



Rajya Sabha discusses new initiatives to protect 'Marine Life' across India's sea shores

Responding in Rajya Sabha, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh Emphasises Mission-Mode Ocean Conservation

Government Strengthening Marine Biodiversity Protection through Deep Ocean Mission: Dr. Jitendra Singh

CMLRE and 'BhavSagar' to Drive Research, Conservation and Monitoring of Marine Life Across India's Coastline

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Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh today highlighted the Government's focused efforts to protect marine biodiversity and sustainably harness ocean resources, stating that India has, for the first time, adopted an institutional and mission-mode approach towards ocean conservation under the Deep Ocean Mission.

Replying to supplementary questions during the Question Hour in Rajya Sabha in the ongoing Budget Session, Dr. Jitendra Singh elaborated on the Government's initiatives aimed at safeguarding marine life, including species like Olive Ridley turtles along the Odisha coast.

The discussion was initiated by Shri Ashok Rao Shankarrao Chavan, with supplementary questions raised by Dr. Sushmita Patra, Dr. Ajeet Madhavrao Gopchade, and Dr. Anil Sukhdeorao Bonde, who sought details regarding protection of marine species, strengthening of marine ecosystems, and benefits for coastal regions.

Responding to concerns about threats faced by Olive Ridley turtles due to fishing trawlers, shipping activities and poaching, the Minister stated that the Government has established the Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE) as a key institutional mechanism under the Deep Ocean Mission. He noted that the Centre serves as a dedicated national repository for marine fauna and biodiversity, addressing long-standing gaps in structured conservation efforts.

Dr. Jitendra Singh informed that CMLRE, headquartered in Kochi, is mandated to carry out survey, assessment, and monitoring of marine life in deep seas, alongside conducting advanced research to develop preservation strategies. The Centre is also working on fisheries data systems, biodiversity hotspot mapping, and development of genetic databases for marine organisms.

Highlighting further advancements, the Minister said that the Government has also launched 'BhavSagar', a biodiversity referral centre, to strengthen research and knowledge-sharing in marine ecosystems.

Emphasizing the scale of India's maritime potential, Dr. Jitendra Singh noted that the country has a coastline of over 11,000 kilometres, yet ocean resources remained largely underexplored for decades. "This is perhaps the first time that India has systematically begun to tap and conserve its vast ocean wealth in a coordinated manner," he said.

The Minister also announced that under the Deep Ocean Mission, India is preparing for a deep-sea human exploration mission up to a depth of 6,000 metres, marking a major technological milestone. He added that this development coincides with the upcoming Gaganyaan mission, reflecting India's simultaneous advancement in both space and ocean exploration.

Addressing queries on benefits to coastal states, including Maharashtra, Dr. Jitendra Singh stated that all 12 coastal states of India will equally benefit from enhanced marine research, conservation efforts, and sustainable fisheries development enabled through these initiatives.

The Minister appreciated the Members of Parliament for raising important issues related to marine conservation, noting that such discussions contribute to greater awareness and policy focus on ocean ecosystems.





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