

## **India-South Africa to strengthen cooperation in Astronomy, RE, Advanced Materials & Indigenous Knowledge**

India and South Africa agreed to strengthen cooperation in the area of Astronomy, Renewable energy, Advanced Materials & Manufacturing, and Indigenous Knowledge System at 12th Joint Committee Meeting (JCM) on Science and Technology during February 17-20, 2020 at Pretoria, South Africa.

A 4 member scientific delegation from India led by Dr. S. K. Varshney, Advisor & Head of International Bilateral Cooperation participated the meeting at Pretoria, South Africa, and the South African delegation was led by Mr. Daan Du Toit, Deputy Director-General, International Cooperation and Resources, Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), South Africa.



National Innovation Foundation (NIF) and DSI, South Africa finalized the Implementation Plan for Grassroot Innovation programme which was signed after the Joint Committee Meeting attended by Dr. Vipin Kumar, Director, NIF, and Ms. Nonhlanhla Mkhize Chief Director: Innovation for Inclusive Development DSI, South Africa.

This will provide a clear strategy to develop or deploy affordable grassroots technologies to address the common challenges of food, nutrition, and health of both countries. India is part of the Square Kilometer Array (SKA) hosted by South Africa. An India South Africa Joint workshop in the area of Radio Astronomy has also been agreed upon to add value to the SKA (Square Kilometer Array) partnership.

The joint committee also appreciated the progress in the HIV-TB programme and agreed to organize a final project review meeting during the last quarter of 2020. Both sides applauded the good response for Joint Call for R & D Projects in the area of Renewable Energy, Biotechnology, and advanced materials. A total of 82 projects have been received from both sides. The joint committee agreed to support about 10 projects based on the basis of scientific merit.

The delegation also visited the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Pretoria, National Institute on Communicable Diseases, Kleinskuur Boerdery Aquaponics Grassroots Innovation project Pretoria, and interacted with the scientists to explore further opportunities of cooperation.