



Curtain Raiser

Union Health Minister Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda to lay foundation stone of ICMR Centre for High Altitude Medicine and Public Health Research at Keylong on 11 July

Keylong to get ICMR's first dedicated centre for high altitude medicine and public health research

New centre to strengthen climate-resilient healthcare and biomedical research across India's Himalayan region

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Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda will lay the foundation stone of the ICMR Centre for High Altitude Medicine and Public Health Research at Keylong in Lahaul & Spiti district, Himachal Pradesh, on 11 July 2026. The Centre, being set up by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) under the Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, will upgrade ICMR's existing field station at Keylong into a full-fledged, multidisciplinary hub for research, innovation and capacity building focused on India's high-altitude and climate-sensitive regions.

The Himalayan ecosystem poses distinct public health challenges — high altitude, extreme climatic conditions, difficult terrain and rising climate variability — that shape disease patterns, healthcare access and emergency response. The Keylong centre will generate context-specific scientific evidence and scalable solutions across a wide research mandate: high-altitude physiology and acclimatisation, mountain medicine, climate-sensitive and emerging diseases, infectious and non-communicable diseases, maternal and child health, nutrition, mental health, environmental and occupational health, and disaster medicine. It will also integrate digital health platforms, telemedicine, drone-enabled healthcare logistics and real-time public health surveillance to improve delivery in hard-to-reach areas.

Located in Lahaul & Spiti, the Centre will have year-round access to high-altitude and tribal populations in a strategically important border region, enabling long-term cohort studies and field research on environmental determinants of health. It is expected to support national priorities in tribal health, disaster preparedness and digital health innovation, while feeding into global research on high-altitude medicine. The Centre will build institutional collaborations with the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS), the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the Himachal Pradesh Government, and academic and research institutions in India and abroad, creating an ecosystem for translational research and policy support. The initiative advances the Government's Atmanirbhar Bharat vision in health research and its broader push for climate-resilient, inclusive health systems.

The 11 July ceremony will include a traditional Bhumi Pujan and groundbreaking, plantation of native Himalayan saplings under the Green ICMR Campus Initiative, a scientific exhibition, the launch of the Centre's website and an introductory video, and the release of a commemorative postal special cover. It will be attended by Members of Parliament and the Legislative Assembly from the region, the Defence Secretary, the Chief Secretary of Himachal Pradesh, senior officials from the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, ICMR, the Armed Forces and partner institutions, along with scientists, public representatives and members of the local community.

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