

Atal Innovation Mission hosts AIM Sumvaad-Central India to strengthen regional incubators through stronger State-Centre collaboration

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Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) - NITI Aayog successfully organized the Regional AIM SUMVAAD, Central India Edition today at Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology (RRCAT) Indore, Madhya Pradesh bringing together key stakeholders from government, industry, academia, incubators, startups, and the wider innovation ecosystem.

The convening aimed at strengthening the State - Centre collaboration and to build a robust incubator network across the region, while deepening engagement with key innovation ecosystem stakeholders. The initiative also focused on fostering inclusive entrepreneurship and accelerating innovation through stronger partnerships between government, industry, academia, and startups.

The regional gathering witnessed participation from representatives of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh, along with startup councils, incubators, industry leaders, CSR partners and ecosystem enablers.

The Sumvaad featured high-level deliberations on strengthening incubation ecosystems, scaling state-led innovation initiatives and enhancing collaboration between governments, academia, incubators and industry. The sessions focused on enabling innovation-driven economic growth and unlocking opportunities for startups across emerging sectors.

Sharing his thoughts on the initiative, Mission Director, Atal Innovation Mission, Deepak Bagla said, "Incubators are the cornerstone of a thriving startup ecosystem, transforming innovative ideas into scalable and impactful ventures. Through strategic collaborations with DST, DBT, and DPIIT, Atal Innovation Mission is strengthening the innovation landscape by enabling world-class infrastructure, mentorship, market access, and collaborative platforms like AIM SUMVAAD. These efforts are fostering entrepreneurship, accelerating innovation, and contributing meaningfully towards the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Speaking during the conclave, Himanshu Rai - Director of IIM Indore, highlighted that India's startup evolution is entering a critical phase, stating that the nation is "moving from a service mindset to a science mindset." He noted that for DeepTech to thrive, the ecosystem must embrace patient capital and a culture that prioritizes deep research over quick returns.

Viraj Bhanage, Director - Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology (RRCAT) and Chairman - AIC π -Hub, underlined the role of incubators in handholding and supporting the next generation of startups. He also emphasized the significance of the AIM Sumvaad in strengthening ties between young entrepreneurs, institutions, and ecosystem enablers to foster collaborative spirit and that this joint initiative would unlock new opportunities for startups, youth and industry.

Dr. Abha Rishi, Executive Head - Madhya Pradesh Startup Centre emphasized that Incubators are the beating heart of our startup ecosystem; recognizing their strategic importance is the first step toward driving a more robust and sustainable innovation landscape across the country.

Besides, a special session on “*Building Effective People and Culture in Incubation Centres*”, led by Shri Manish Verma, focused on strengthening the people and the culture behind the incubator, which will create a sustainable engine for entrepreneurship that can withstand any market shift.

Speaking on the evolution of the Indian Incubators landscape, Shri Sandeep Gupta, Director - CFA Institute India, emphasized that the next frontier for incubation centers is the shift '*From Grants to Growth*,' focusing on financially sustainable and professionally managed models.

One of the major highlights of the event was the launch of the state chapters of Incubators in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, as Madhya Pradesh Incubation Consortium and Thar Incubation Alliance, respectively.

The Regional AIM SUMVAAD also serves as a powerful platform for knowledge exchange, strategic collaboration and policy dialogue, reinforcing AIM’s commitment to nurturing innovation-led development and strengthening India’s entrepreneurial landscape through localized action and national partnerships.

Other dignitaries present on the conclave were Prateek Deshmukh, Program Director -AIM; Dr C.P Paul, Head - AIC Pie Hub and Secretary DIA; Prasad Menon, President – ISBA; Chandra Shekhar Yadav from Department of Science and Technology (DST); Ravi Pandey, Startup head - Start in UP; Dhawal Singhal, Program Lead - iStart Rajasthan; Manish Verma - Growth Expert and Mentor at IIM Lucknow - EIC; Sandeep Gupta from CFA among others.



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