India's 183rd seismological observatory opens at Kishtwar, Jammu & Kashmir – 4th in the UT

Science · 5 November 2026 · https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/current-affairs-english/2026/11/05



News

Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Earth Sciences, inaugurated India's 183rd seismological observatory at Kishtwar, Jammu & Kashmir, on 2 Nov 2026. It is the fourth in J&K – the others are at Jammu, Srinagar and Udhampur. Fitted with modern digital seismic equipment, it will send real-time data to the 24x7 earthquake monitoring centre of the National Center for Seismology (NCS) in New Delhi, strengthening earthquake monitoring and disaster preparedness in the Himalaya. Officials said Kishtwar 'sits in the middle of a fault line'.

Key facts

Inauguration	2 Nov 2026 – Dr Jitendra Singh (Ministry of Earth Sciences)
Count	India's 183rd; 4th in J&K (Jammu, Srinagar, Udhampur, Kishtwar)
Earlier	153rd observatory – Udhampur, 21 June 2022
NCS network	About 84 stations in 2014 → 168 by Aug 2025 → 183 now
Other facilities	4 Doppler weather radars in J&K (Banihal, Jot, Jammu, Srinagar); 4 more in 2027 at Doda, Kishtwar, Anantnag, Baramulla

Kishtwar	Chenab valley; Kiru (624 MW), Kwar (540 MW) on the Chenab; Pakal Dul (1,000 MW) on its tributary, the Marusudar

Background

- Body: the National Center for Seismology (NCS) is the Government of India's nodal agency for monitoring earthquake activity; it was set up in Aug 2014 under the Ministry of Earth Sciences. Its work includes 24x7 monitoring, a seismological data centre and city seismic microzonation studies.
- History: after the 1897 Shillong plateau earthquake, India's first seismological observatory was set up at Alipore, Calcutta, on 1 Dec 1898. The national network grew to 6 stations in 1940, 15 in 1960 and 18 in 1970.
- Seismic zones: the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) code IS 1893 divides India into four zones, II to V (V = highest risk). IS 1893:2025, issued in Nov 2025, added a new 'Zone VI' covering the whole Himalaya and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, but BIS withdrew it in March 2026 – the 2016 standard is back in force.
- Science: the point underground where a quake starts is the 'focus' (hypocentre); the point on the surface directly above it is the 'epicentre'. The Richter scale, devised by Charles Richter in 1935, is a logarithmic scale of an earthquake's 'magnitude' (energy released); the 'intensity' of shaking and damage is measured on the Mercalli scale. A seismograph records seismic waves.

Tamil Nadu link: according to the Ministry of Earth Sciences' Lok Sabha reply (20 Mar 2020), Tamil Nadu lies in seismic Zones II and III. Chennai, Tiruvallur, Vellore, Chengalpattu, Ranipet, Kanniyakumari, Tirupattur and Tiruppur are in Zone III; Tiruchirappalli, Madurai, Thanjavur, Nagapattinam, Ramanathapuram, Thoothukudi and others in Zone II; Coimbatore, Salem, the Nilgiris, Kancheepuram and some others straddle both.

Shanmugam IAS Academy – your next step

- **Courses:** TNPSC Group 1, 2 / 2A (Prelims + Mains), Group 4, UPSC / IAS – Coimbatore · Madurai · Online – https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/fees
- **Books (PDF):** TNPSC PYQ books, UPSC books – https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/study-materials
- **Free quiz + daily PDFs:** https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/free-pdf-download · All news of this day: https://www.shanmugamiasacademy.in/current-affairs-english/2026/11/05

Admissions – call / WhatsApp: 99941 46662 · 99944 27714 · www.shanmugamiasacademy.in