Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh calls for enhancing Private Sector Participation in India’s Biotechnology Ecosystem

Government Steps Up Efforts to Build Globally Competitive Biotechnology Ecosystem: Dr Jitendra Singh

Dr. Jitendra Singh Emphasises Stronger Industry Outreach to Promote Indigenous Biotechnology Products and Mobilise Investment

BIRAC-RDIF to Accelerate Commercialisation of Indigenous Biotechnology Innovations with Support of ₹5200 Crore

BIRAC to Strengthen Industry Linkages through Life Sciences GCCs, CSR Partnerships and Startup-Investor Connect

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Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh has called for enhancing private sector participation in India’s Biotechnology ecosystem, strengthening thr industry outreach to promote indigenous products and technologies in biotechnology and life sciences, and to encourage greater private investment.

Dr Jitendra Singh stressed the need to build stronger linkages between India’s indigenous biotechnology capabilities, industry and investors so that promising innovations can move from research and development to commercialisation at a faster pace.

The Minister’s emphasis came during a meeting with senior officials of the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) in New Delhi, where a range of measures to expand investment, industry participation and market opportunities for India’s biotechnology ecosystem were discussed.

The meeting focused on the implementation of the BIRAC Research, Development and Innovation Fund (BIRAC-RDIF), strengthening industry engagement in biotechnology, integrating Life Sciences Global Capability Centres (GCCs) with the domestic biotech ecosystem, leveraging Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for biotechnology-led initiatives, enhancing BIRAC’s outreach and international visibility, and creating stronger investor linkages for biotechnology startups and enterprises. Dr.

Dhananjay Tiwary, Managing Director, BIRAC and Senior Adviser/Scientist 'H', DBT; Dr. Manish Diwan, Group General Manager and Head, BIRAC-RDIF; CS Kavita Anandani, General Manager and Head, Corporate & Legal Affairs along with senior officials were present.

The BIRAC-RDIF is a key component of the Government of India's ₹1 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund aimed at advancing deep-tech innovations and high-impact indigenous manufacturing under the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. Launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on November 3, 2025, the RDI Fund is managed by the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST), with BIRAC designated as a Second Level Fund Manager for the biotechnology sector.

BIRAC-RDIF is designed to support the development and commercialisation of indigenous biotechnology innovations, particularly high-risk and technology-intensive projects spanning Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 4 to 9. Eligible technology entities, including startups and industry, can receive assistance ranging from ₹5 crore to ₹200 crore, covering up to 50 per cent of the total project cost. The Fund provides support through collateral-free long-term loans, equity and hybrid instruments, with a strategic co-investment framework aimed at catalysing greater private-sector participation in biotechnology.

BIRAC has established a dedicated BIRAC-RDIF division to ensure ring-fenced implementation of the Fund. The first National Call for Proposals was launched on February 13, 2026, along with the BIRAC-RDIF website and an integrated e-portal for receiving applications from eligible startups and industry. A total of 198 applications has been received and are being appraised in accordance with the scheme guidelines. Screening and evaluation of the first 50 applications has been completed, with eight Eligible Technology Entities selected so far on the recommendations of the Investment Committee comprising external experts. These entities are currently undergoing detailed due diligence before entering into loan or equity agreements.

The meeting also focused on tapping the growing Life Sciences Global Capability Centre (GCC) ecosystem to deepen industry participation in India's biotechnology sector. India currently hosts more than 1,700 GCCs employing around 1.9 million professionals, while life sciences and healthcare GCCs have emerged as important centres of R&D in areas including biopharmaceuticals, medical devices and digital health. BIRAC will facilitate greater integration of existing and prospective GCCs with the domestic biotechnology ecosystem by mapping their requirements in infrastructure, pilot-scale manufacturing and R&D, and connecting them with India's BioE3 bio-foundries, bio-incubators and StartUps.

The role of CSR in expanding the biotechnology ecosystem was also taken up during the meeting. With India's CSR expenditure increasing substantially over the past decade and healthcare accounting for a significant share of CSR investments, BIRAC proposes to leverage its scientific due-diligence capabilities, nationwide network and transparent grant-management framework to channel CSR investments into biotechnology-led social innovation. Areas identified include affordable healthcare, diagnostics, maternal and child health, nutrition, climate-resilient agriculture and skill development. BIRAC already has a CSR-implementing-agency framework and has undertaken pilot corporate CSR initiatives, providing a foundation for scaling up such partnerships.

Strengthening BIRAC's outreach and visibility was another area of focus. BIRAC has proposed branding initiatives at Jammu and Vadodara airports to showcase DBT-BIRAC achievements and create greater awareness among corporates, investors and global partners about opportunities to collaborate with India's biotechnology ecosystem. Jammu is emerging as a destination for biotech, healthcare and Agri-innovation, while Vadodara has an established pharma-biotech-manufacturing base.

The meeting also addressed the need to strengthen India's biotechnology investment ecosystem, particularly access to growth-stage capital. In this context, BIRAC has proposed the BIRAC Startup Investor Connect, a dedicated platform to bring together investment-ready biotechnology startups and investors. The platform is envisaged to create greater awareness of biotechnology opportunities, facilitate strategic partnerships, strengthen investment networks and accelerate the commercialisation of innovative technologies.

The initiatives discussed during the meeting seek to strengthen the bridge between India's scientific capabilities, indigenous biotechnology products, industry and investment, while creating greater opportunities for public and private sector participation. The approach is aimed at accelerating the journey of Indian biotechnology innovations from laboratory validation to commercialisation and strengthening the foundation for a globally competitive biotechnology ecosystem aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

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