



Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) marks major milestone in India's journey towards self-reliant Energy Security: Dr. Jitendra Singh at VAKTAVYA 2026

AI to Become Integral to Governance and Daily Life, Must Be Used as an Enabler: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh

50% Startups Emerging from Tier-2 and Tier-3 Cities, Reflecting Democratisation of Innovation: Dr. Jitendra Singh

Minister emphasises the need for a change in mindset

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Addressing the VAKTAVYA 2026 organised by Hindu College, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted the significance of India's indigenously developed Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR), stating that it marks a major milestone in India's journey towards self-reliant Energy Security.

The Minister said that the reactor uses plutonium with liquid sodium as coolant, ensuring higher energy output with lower input, and will pave the way for thorium-based reactors, leveraging India's vast thorium reserves. He emphasised that this development strengthens India's capability and will play a key role in achieving long-term clean energy goals.

Highlighting the growing role of emerging technologies, Dr. Jitendra Singh underlined that Artificial Intelligence is no longer optional but inevitable, and will increasingly become part of governance and daily functioning. He stated that AI can serve as a powerful enabling tool, helping in research, analysis, and decision-making, but must be used carefully so that human intelligence is not overshadowed. He described this as a hybrid model where technology complements human capabilities.

Referring to India's Startup ecosystem, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the country is now ranked among the leading startup nations globally, with the number of startups reaching 2 lakhs+ rising significantly over the past decade. He highlighted that nearly 50% of these startups are emerging from tier-2 and tier-3 cities such as Sonipat, Panipat and Surat, reflecting the democratisation of opportunities and the spread of innovation beyond metropolitan centres. He also noted the increasing participation of women in the startup ecosystem.

The Minister further spoke about the transformative impact of the National Education Policy (NEP), describing it as a major shift that has provided students with flexibility and freedom to choose and change academic pathways. He noted that students are no longer bound by rigid subject streams and can explore interdisciplinary learning, enabling them to align their education with their evolving interests and aptitudes.

Highlighting initiatives to support talent and innovation, Union Minister referred to the “VAIBHAV” programme, which aims to connect the Indian scientific diaspora with domestic institutions and create opportunities for collaboration. He noted that such initiatives are helping build an enabling ecosystem where global expertise can contribute to India’s scientific growth.

The Minister also spoke about the “Pratibha Setu” portal, designed to connect UPSC aspirants who reach advanced stages of the examination process with potential employers. He noted that the platform allows verified candidate profiles to be accessed by organisations, creating opportunities for those who may not make it to final selections but possess strong capabilities.

During the interaction with students, the Minister emphasised the need for a change in mindset, stating that growth in today’s interconnected world cannot happen in silos. He encouraged students to explore diverse opportunities beyond conventional career paths and make effective use of the technological tools available to them.

Concluding his address, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the present era offers unprecedented opportunities for the youth, driven by access to information, technological advancements, and policy reforms. He urged students to make the most of this enabling environment and contribute actively to India’s growth and development.







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