Those who adhered to even 5 or more of the 7 metrics showed a significantly enhanced life expectancy and better quality of life. He said

Dr. Sushil Sharma in his concluding remarks told that "Heart disease does not announce itself with warning bells-it creeps in silently, often undetected until it is too late. But the good news is that most heart diseases are preventable, and the power to prevent them lies in our daily habits. Through this initiative, we are not just treating or diagnosing. We are educating, empowering, and inspiring people to take ownership of their health. Management Committee of the Library and Research Center Raman Chhalotra, Balwant kataria, Joginder Angotra, Ram pal Chadgotra, Ramesh Angotra, Mohinder Pal and Balbir Ram Rattan (Vice Chairman BJP OBC) appreciated the efforts of Dr Sushil and his team for conducting cardiac awareness Cum health check up camp in their premises and shows their heartfelt gratitude.

Others who were part of this camp include Dr Venkatesh Yellupu and Dr Aditya Sharma . Paramedics and Volunteers include Kamal Sharma, Rajkumar, Ranjeet Singh, Shubham Sharma, Paramveer Singh, Rajinder Singh, Rohit Nayyar, Rahul Vaid, Gourav Sharma, Vikas Kumar, Rajesh Sharma, Maninder Singh and Nirvair Singh Bali.

JU VC visits Poonch Campus; reviews academic progress, infrastructure projects

Explores defence-academia collaboration, community engagement initiatives

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POONCH: To strengthen and to ensure optimum outreach of higher education in border and remote areas, Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu, today visited the University's Poonch Campus and reviewed academic progress and inspected infrastructural projects.

The visit also aligns with the Prime Minister's visionary call for replacing the terminology of "last village" with "first village", signifying a transformative approach to integrating border regions into the national development framework.

During the visit, the Vice Chancellor was accompanied by MLA Poonch, Ajaz Jaan; Dr. Guneet Singh Sudan, Director IT and OSD, J&K Higher Education Council; Dr. Jasbir Singh, Principal, SKC Government Degree College, Poonch; and local Sarpanchs. Prof. Rai interacted with faculty, staff, and campus officials, emphasizing the importance of quality education, skill development, and equitable access to higher education in geographically sensitive and underserved districts.

Importantly, the Vice Chancellor's visit comes in the



JU VC, Prof. Umesh Rai posing with faculty of Poonch Campus.

lead-up to a historic moment for the University of Jammu: for the first time in its history, the Academic Council meeting-one of the highest academic decision-making bodies-will be held at the Bhadrawah Campus on June 15, 2025. This initiative reflects the University's evolving academic outreach and its alignment with the vision of the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor, JKUT and Chancellor of the University, who has consistently advocated for the holistic development of youth through expanded academic, cultural, and sporting opportunities across all regions of the Union Territory.

The Bhadrawah Campus will also host a series of academic, literary, and sports events

between June 14-16, 2025, aimed at celebrating regional heritage, encouraging student participation, and promoting communal harmony. These efforts underscore the University's broader commitment to nurturing local languages, cultural identity, and inclusive academic practices.

The objective behind holding the Academic Council meeting at Bhadrawah Campus-and similar important events at off-site campuses-is to make these campuses an integral part of the University's core functioning. By involving them in key decision-making and flagship initiatives, the University aims to instill a strong sense of inclusion, institutional belonging, and collective purpose among faculty, staff, and students at

these campuses.

During the Poonch Campus visit, Prof. Rai also indicated that new academic programs are being proposed for introduction at Poonch, and the matter will be formally deliberated during the upcoming Academic Council meeting at Bhadrawah. The objective is to expand course offerings that reflect both regional aspirations and national priorities in education.

Dr. Rubia Bukhari, In-charge, Department of Sericulture, presented a comprehensive briefing on academic activities and development initiatives at the Poonch Campus.

As part of the engagement, Prof. Rai held a productive meeting with Brig Mudit

Mahajan to discuss academic cooperation between the University and the armed forces. The University of Jammu will introduce tailor-made academic programs-including certificate, diploma, and degree courses-designed specifically for armed forces personnel stationed at Poonch and Bhadrawah. These programs will cater to their operational realities while enhancing lifelong learning opportunities. The Vice Chancellor also stated that University faculty will provide practical, technology-supported solutions to address specific needs of the armed forces, and internship opportunities will be extended to students as part of this collaborative framework.

Earlier, Prof. Rai alongwith other officials from the University paid obsequance at Gurdwara Nangali Sahib.

The Vice Chancellor also interacted with various social organizations in Poonch and acknowledged their efforts in supporting youth, education, and community welfare of border areas. He expressed the University's willingness to partner with such groups for initiatives that support youth engagement and education.

Feeding poor is true service to God: Balbir

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JAMMU: Believing that serving the poor and needy is the highest form of religion, Balbir Ram Rattan-National General Secretary of the Guru Ravidass Vishwa Mahapeeth, General Secretary of the Indian branch of the British Ravidasia Heritage Foundation, and member of the Begumpura Vishwa Mahasabha-joined a langar run by prominent social worker and businessman of Jammu city, Prem Gupta, and distributed meals to hundreds of people. This langar has been run-



ning continuously for over three months, providing free and respectful meals daily to hundreds of poor individuals.

Speaking about this commendable initiative by Prem

Gupta, Balbir Ram Rattan said, "We perform rituals and worship in temples, conduct havans and religious events, but if someone around us goes to bed hungry and we fail to

help them, then our devotion remains incomplete. True service to God is feeding the hungry."

He appealed to people to incorporate service into their lives and take a pledge to feed at least one hungry person every week. He emphasized that if each individual contributes even a little in this direction, the issue of hunger in society can be significantly reduced.

Balbir further stated that the true measure of a society lies in its compassion toward its weakest members. "When

we feed the hungry, it is not just about satisfying their hunger-it is a true expression of humanity and religion," he said.

On this occasion, langar organizer Prem Gupta said, "We are grateful to God for giving us the opportunity to serve. Our aim is not just to distribute food, but to spread the message of compassion, service, and equality in society. Every individual, regardless of their social or economic status, deserves to receive food with dignity-that is the core purpose of our initiative."

CM Omar Abdullah should catch on project 'one state, one global tourist destination' for areas in Chenab Valley, Pir Panjal & Shivaliks

Prime Minister Modi again becomes 1st to place on board the idea of 'one state, one global tourist destination'

DAYA SAGAR

Like the areas lying in districts like Kathua, Udhampur, Kishtwar & Doda the areas in Rajouri and Poonch districts too have unimaginable large potential for pilgrim tourism and commercial tourism (Baba Budda Amarnath Ji Mandi, Ram Kund in Mandhir Poonch, Nangli Sahib Gurudawara, The Ziyarat Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah (R.A) Shahdara Sharief near Rajouri ,Doodadhara Temple Rajouri, Gurudwara Chhati Padshahi, Balidan Bhavan,Rama Temple, Jama Masjid and Shiv Mandir. Kotranka Budhal 40 Km from Rajouri, Poonch Fort , Noori Chamb less than 46 km from Poonch Surankote, Buzliaz about 40 Km from Poonch, Nandishool waterfall 12 kilometres from Loran , Loran a small village 34 Km from Poonch, about 40 Km from Poonch is Than Pir, Dhanidhar Fort Rajouri Dist , like)as well as scope for summer/ winter commercial tourism

in upper reaches with enough possibilities of further connecting with Kashmir Division through Mugal road / other routes (84 Km from Buzliaz is Shopian. Mughal road connects beautiful locations including Buzliaz, Behrangala, Chandimarh, Dugran, Pushana, Chatta Pani, Mansar, and Peer Ki Gali.). A good infrastructure would have been developed with just around a few thousands INR had the areas been duly cared after independence /during earlier times but now increase in 2025 competitive tourism infrastructure & environment is to be created / for development in such areas in Jammu division outside Kashmir valley , there may be utmost need to pump in around min of INR 20000 Crs to 25000 Crs out of the state exchequer in addition to private sector investments in next 5 to 10 years to catch on the last pace and surely some more in case World Class acceptance is to be the target. The locals of such area may have

lost much more than even INR .35000 - 40000 er that they would have earned through direct / indirect means over more than last 7 decades had the business in these areas been promoted with improved tourist flow as well better surface communication. Where as,sofar no real benefit has come to the common people of such areas proportionate to thousands of crores of financial assistance extended over the years by Government of India .Surely only governments of the past like that of Mufti Mohd Sayeed and the Congress- NC Government that followed in 2008 cannot be solely blamed for all the fall back . New Delhi could argue that planning for local infrastructure&development is the responsibility of State Government. But New Delhi cannot deny that the superior civil servants in J&K are from GOI/ Central



A Look through the Mist Part-III

Government Services who hold the superior and decisive positions as regards planning and implementation of programmes. So reasonable amount of short fall as regards assessment of priorities has to be debited to the account of New Delhi as well. Leads need be taken by the people outside Kashmir Valley as well as the J&K Government to press for make good the losses / shortfalls . The local civil society that also has many retired bureaucrats and technocrats too needs to work out and push in and follow proposals for sanction & implementation by the government. The lack of concern on the part of local governments so far could be well gauged from the fact that every second day 'leaders' talk of Basohli Bani > Bhadrawah track and people have been receiving only statements and no meaningful progress on this 'road', not even in last

two decades. (of less than 100 km). Had British seen only commercial profitability there would have been no rail line to Shimla (Kalka Shimla Railway, a 96.6 kilometer long a single track working rail link was built in the mid-19th century), no line to Darjeeling (nineteenth century) and like. Recent 'dropped' Jammu Poonch rail link via could a quote which was in 2012 taken as a notion project. This line too should be included in the project "one state, one global tourist destination".

Otherwise also had the areas referred herein been given timely inputs for development of communication and tourism infrastructure the inputs would have been not less than a lakh of er INR so now in case that inputs are made that would not be something very extra to give for GOI/ UT government . Chief Minister Omar Abdullah should hence catch the bull from the horns for taking on the projects worth getting

through. Narendra Modi ji isEx-officio chairperson of NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog by virtue of hisbeing the is Prime Minister of India and it is he who has given the call while addressing the 10th General Council meeting of NITI Aayog on 24ththat <"States should develop at least one tourist destination per state at par with global standards and by providing all facilities and infrastructure - One State: One Global Destination. It would also lead to the development of the neighbouring cities as tourist places,"> so Omar has to take the call worth placing the project before him for which PM would surely be obliged to extend all supports, yes the project has to be sound and the J&K areas outside Valley surely qualify for that. Ball is now in Omar's court, will he ?

(The writer is Senior Journalist and analyst J&K affairs)