Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Launches Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge

The Department of Fisheries, Government of India in association with Startup India, Ministry of Commerce and Industry inaugurated the “Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge” on 13th January 2022. The challenge has been launched with an objective to provide a platform to start-ups within the country to showcase their innovative solutions within the Fisheries and Aquaculture sector. The event was graced by the presence of Shri Parshottam Rupala, Hon'ble Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and Dr. L. Murugan, Minister of State, Hon'ble Minister of State of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying.

The event started by opening remarks from Shri Sagar Mehra, Hon'ble Joint Secretary (Inland Fisheries). In his address, he stressed upon ways to capitalize the young talent in the country for bringing in noble solutions in the fisheries sector. Dr. J. Balaji, Hon'ble Joint Secretary (Marine Fisheries) deliberated that the unrealised potential of the fisheries sector offers varied opportunities for bringing in scalable business solutions and maximizing the benefits for the fishermen and fish farmers.

Shri Jatinder Nath Swain, Hon'ble Secretary Department of Fisheries, articulated that fisheries is one of the fastest growing sectors amongst the primary producing sectors. However, in order to realize the true potential of the fisheries sector, technological breakthroughs are required for enhancing production, productivity and efficiency of the fisheries’ value chain.

Hon’ble Minister of State, MoFAH&D emphasised that the fisheries sector plays a vital role in economic and overall development of the country. Referred to as the “sunrise sector”, fisheries sector is poised to bring in immense potential through equitable and inclusive growth. The sector is recognized as a powerful engine for providing employment to ~14.5 million people and sustaining livelihood for ~28 million fishermen of the country. He urged that the young entrepreneurs of the country should thereby come forward and offer solutions to resolve on-ground challenges through technology interventions and innovative solutions.

Hon’ble Minister, MoFAH&D stressed upon the enormous potential of the fisheries and aquaculture sector and its significance to the national economy. He launched the Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge and urged the brilliant and enlightened young minds of India to use the Grand Challenge as a platform to showcase their solutions for resolving sectoral challenges. He also highlighted that the solutions should be devised for resolving issues across the fisheries value chain for increasing aquaculture productivity from the current national average of 3 tons to 5 tons per hectare, doubling exports earnings and reducing post-harvest losses from 25% to 10%.

“Fisheries Startup Challenge” launched today by Department of Fisheries, GoI will be live for 45 days for submission of applications on the Start-up India portal – www.startupindia.gov.in. The following themes have been identified for submission of problem statements under the Fisheries Start-up Grand Challenge.

Design and develop technology / solutions for enhancing the productivity so that the fishers & fish farmers can achieve better price realization

Develop infrastructure and post-harvest management solutions that will enable fishers, fish farmers in creating value addition, value creation and value realization ensuring minimal wastage across the fisheries value chain.

Develop business solutions and outreach activities that will make fish and fish products easily accessible,
acceptable and popular among the meat consuming population in the country

Develop sustainable solutions to reduce/stop soil erosion, siltation of the water bodies and develop eco-friendly solutions for coastal fishers

The challenge is expected to foster start-up culture within the sector and to establish a strong foundation of the entrepreneurial model, the Department of Fisheries has earmarked funds to the tune of Rs. 3.44 Crore for the challenge. The selected 12 winners of the challenge will be awarded a cash grant of Rs 2.00 Lakh each to 10 shortlisted start-ups for translating their ‘Idea to PoC’. In the final round a grant up to INR 20.00 lakh (General category) and INR 30.00 Lakh (SC/ST/Women) will be provided to the winners for transforming their ideas into effective pilots which would further translate into commercialization.

The launch event was attended by various stakeholders including key start-ups, industry experts, entrepreneurs, investors, incubators and policy makers. The event culminated with vote of thanks by Shri Mukesh, Director (Fisheries Statistics, Department of Fisheries). He thanked all the distinguished guests and participants for their valuable time and wished for the grand success of the Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge.

At a macro level, through Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge and similar impactful activities, the Department envisages inclusive growth within the sector through collaborative and cumulative efforts from various stakeholders. Importantly, the Department aims to progressively contribute towards nation building by fulfilling the objective of making an ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat’.

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