

# CSIR in Media



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## Midhani inks pact with NAL

CSIR-NAL

7<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited (Midhani), a city-based defence public sector alloy manufacturing unit, has signed a transfer of technology agreement with Bangalore-based premier research and development laboratory National Aerospace Laboratories (CSIR-NAL) for processing Nickel - Titanium (NiTi) Shape Memory Alloys on exclusive basis for engineering and bio-medical applications.

The agreement was signed between Midhani chairman and managing director D.K. Lekhi and CSIR-NAL director Jitendra J. Jadhav. According to a press release, NiTi shape memory materials have the ability to “memorize” or retain their previous form when subjected to certain stimulus such as thermo mechanical or magnetic variations.

**Published in:**

**[Hindu Business Line](#)**



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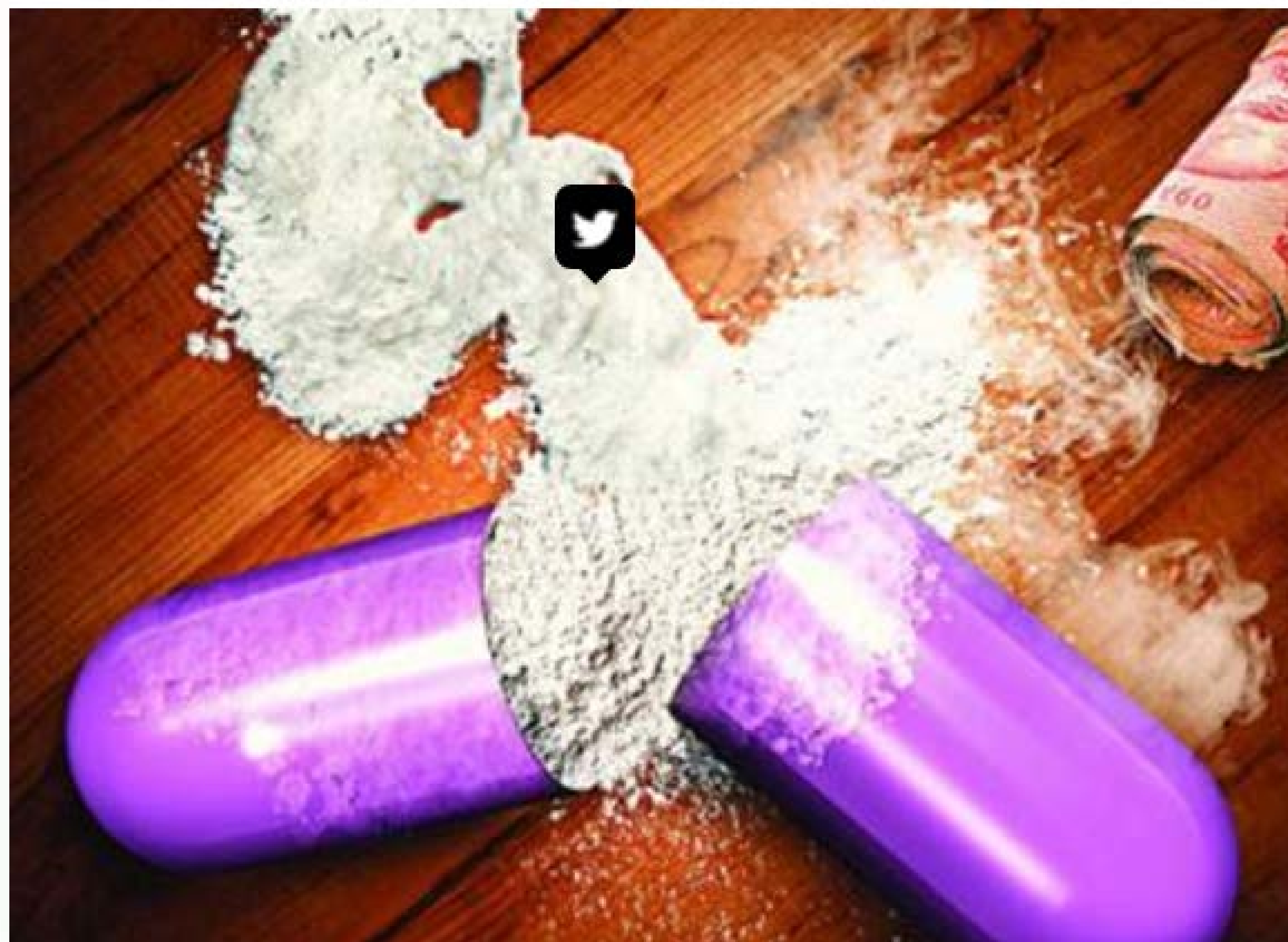
[New Indian Express](#)



## NCL, startup sign ink pact for vitiligo drug development

CSIR-NCL CSIR-IGIB

7<sup>th</sup> March 2017



*The National Chemical Laboratory scientists have initiated a research to find a new and effective drug for vitiligo — a skin disorder — in collaboration with a drug-discovery startup*

The National Chemical Laboratory and Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), both laboratories of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), New Delhi, recently signed a patent licensing agreement with Ahammune Biosciences Pvt Ltd for the vitiligo drug development. D Srinivasa Reddy (NCL), Rajesh S Gokhale (IGIB, on deputation from NII) and T N Vivek (IGIB) are the lead inventors of the patent.

Ahammune is a resident incubatee company of Venture Centre, NCL's technology business incubator. As many as 80 million people in the country are affected by vitiligo. The current treatment strategies provide only temporary relief and are mostly ineffective, an NCL scientist said. The startup, Ahammune Biosciences and NCL are now striving to fulfil the medical need in the vitiligo therapeutic area.



An NCL statement said Ahammune Biosciences was an innovation-led drug discovery startup company with the vision to find a new drug for the debilitating skin disorder, vitiligo. "It is the most common depigmenting disease with over 80 million people affected by it. In vitiligo, colour-producing cells are lost from areas of skin, leaving behind white spots. The spread of depigmentation is unpredictable, ranging from days to years," added the statement.

It is a cause of immense psychological torment, with patients feeling isolated and depressed. This disease is a major concern in India, where it is considered as a social stigma because many people confuse it with leprosy.

As a part of the research, scientists would conduct further work towards potential vitiligo drug development after the patent licensing agreement.

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## **‘NIO’s research now will have a more direct societal link’**

CSIR-NIO

1<sup>st</sup> March 2017

As director of National Institute of Oceanography (NIO), which is now 50-odd years old, what are your priorities?

It's a very exciting time in terms of reflecting on everything that NIO and the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), which is celebrating 75 years, have achieved. Now, CSIR is undergoing a lot of change. There is a shift in the research pattern, which will also mean that NIO will change its direction slightly. Earlier, I could

take up the research of, say, the warming of the ocean while somebody else could take up research on extreme events like cyclones, or something else like the ecosystem. But, all these things are connected. At the time it was not mandatory and one could research small exciting problems that did not have to be connected. It was not necessary to look at it in a holistic manner. But I think the demand, now that the nation has high expectations from us, is quite different from what it was earlier.



What are the new areas in ocean research that NIO is looking at?

CSIR's guideline asks for a 15-year vision, a seven-year strategy, and a three-year implementation plan. We are preparing the first document towards that 15-year vision plan. But there is three years of implementation for which NIO will put up four important programmes that look at the climate change and monsoon. Monsoon has been the focus of NIO's research in some way, but we are now going to look at what role the ocean plays in terms of modulating the monsoon, and whether we can improve the prediction, and help the agencies that predict monsoon, such as IITM (Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology) and IMD (India Meteorological Department), by improving our understanding in a quantitative way, and that can be put into the model and they can improve the prediction.

There have been reports that funding for science and ocean study is coming down. How do you manage to sustain your activities?

Well, as of now, our last five-year plan is going to end in March 2017. So, we have been funded up till that point. After March 2017, all the programs we are going to undertake will directly contribute towards nation building, in terms of the government's program. Also, the government of India is a signatory to the UN sustainable development goal, which has listed about 30-odd topics. India is committed to contribute towards that sustainable development, and that has climate, ecosystem, and oceans in it. We will be contributing towards all these areas. We will also look at the ocean under the Blue Economy, which is nothing but knowledge economy. Simply put it means you first have to have the knowledge, then you can derive benefit from it. To elucidate the point, let's suppose that I want to develop a coastal region and there's an entrepreneur who wants to set up a beach recreation business.



Now, it's a very lucrative business. But, before entering into it, he/she should be equipped to understand the coastline, and what the vulnerabilities are, and what the particular features of that coastline are. And he should also know how he can do his business in a sustainable manner. For example, if a thousand people are coming to a small one-kilometre stretch of coastline, can the activity be sustained? Probably not. We need to regulate that.

So, NIO is also going to be a kind of an advisory body to the tourism department?

We are probably going to go much beyond that, because CSIR has also launched something called the 'Skill India' programme in September 2016. We will have the courses to teach entrepreneurs. We'll launch maybe four to five certificate courses which will range from two to eight months, in line with the 'Skill India' programme.

You have had some very interesting findings in the past, some of which have been a boon to medicine and the fisheries sectors. Have these translated into economic benefits for NIO?

Not really, we have not taken in a grand way to industry. A lot of research has gone into the dye industry. They create dyes, and the discolouration is a problem, apart from the toxicity. Even if you take care of the toxicity, if the water is discoloured, people don't want to use that dye. It may not be toxic, but the discolouration can cause difficulty. 'Y-Technology', our technology group, has developed a series of microbes that can take care of this problem by reducing the discolouration. Now, we are going to try it out from the laboratory scale to field scale, and then we're going to go to the industry. Earlier it has just been thought about on a slower pace, but now we are going to have to do it much faster. That is how we are going to translate the research.



But, economically, has there been any significant benefit?

Yes, because they can reduce the cost several times, so economically it is very lucrative. We cannot have 100% discolouration, but even a reduction of 40% in discolouration is great for industry. There is also research going on about how mercury in the environment can be reduced.

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## Seminar on aroma bearing crops held

CSIR-IIIM

6<sup>th</sup> March 2017

CSIR-IIIM Jammu in collaboration with 11th International Congress of Essential Oils, Flavour and Fragrance-1989, New Delhi conducted a national seminar on Aroma Bearing Crops (Scientist-Farmer-Industry Meet) on Aroma and on Facilitating marketing link between essential oils produced by the farmers with the industry here at CSIR-IIIM Jammu.

The meet was attended by 50 farmers of Jammu division and 25 industrialists from Aroma industry across the country.

The meeting was inaugurated by Dr.

Ram Vishwakarma, Director, CSIR-IIIM Jammu.

Dr. Ram Vishwakarma, Director, CSIR-IIIM Jammu briefed the participants on the research done by the institute and future schemes for the farmers. Scientists of the institute presented the research on aroma bearing plants for the benefit of farmers.

The meeting concluded with an interaction between scientists-farmer and industry which was chaired by the Dr. Ram Vishwakarma, Director, CSIR-IIIM Jammu.

[State Times](#)

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