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Tribal communities have been the guardians of biodiversity: Dr Jitendra Singh

CHENNAI – 18 Nov, 2026 Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, the Department of Atomic Energy and the Department of Space, Dr Jitendra Singh, today called for tribal communities to be partners and leaders in India's scientific and innovation journey.

Dr Jitendra Singh was addressing a programme marking Janjatiya Gaurav Divas, commemorating the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. The programme was organised by the Department of Science and Technology's (DST) SEED Division and the North East Centre for Technology Application and Reach (NECTAR). A technology compendium and a booklet on science, technology and innovation for tribal empowerment were released on the occasion.

Dr Jitendra Singh said Bhagwan Birsa Munda remains one of the greatest icons of India's freedom struggle and a symbol of courage, self-respect and the aspirations of tribal communities. His life and contribution, the Minister said, continue to inspire efforts towards social justice, equality and inclusive development.

The Minister described tribal



communities as guardians of biodiversity, living in harmony with forests, rivers and mountains. Dr Jitendra Singh said tribal knowledge and practices continue to inspire modern science, while digital education and STEM training can help tribal youth lead India's scientific journey. The Minister called for technology-based enterprises, supported by skills, mentoring, finance and market linkages, to create livelihoods and strengthen local economies, particularly in the North Eastern Region.

The Minister said that the empowerment of tribal communities, particularly those living in remote and geographically challenging regions, is essential to achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.

The Union Minister emphasised the need for affordable, accessible technologies suited to local conditions and easy to operate and maintain. Citing sickle cell anaemia, Dr. Singh referred to a multi-institutional CRISPR-Cas9 gene therapy effort involving CSIR-IGIB, AIIMS New Delhi, CSIR-IICT Hyderabad, NII Mumbai and other institutions.