

# India felicitates foreign ISA Trainees from 6 countries in Ocean Exploration after completion of specialised programme conducted by Ministry of Earth Sciences:

## Dr. Jitendra Singh Highlights Sustainable Marine Practices

## India Reaffirms Global Leadership in Sustainable Seabed Exploration at ISA Trainee Ceremony

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In a move highlighting India's commitment to sustainable ocean development, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh felicitated international trainees from six countries including Nigeria, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Ghana and Jamaica, who had completed a specialised trading programme in Ocean Exploration.



The event, organized with the International Seabed Authority (ISA), celebrated the completion of advanced seabed exploration training and underscored India's dedication to environmental stewardship, international collaboration, and resource-sharing.



In a significant address at New Delhi's Ministry of Earth Sciences, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh recognized a group of international trainees who had completed a specialized training program focused on polymetallic nodules (PMN) and polymetallic sulphides (PMS) exploration. This training, facilitated by the ISA, attracted participants from nations including Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Jamaica, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania, underscoring India's role as a hub for sustainable marine exploration and capacity building.

Dr. Jitendra Singh began by welcoming the trainees on behalf of the Government of India, congratulating them on successfully completing the rigorous program. He emphasized India's leadership in responsible seabed exploration, framing the training as an opportunity to build a network of skilled professionals dedicated to environmental sustainability. "You are not only trainees; you are ambassadors of a sustainable future," he said, encouraging participants to use their expertise to champion marine conservation in their home countries.



During his address, Dr. Jitendra Singh outlined India's approach to seabed mining, defined by four guiding principles: sustainable utilization of seabed minerals for the common good, strict adherence to marine environmental protection, the development of seabed mineral regulations, and alignment with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). India, he reiterated, is "fully dedicated to safeguarding marine ecosystems while pursuing responsible exploration to benefit humanity."

As a signatory of the UNCLOS since 1982, India has maintained a strong voice in the ISA, which was established in 1994 to oversee mineral-related activities in the international seabed area. India holds two of the 31 ISA exploration contracts, covering PMN and PMS mining, and is committed to following strict protocols

for environmental impact assessment, from preliminary exploration to the post-extraction phases. These actions position India as a global leader in the environmentally responsible development of ocean resources.

The Minister observed that the training program aligns closely with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Blue Economy" policy, which prioritizes the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, job creation, and improved livelihoods. The Blue Economy initiative aims to harness ocean wealth responsibly; ensuring benefits reach local communities without compromising the health of marine ecosystems.

Dr. Jitendra Singh reiterated India's stance that true economic progress comes from a balance between development and environmental conservation.

The training modules covered diverse aspects of sustainable seabed exploration, including advanced exploration technologies, remote-operated vehicles, deep-sea mapping, mineral sample analysis, and environmental impact assessment methods.

Dr. Jitendra Singh encouraged the trainees to foster networks with their Indian peers and return home with India's commitment to both technological innovation and environmental responsibility. India's ongoing role as a mentor in ISA programs reflects its dedication to supporting other nations in developing a skilled workforce capable of managing marine resources sustainably, he said.

Addressing the trainees, Dr. Jitendra Singh added, "You have become a part of India's extended scientific community. This partnership in knowledge-sharing represents our commitment to a collaborative, sustainable future in marine science."

Attendees included senior officials, scientists, and other dignitaries from the Ministry of Earth Sciences, all of whom shared Dr. Jitendra Singh's optimism for the program's impact. The Minister invited the trainees to continue providing feedback on their experiences, noting that their insights could further refine and enhance India's role in international training programs. He also emphasized the importance of these collaborations, calling the trainees "global messengers of ocean conservation" with the potential to shape their countries' approaches to seabed mining.

Dr. Jitendra Singh concluded the event by reaffirming India's intent to deepen its partnerships with ISA and other international entities to ensure a sustainable marine environment for future generations. He expressed hope that India's efforts would inspire other nations to adopt similar frameworks for responsible ocean exploration, setting the stage for greater international cooperation in marine science and environmental protection.

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