



Himalayan Climate Research Centre in J&K

Why in News?

The Union Minister of Earth Sciences inaugurated the first-ever “Himalayan High Altitude Atmospheric & Climate Research Centre” in the elevated region of Nathatop, located in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Key Points

- **Collaborative Efforts:**
 - The centre is the result of a multi-tier collaboration of the Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of J&K and **Swiss National Science Foundation**.
- **A Strategic Location for Critical Research:**
 - The Nathatop site was chosen for its **clean air and low pollution levels**—ideal conditions to study [cloud formation](#), [aerosol interactions](#), and [weather patterns](#).
 - Researchers will be able to **observe atmospheric processes in free tropospheric conditions**, a rarity in most parts of India.
- **Launch of ICE-CRUNCH:**
 - During the ceremony, the union minister also flagged off **ICE-CRUNCH—a joint Indo-Swiss research project** involving Indian scientists and researchers from university in Zurich.
 - The study will explore **ice-nucleating particles and cloud condensation nuclei** in the **north-western Himalayas** both critical for **understanding precipitation and climate behaviour**.
- **Tapping Himalayan Potential:**
 - The minister also cited national initiatives like the [Aroma Mission](#) and [Floriculture Mission](#), which are helping unlock the Himalayas' economic and ecological potential.
 - These missions aim to **boost local livelihoods** while contributing to India's broader climate goals.

Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF)

- The SNSF, **established in 1952**, is a **public funding organization** that evaluates research proposals and allocates public research money based on a competitive principle, ensuring **high-quality research in Switzerland**.

Aroma Mission

- **Objectives:**
 - To **promote the cultivation of aromatic crops for essential oils** that are in great demand by the aroma industry.
 - To enable Indian farmers and the aroma industry **to become global leaders** in the production and export of some other essential oils on the pattern of menthol mint.
 - To **provide substantial benefits** to the farmers in achieving higher profits, utilization of waste lands and protection of their crops from wild and grazing animals.
- **Nodal Agencies:**

- The nodal laboratory is **CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CSIR-CIMAP), Lucknow.**
- The participating laboratories are CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (CSIR-IHBT), Palampur; CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), Jammu etc.

Floriculture Mission

▪ Floriculture:

- It is a branch of **horticulture** that deals with the cultivation, processing and marketing of ornamental plants vis-à-vis landscaping of small or large areas, and maintenance of gardens so that the surroundings may appear aesthetically pleasant.

▪ Objectives:

- To focus on commercial floral crops, seasonal/annual crops, wild ornaments and cultivation of flower crops for honey bee rearing.
- Some of the popular crops include Gladiolus, Canna, Carnation, Chrysanthemum, Gerbera, Lilium, Marigold, Rose, Tuberose etc.

▪ Implementing Agencies:

- Along with **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**, other implementing agencies involved are:
 - **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)**
 - **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)**
 - **APEDA and TRIFED**
 - **Fragrance and Flavour Development Centre (FFDC), Kannauj, and**
 - **Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).**

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