

Dr Jitendra unveils NITI Aayog Report, asks States to align with Centre's vision

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NEW DELHI: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh on Thursday unveiled the 'NITI Aayog's Roadmap for Strengthening State Science and Technology Councils' at NITI Aayog complex, here. He called upon the States and UTs to align with Centre's vision and thereby also align with S&T Efforts in the making of Viksit Bharat@2047.

The roadmap is a major step toward building a robust and coordinated science and technology ecosystem across the States to fuel India's transformation into a knowledge-driven economy.

Delivering the keynote address, Dr. Jitendra Singh identified Science and Technology as the key growth engine of India's economic rise, stating that "if India is to move from the 4th to the 3rd largest economy and beyond, it is science and technology that will drive this growth."

The Minister recalled that it was Prime Minister



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh speaking after releasing the NITI Aayog report titled "A Roadmap for Strengthening State S&T Councils" at New Delhi on Thursday. Also seen are NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery and Member Dr V.K. Saraswat.

Narendra Modi who hauled the planning framework in 2014, replacing the Planning Commission with NITI Aayog as a forward-looking think tank, which has since guided India's growth with visionary policies. "This transformation enabled long-term thinking, evidence-based policy, and a shift from fund allocation to strategic coordination," he emphasized.

Tracing India's exceptional S&T trajectory over the past decade, Dr. Jitendra Singh said PM Modi has consistently given patronage to scientific progress. "In each of his Independence Day addresses from the Red Fort

in the last 11 years, he has highlighted major scientific initiatives-be it the Swachh Bharat Mission, Digital India, Stand-Up and Start-Up India, Deep Ocean Mission, or the Digital Health Card," Dr. Singh noted.

He emphasized that a change in mindset is critical for innovation. "We must move away from excessive reliance on government funding and encourage vibrant public-private partnerships to unlock innovation at scale," he stated.

Citing India's S&T success stories like Chandrayaan-3, indigenous vaccine development, and the successful

gene therapy trial for Hemophilia published in The New England Journal of Medicine, Dr. Jitendra Singh underscored India's rising global credibility. He highlighted that resident Indian patent filings have surged by nearly 56%, and 67% of India's research output now comes from centrally-funded institutions.

The Minister described the recently established Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) as a game-changer that will bridge gaps between academia, industry, and government, facilitating co-creation and co-investment in research. He also

praised the emerging Bio-E3 cell ecosystem, backed by the Prime Minister, stating, "The next big revolution will be biotech-driven, and India is set to lead the world."

Referring to the liberalization of space and nuclear sectors for private participation, Dr. Jitendra said, "With these domains unlocked, only the sky is the limit for Indian science." He called for the Government to assume the role of facilitator rather than controller, encouraging innovation to thrive.

Dr. Singh also lauded NITI Aayog's Atal Tinkering Labs initiative, which has nurtured innovation at the school level, providing a strong foundation for India's next generation of scientists and entrepreneurs. Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog, Shri Suman Bery, emphasized the urgent need for such a roadmap to ensure that State S&T Councils align their efforts with national development goals and drive innovation that is both inclusive and sustainable.



PM Modi conferred with Namibia's highest civilian award

Clean Jammu Green Jammu Campaign' J&K HC conducts plantation drive at Janipur complex



Justice Javed Iqbal Wani, Justice Mohd Akram Chowdhary, Justice Rahul Bharti, Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi, Justice Rajesh Sekhri, Justice Mohd Yousuf Wani and Justice Shahzad Azeem during a plantation drive.

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JAMMU: A plantation drive was carried out in the Jammu High Court premises under the "Clean Jammu Green Jammu Campaign" and "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" initiative.

Under the directions and patronage of Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, Arun Palli, a plantation drive was organized on Thursday in the High Court Complex, Janipur, Jammu, in collaboration with the Jammu Municipal Corporation and Urban Forestry (Jammu Division) under the Chairmanship of Justice Sindhu Sharma.

Present on the occasion

were Justice Javed Iqbal Wani, Justice Mohd Akram Chowdhary, Justice Rahul Bharti, Justice Moksha Khajuria Kazmi, Justice Rajesh Sekhri, Justice Mohammad Yousuf Wani and Justice Shahzad Azeem who participated in the plantation drive by planting saplings of different varieties of ornamental trees including Chinar, Jacaranda and Gulmohar.

President, J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu, Nirmal Kotwal and members of executive body of Bar Association also took part in the plantation drive.

The event was organized to commemorate Guru Purnima as a contribution to

mother nature with the aim to inspire the general public to make Jammu city clean and green, creating a safer environment for the future generations.

Sandeep Kour Registrar Judicial, High Court Jammu Wing, Meyank Gupta Joint Registrar Judicial/Protocol, High Court Jammu Wing, Ajay Kumar Additional Registrar besides other officers and officials of the registry were also present on the occasion. Officers from Jammu Municipal Corporation including In-charge IEC JMC, Dr. Divya Sharma, Dr. Rabia Khan AFO, JMC and officials from Urban forestry division Jammu also joined the event.

3-day training programme under NAKSHA commences



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JAMMU: A 3-day long training programme started on Thursday for Revenue and Urban Local Bodies (ULB) officials at Revenue Training Institute Jammu under the ambitious NAKSHA (National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of urban Habitants) Project. The initiative is part of the government's broader effort to modernize land records and enhance transparency through digital mapping.

The training programme was conducted under the visionary guidance of Shaleen Kabra, Financial Commissioner Revenue, J&K and Commissioner Survey and Land Records, Inderjeet Bhagat, who have

been instrumental in steering the NAKSHA project across the Union Territory. Kanta Devi, Regional Director, Survey and Land Records (Jammu), and Sunaina Sharma Mehta, Principal, Revenue Training Institute were present during the session to oversee the proceedings and interact with the participating officers. At the outset, Sunaina Sharma Mehta, Principal, Revenue Training Institute Jammu welcomed the Regional Director and participants in the training programme. She highlighted the importance of this training programme for successful implementation of NAKSHA project which will subsequently help in modernisation of land records, better urban planning

as well as property tax management. She impressed upon importance of precision, accountability, and timely execution in the successful rollout of the project, which will make the life of common man a lot easier.

Addressing the gathering, Kanta Devi, Regional Director stressed the significance of accurate land mapping for effective governance, citizen-centric service delivery, and minimizing land disputes. She urged the officials to make full use of the tools provided and ensure seamless coordination between the Revenue and ULB departments.

The technical sessions included detailed presentations and hands-on training on the use of geo-referencing

tools, mobile data collection applications, map verification techniques, and integration of cadastral maps with digitized records. Experts from the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and the Revenue Department served as resource persons for the training.

The NAKSHA Project, being implemented under the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP), aims to create a unified and tamper-proof digital land records system using GIS technologies and satellite imagery.

The Day-1 training concluded with an interactive Q&A session and distribution of training manuals and standard operating procedures (SOPs).

CS reviews progress, future plans of Mining Deptt



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

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SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting to review the operations and chart out a future strategy for the Department of Geology and Mining. The meeting witnessed a detailed discussion on reforms, illegal mining control, mineral block operations, and revenue enhancement. The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Mining Anil Kumar Singh; Director, Geology and Mining; Managing Director, J&K Minerals Ltd; and other senior officials. Chief Secretary Dulloo emphasized the urgent need to curb illegal mining activities by leveraging modern technology. He directed the department to implement GPS tracking, RFID tagging, geo-fencing, and real-time monitoring systems to track mining operations and generate actionable alerts against violators. "There must be strong deterrence against habitual offenders to ensure compliance and transparency," he stressed. He also called for expediting the issuance of Letters of Intent (LoIs) for inoperational mineral blocks and directed the department to coordinate closely with the Union Ministry of Mines for early assessment and auctioning of newly identified mineral sites. Dulloo highlighted the need to emulate best practices from other progressive states and UTs, with a focus on maximizing revenue from the mining sector. He noted that the District Mineral

Foundation Trust (DMFT) rules must be framed swiftly to align with national mining reforms. Expressing concern over overcharging of minor minerals, he instructed the department to ensure fair pricing and adequate supply of construction materials for the general public, advocating for a citizen-friendly and transparent ecosystem. Principal Secretary Anil Kumar Singh presented the department's roadmap, revealing that of 233 mineral blocks auctioned/reserved across J&K, 106 are operational while 127 remain non-operational. Efforts are on to make 60 of these operational by October 31, 2025. He also announced a target revenue of Rs 500 crore for FY 2025-26, significantly up from Rs 150 crore in the previous year. This includes Rs 260 crore from major minerals, Rs 220 crore from minor minerals, and Rs 100 crore from other sources. The meeting was informed that 48 limestone blocks have been identified, including 23 non-operational mining leases. Five limestone blocks, with reserves of 75.597 million tonnes, are being prepared for e-auction by October 31, with expected revenue of Rs 260 crore. Regarding minor minerals like RBMI, the department aims to operationalize 60 non-functional blocks, adding Rs 53 crore in revenue. Eight LoIs are to be issued within a month, and 19 blocks are set for e-auction within the next three months. Additionally, 73 blocks identified under the Single

Window System await NOCs from Deputy Commissioners by August 18, with an estimated revenue of Rs 100 crore. On the much-anticipated Lithium reserves in Reasi, it was informed that GSI investigations estimate a resource of 5.9 million tonnes, with geological studies expected to conclude by December 31, 2025. Other minerals discussed included Sapphire (Kishtwar), Lignite (Kupwara), Granite (Doda, Ganderbal), Quartzite (Kishtwar), Dolomite (Rajouri), and Graphite (Kupwara), with clear exploration timelines established. To control illegal mining, the department is deploying an integrated Mining Surveillance System (MSS), already operational in its first phase, with the second phase underway. The system includes real-time vehicle tracking, e-Challan generation, GPS-enabled monitoring, integration with the VAHAN portal, and on-spot penalties via PoS machines, now functional in Jammu and Samba, and set to expand UT-wide by July 15. Further steps include the construction of 22 Mineral Check Posts, formation of Multi-Departmental District Task Force Cells, and launch of an online portal for mineral sales. The meeting also reviewed the functioning of J&K Minerals Limited (JKML), which currently runs Gypsum and Coal Mines in Ramban and Kalakot. Steps are being taken to operationalize additional mineral blocks, resolve financial liabilities, and improve its operational efficiency.

HC grants bail to CE in corruption case

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JAMMU: Justice Rajesh Sekhri of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court granted bail to Sumit Khajuria, Konkani Railway Chief Engineer (CE) who was arrested by the CBI in month of February, 2025.

Justice Rajesh Sekhri, after hearing both the sides, observed that there cannot be two opinions to the crystallized position of law that it is a fundamental postulate of criminal jurisprudence that an accused is presumed to be innocent till the guilt is

proved.

The discretionary jurisdiction of a court of grant or refusal of bail is regulated by settled principles of law and facts and circumstances of each case. The facts and circumstances to be taken into consideration are the seriousness of the offence, potential impact on the investigation, the risk of the accused absconding, the nature of accusations, the severity of punishment which conviction will entail and, of course, Courts are obliged to balance the rights

of the accused with a need to maintain public confidence in the justice system.

Justice Rajesh Sekhri further observed that the investigation against the applicant has already culminated in final report in the competent court.

The Offences, he is charged with are punishable with maximum imprisonment upto seven years. Co-accused Rajesh Kumar Jain has already been admitted to bail by the trial Court. Most of the witnesses, cited by the prosecution, are official wit-

nesses and the apprehension of the respondent with respect to the tampering of the evidence by influencing the prosecution witnesses can be taken care of by imposing stringent conditions.

In the circumstances, further incarceration of the applicant shall not serve any purpose.

With these observations, Court allowed the application and applicant is admitted to bail on his furnishing a surety bond in the amount of Rs. 50,000 to the satisfac-

tion of trial court and a bond of personal recognizance of the like amount to the satisfaction of the Superintendent of concerned Jail, subject, however, to the following conditions that: he shall not leave territorial jurisdiction of the trial court without prior permission; he shall not jump over bail and tamper with the prosecution evidence or make an attempt to influence or intimidate the prosecution witnesses; and he shall remain present during the trial on every date of hearing.

Joint Director Tourism Jammu interacts with social media influencers Prepares roadmap for promoting destinations through social media engagement

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JAMMU: As a part of the Department's broader vision for tourism promotion in the region and highlighting off beat destinations and tourist places Aijaz Qaiser, Joint Director Tourism, Jammu interacted with the travel/food vloggers from Jammu region on Thursday in the Directorate of Tourism, Jammu. The department engaged with the vloggers who had shown considerable interest in collaborating with the Tourism Department for the promotion of tourism in the Jammu region.

While appreciating their content and creativity, the Joint Director expressed the Department's willingness to collaborate with the local content creators for this initiative.

The influencers having considerable followers and viewership can create and contribute by highlighting the unique tourism offerings of the Jammu Division.



Aijaz Qaiser, Joint Director Tourism, Jammu interacting with the travel/food vloggers.

fall in Katra and diverting them to other potential tourist destinations in the Jammu region.

He assured the attendees that the Department will extend its full support to all such influencers who have the potential to showcase Jammu region's rich heritage, culture, food along with its other unique selling points.

A power point was presented to give the vloggers an idea as to how the department is committed to make Jammu region into an Adventure Tourism hub and the efforts being made in this direction.

All the influencers present at the meeting

expressed their willingness to contribute to the social media handles of the Department. They further suggested that group tours of local vloggers to various off-beat as well as prominent tourist destinations in the Jammu region be organized, to generate maximum traction and publicity through the combined follower base of multiple influencers.

The initiative of organizing the interaction with social media influencers was taken under the supervision of Vikas Gupta, JKAS, Director Tourism, Jammu. The suggestions and ideas put forth by the

social media influencers of the Jammu region were noted, and they were assured of full support from the Department as well as complete artistic freedom.

It was emphasized that the Department seeks quality content. The influencers were further encouraged to create content to attract tourists across all budget categories, as well as from different tourism sectors, ranging from Adventure, Leisure, Spiritual, Luxury, Border, Wildlife, Nature, and more.

The Joint Director Tourism assured the participants that group tours of local social media con-

tent creators will be organized in the coming months, covering all parts of the Jammu Division. They were further informed that the Department is open to all suggestions and ideas for collaboration and contribution from local content creators in the Jammu Division and is committed to engaging with them meaningfully.

Savita Chouhan, Deputy Director Tourism, Jammu and Muzammil Hassan Choudhary, Assistant Director Tourism, Rajouri were also present during the interaction from Tourism Department. Social media influencers covering a wide range from travel vloggers to food vloggers, nature and wildlife photographers, among others were present during the meeting.

Some of the vloggers in attendance were Ishita Khajuria, Amit Sharma, Sahaj Sabarwal, Surbhi Sharma, Shamas Malik, Shiva Soule, Siddharth Dhar, Rahul Gupta, Rajat Gupta, Sajjad, and Vikram Singh.