



Northeast's transformation since 2014 evident on ground; best appreciated by those who have seen how it was before, says Dr Jitendra Singh

Biggest contribution of Modi government is total mainstreaming of Northeast with rest of India: Dr Jitendra Singh

Today, Development and Peace flourish Together in the Northeast: Dr Jitendra Singh at Guwahati Pre-Retirement Counselling Workshop

Retiring at 60 Is Not the End but a New Beginning; Pre-Retirement Counselling to Channelise Employees' Experience and energy for Viksit Bharat: Dr Jitendra Singh

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“Development and peace share a reciprocal relationship, when peace prevails, development accelerates, and when development reaches people, it strengthens peace,” said Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh, while addressing a Pre-Retirement Counselling (PRC) Workshop at Guwahati, Assam, today.

The workshop was organised by the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare in collaboration with the Assam Government, with participation from senior public representatives, officials of the State administration, banking institutions including SBI, and employees approaching superannuation. The event marked the second such programme in the State this year, reflecting the strong administrative support and effective coordination extended by the Assam Government.

Referring to the transformation witnessed in the North Eastern region over the past decade, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that those who had seen the region before 2014 could best appreciate the scale of change. Improved road connectivity between Guwahati and Shillong, expansion of railway services to States that had never seen rail connectivity earlier, new airports across the region, major bridges including the Bhupen Hazarika Bridge, and enhanced security conditions together reflect a new era of growth and integration, he said. He added that the mainstreaming of the North East has been one of the most significant contributions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has visited the region frequently to personally review development initiatives.

The Minister said that rising life expectancy and improved health standards have led to a steady increase in the number of pensioners in the country. In this context, he explained that the Pre-Retirement Counselling initiative was conceived to channelise the experience, expertise, and energy of retiring employees towards nation-building. He said that individuals retiring at 60 today are often in their prime of health and professional capability, and their potential should not be lost to society.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that over the past decade, the government has undertaken wide-ranging pension reforms with a citizen-centric approach. He recalled that earlier, pensioners often faced delays due to cumbersome procedures such as multiple No Objection Certificates and lengthy paperwork. Today, with end-to-end digital processing, pension papers are initiated well in advance and much of the process has moved online, significantly reducing delays.

He informed that the CCS (Pension) Rules have been rationalised and simplified. Multiple coloured pension forms have been replaced with a single integrated digital form. Obsolete provisions dating back to colonial times have been removed. He cited examples such as making single, divorced and separated daughters eligible for family pension without prolonged legal procedures, and granting family pension in cases where an employee dies before completing ten years of service.

The Minister also referred to the amendment of the rule relating to missing employees, under which families earlier had to wait for seven years to receive pension benefits. The provision has been revised to reduce hardship, particularly in regions that had previously faced law and order challenges.

On Digital Life Certificates (DLC), Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the campaign has become a mass movement. Dedicated camps are organised across thousands of cities, and Face Recognition Technology has been introduced to facilitate elderly pensioners, especially where biometric authentication may fail. He said that lakhs of pensioners have benefited from this facility, enabling them to submit life certificates from the comfort of their homes using mobile devices.

He further highlighted initiatives such as the “Bhavishya” portal for online pension processing, integration of pension disbursing banks into a single-window system, regular Pension Adalats for on-the-spot grievance redressal, and strengthening of pensioners’ welfare associations through enhanced grants. Several long-pending cases, including those pending for decades, have been resolved through these interventions.

Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasised that the government’s approach has focused not merely on creating new rules, but on removing outdated and unnecessary ones that had lost relevance in today’s social context. He urged retiring employees to consider themselves active stakeholders in India’s journey towards Viksit Bharat and contribute their experience to society even after superannuation.

The Minister expressed confidence that the Pre-Retirement Counselling initiative would help retiring employees plan their post-retirement life with clarity and purpose, while also enabling the government to benefit from their continued engagement in nation-building.





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