

Ladakh celebrates first National Mega Entrepreneurship Day with great pride

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: The Union Territory of Ladakh observed its first-ever National Mega Entrepreneurship Day in Leh with great enthusiasm and pride on Sunday.

The event, an initiative of the Department of Higher Education, Administration of UT Ladakh, was implemented by the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Gujarat.

The grand event was graced by the presence of the Lieutenant Governor of UT Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, who commended the young entrepreneurs of Ladakh for



their creativity, determination, and contribution to the region's economic future.

Students from across Ladakh, including the remote regions of Changthang and

Drass, participated in the celebration, showcasing a diverse range of locally inspired and skill-based products developed over the last four months. ▶ P11

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Their exhibits included crochet crafts, eco-solar innovations, mushroom spa products, Drass pickles, graphic design works, bakery delights, Kharnak embroideries, Himalayan apple crisps, and many other creative ventures.

The display reflected the entrepreneurial spirit of Ladakh's youth and the region's potential for sustainable, locally driven economic growth.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Sunil Shukla, Director General of EDII, extended a warm welcome to all participants. He urged the youth to transform themselves from job seekers into job creators, emphasizing the importance of leveraging various Government of India schemes focused on entrepreneurship and youth empowerment.

He underscored that the initiative aims to promote local skills, cultural heritage, and tradition-oriented education, integrating skill-based learning within schools and beyond academics.

Rudra Goud, Administrative Secretary of Industries, elaborated on the MSME schemes and their benefits for small businesses, such as access to bank loans, design and research projects, and export support for local products.

He encouraged students and aspiring entrepreneurs to dream big and overcome limitations, expressing confidence that Ladakh could emerge as a "unicorn hub" in the near future.

Bhanu Prabha, Administrative Secretary of Higher Education, shared insights into the four-month journey of the startup initiative and the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with EDII. She highlighted that over 1,500 students participated in the program, developing nearly 100 innovative products that were launched publicly during the event.

She described this as a remarkable achievement and reaffirmed the Administration's commitment to nurturing more such initiatives in the years ahead.

In his keynote address, Gupta congratulated the students and participants for their remarkable enthusiasm and creativity.

He noted that Ladakh stands among 22 states and UTs celebrating this special day and praised the region for embracing entrepreneurship despite its fragile ecosystem and challenging climate.

He appreciated EDII's efforts in empowering youth and women through training and innovation, noting the vital role of women's self-help groups and tourism-based enterprises in inspiring others. He further emphasized the importance of eco-friendly sustainability, digital integration, and e-commerce in shaping a prosperous future for Ladakh.

He reaffirmed the Administration's commitment to supporting such developmental activities, encouraging youth to rely on their skills and innovation.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Shri Amit Kumar, Project Director of EDII, who announced the successful registration of 150 entrepreneurs on the UDYAM portal and celebrated the achievements of the four-month startup journey. He expressed gratitude to all stakeholders, students, and mentors who made the initiative a resounding success.