



# **India-France Space Cooperation Enters New Phase with Focus on Human Spaceflight, Start-ups and New Space Ecosystem: Dr. Jitendra Singh**

**French Minister for Higher Education, Research and Space Philippe Baptiste-Led Delegation Meets Dr. Jitendra Singh in New Delhi**

**India-France Space Partnership Spans Over Six Decades, From Sounding Rocket Experiments to Gaganyaan and Joint Satellite Missions: Dr. Jitendra Singh**

**2026 India-France Year of Innovation Opens New Avenues for Deeper Scientific and Technological Cooperation, says Dr. Jitendra Singh**

**TRISHNA, Gaganyaan and India's 400+ Space Start-ups Create New Opportunities for India-France Partnership: Dr. Jitendra Singh**

**Dr. Jitendra Singh Pitches for Wider Government-Industry and Start-up Collaboration in Space Sector**

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India-France space cooperation has evolved from the early sounding rocket experiments of the 1960s into a broad and expanding partnership encompassing joint satellite missions, launch vehicle technologies, human spaceflight and emerging space applications, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences and MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh, said today.

He said the long-standing relationship between the two countries now provides an opportunity to build a larger ecosystem by bringing together governments, research institutions, industries and start-ups, including through deeper engagement in the rapidly expanding space sector.

A high-level French delegation led by Prof. Philippe Baptiste, French Minister for Higher Education, Research and Space, met Dr. Jitendra Singh in New Delhi today. The meeting covered the Space Summit, India-France Year of Innovation 2026 and priorities in scientific and technological cooperation, including Space, CEFIPRA and Blue Economy. Dr. Jitendra Singh said the breadth of the delegation itself reflected the wide-ranging nature of India-France cooperation across different science domains.

Dr. Jitendra Singh was accompanied by Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Prof. Umesh V. Waghmare; Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Dr. T. Srinivasa Kumar; Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, Dr. Rajesh S. Gokhale; Director General, CSIR, Dr. (Mrs.) N. Kalaiselvi; Head, International Cooperation, DST, Dr. Praveenkumar Somasundaram; a representative from the Department of Space; Ministry of External Affairs representative; Director, CEFIPRA; and Nodal Officer of France, Scientist-E, ICD, DST.

The French delegation comprised Prof. Philippe Baptiste; Chief of Staff Lou Le Nabasque; Diplomatic Adviser Alexia Lacaze; Personal Security Officer J  r  my Roller; India Desk Officer Beno  t Talleu; Director General of ESSEC Vincenzo Vinzi; Ambassador of France to India Thierry Mathou; Counsellor for Cooperation and Cultural Action Gr  gor Trumel; Deputy Counsellor Nicolas Gascoin; Attach   for Scientific Cooperation Sylviane Pied; Strategic Affairs Adviser Rapha  lle Sanan  s; and Space Affairs Counsellor Tamara Tezzele.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said India-France space cooperation is as old as the two countries' respective space agencies, with the partnership progressing from sounding rocket experiments in the 1960s to present-day human spaceflight. He referred to Megha-Tropiques and SARAL, jointly built by ISRO and CNES, as well as cooperation in launch vehicle engine development, as milestones of this enduring partnership. He said the realisation of the third joint satellite, TRISHNA, is progressing well, and also appreciated CNES support to India's Gaganyaan programme, including supply of consumables and training of flight surgeons. Indian and French teams have also initiated discussions on microgravity research and parabolic flights in connection with human spaceflight.

The Minister said the ongoing transformation of India's space sector has created new possibilities for the two countries to expand cooperation beyond government institutions and established agencies. Referring to India's space-sector reforms and the growth of the private ecosystem, he said more than 400 Indian space start-ups are now engaged in areas including rocket building, satellite building and space applications. He said the next phase of India-France cooperation can bring together government institutions, industries and start-ups on both sides to create a larger ecosystem and wider resource pool.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said the India-France Year of Innovation 2026, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the President of France in February this year, provides an important platform to take the partnership in innovation and emerging technologies forward. He referred to the upcoming Water Cycle and TRISHNA Mission event in Bengaluru on October 11, where ISRO will contribute outreach material and senior officials will speak on the TRISHNA satellite and its applications.

The Minister also placed the space partnership in the wider context of India-France scientific cooperation, spanning biotechnology, digital sciences and technologies and ocean sciences. He referred to the continuing engagement through institutions and mechanisms such as CEFIPRA and Indo-French joint centres, saying that the cooperation has developed as a consistently progressing partnership across multiple science domains.

Referring to the Blue Economy, Dr. Jitendra Singh spoke about the scope for cooperation in ocean sciences and India's Deep Ocean Mission, which seeks to explore the vast scientific and resource potential of the deep oceans. He said the expanding engagement across space, science and ocean domains provides an opportunity to build a broader India-France partnership with participation from institutions and stakeholders across the ecosystem.

Prof. Philippe Baptiste said France shares India's vision of taking the partnership forward in science, technology and space and expressed strong interest in expanding cooperation in these areas. He described TRISHNA as a strong example of what India and France can achieve together, and welcomed greater cooperation in human spaceflight, astronaut health, microgravity research and parabolic flights. He also spoke positively about connecting research institutions and start-ups from both countries, reflecting a shared objective of building a stronger and future-oriented India-France innovation ecosystem.

The meeting comes at a significant moment in the India-France partnership, with 2026 being observed as the India-France Year of Innovation and cooperation continuing across space, science and technology, biotechnology, digital sciences and ocean sciences. The discussions provided fresh momentum to further expand this longstanding partnership into emerging areas while creating greater opportunities for institutional, industrial and start-up collaboration.





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