

Partnerships to reach approximately 1,000 Scheduled Tribes Entrepreneurs with a minimum of 100 to be funded and incubated under VCF-ST

MoUs to provide structured capacity building, mentorship, market linkages and investment-readiness support to ST- led enterprises

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Under the leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, the Government of India has placed the socio-economic empowerment of Scheduled Tribes (ST) at the centre of its development agenda.

Carrying this commitment forward, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) today signed and exchanged MoUs with Ten State & Technology Business Incubators at the Conference Hall, Kartavya Bhavan-I, New Delhi establishing a national pathway to identify, incubate, mentor and finance ST-led startups and enterprises.

The Ministry signed the MoUs with IIM Calcutta Innovation Park, T-Hub Foundation, Startup Tamil Nadu, Startup Odisha, IIM Udaipur Incubation Centre, Kerala Startup Mission, PRIME Meghalaya, KIIT Technology Business Incubator, Foundation for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (FIED), IIM Kashipur, and Entrepreneur School of Business, Nagaland. Together, these institutions will work with the Ministry to create an enabling ecosystem for innovation-driven entrepreneurship among Scheduled Tribe communities across the country.



In his keynote address, Shri Jual Oram, Hon'ble Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, emphasised the goal of creating both job creators and job seekers. He stressed on harnessing the potential of tribal youth, and of reaching and handholding a larger number of Scheduled Tribe innovators and entrepreneurs.

Thereafter, the Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Shri Durgadas Uikey reinforced the vision of Hon' PM of Viksit Bharat. He highlighted the growth of tribal communities in the Education, Health, Digital Infrastructure and AI.

Ms. Ranjana Chopra, Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, spoke on identifying the potential of tribal communities, remarking that innovation is not new to them but is intrinsic to their way of life. She remarked that traditional tribal systems hold a wealth of innovation that has often been lost to the modern world and needs to be streamlined with structured strategy. She outlined the priorities for the partnership, namely bridging the gap between the total number of startups in the country and the number of Scheduled Tribe (ST)-led startups, and handholding a much larger number of ST entrepreneurs. Calling for the efforts under this MoU to be aspirational, the Secretary underlined the principle of equity over equality, recognising that tribal startups and enterprises may begin from a different starting point and therefore require dedicated, strategized, and specialised support, exposure, and networking. She explained that enhancing livelihood integration means bringing marginalized communities into the mainstream and linking them with modern livelihood opportunities that go beyond traditional models. She articulated the central goal of moving tribal communities into modern, aspirational livelihoods beyond subsistence. She reiterated her call to the incubators not to aim merely for subsistence, but to target commercially viable enterprises.



The initiative reflects the Ministry's continued commitment for an enabling ecosystem for tribal youth through mentorship and capacity building support. Facilitating innovation-led enterprise development by strengthening access to markets, finance and investor networks integrating tribal entrepreneurs into India's growing startup landscape in line with the vision of AtmaNirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat 2047.

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