

## Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh chairs the first Steering Committee Meeting of Deep Ocean Mission

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Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh said here today that in the years to come, "Blue Economy" will be major contributor to India's overall economy and the Deep Ocean Mission announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the core component of it.

The Minister was chairing the first-ever high-level Steering Committee Meeting of Deep Ocean Mission today at Prithvi Bhawan, New Delhi. The Committee consists of Union Ministers of State of Environment, External Affairs, Defence and Finance in addition to Vice Chairman NITI Aayog.



Dr Jitendra Singh said that the Deep Ocean Mission is part of Government of India's Blue Economy initiative. The mission, said the Minister, heralds India's ushering into an era of "Blue Economy" which is going to play a major part in building India's overall economy during the years to come.

The Deep Ocean Mission is a high-level multi-ministerial, multi-disciplinary programme for better understanding of the deep sea living and non-living resources of the Indian Ocean and will aid in India's efforts to attain the Blue Economy status.

Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Minister of State, Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Pankaj Chaudhary, Minister of State, Ministry of Finance, V. Muraleedharan, Minister of State, Ministry of External Affairs, Ajay Bhatt, Minister of State, Ministry of Defense, Suman K Bery, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood, Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of

India, Dr M Ravichandran , Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences and other senior officers of various ministries attended the meeting.



The Mission Steering Committee (MSC) is the highest Policy making body constituted under the Deep Ocean Mission (DOM). The MSC will provide broad policy direction to the mission and exercise the main programme and governance for the deep ocean sector and advise the other committee in policy and implementation strategies. The MSC chaired by Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh today reviewed the progress of DOM of various components.

Dr Jitendra Singh further said that the technologies developed under the mission would help in exploration of the oceans and possible harnessing of non-living resources like energy, fresh water and strategic minerals. The design and development of subsystems of the manned submersible to carry three humans has been completed and integration is in progress.

The Minister further mentioned that the design of the mining machine is ready and a demonstration trial of mining crawler on sea bed has been completed in stage 1. It is planned to undertake pumping of nodules to the mother ship during 2026 for which testing of various components is in progress.



Talking about ocean resources, Dr Jitendra Singh said that the exploration of strategic minerals like cobalt, nickel, copper and manganese are expected to pave the way for future commercial exploitation of these resources. 11 Potential sites for hydrogen sulphides have been mapped and detailed surveys in this area are planned during end of 2024 using Remotely Operated Vehicle. A dedicated multi-purpose survey vessel is being acquired, he said.

In the meeting, Union Minister of State, Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Shri Ashwini

Kumar Choubey said that the mission aims to boost the central government's vision of 'New India' that highlights the blue economy as one of the ten core dimensions of growth.

Union Minister of State, Ministry of External Affairs, Shri V. Muraleedharan said that it is essential that the Mission involves all stakeholders and takes everyone into confidence especially the communities residing in the coastal regions of the country.

Union Minister of State, Ministry of Defense, Shri Ajay Bhatt appreciated the Ministry of Earth Sciences for progress it has achieved in making the Deep Ocean Mission a reality and ensured all the support from the Ministry of Defense and the Indian Coast Guard.

Shri Suman K Bery, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog said that there is a lot of potential in the Deep Ocean Mission.

Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood, Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India complimented the team behind the mission for the progress achieved and said that in one year the project has really fructified.

Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Dr M Ravichandran thanked the various ministries for working together to realise the goals of Deep Ocean Mission.



The Deep Ocean Mission was sanctioned in September 2021. The estimated cost of the Mission is Rs. 4047 Cr for 5 years with two phases: Phase I – Rs. 2823.40 Cr. – three years, Phase-II – Rs. 1223.60 Cr. – after successful review of Phase -I. The Deep Ocean Mission consists of 6 themes: 1)Development of Technology for deep sea mining, manned submersible and underwater robotics, 2) Development of Ocean and climate change Advisory services, 3) Technology innovations for exploration and conservation of deep sea biodiversity, 4) Deep Ocean survey and exploration, 5) Energy and Freshwater from the Ocean, 6) Advanced marine station for Ocean Biology.

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