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Encourage startups by locals in Araku: Sumita Dawra

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Published
Updated

Apr 16, 2016, 7:23 am IST
Apr 16, 2016, 7:23 am IST

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Forest products have great business potential: Secretary Sumita Dawra.



📷 Vizag police commissioner Amit Garg has a word with higher education principal secretary Sumita Dawra during a conclave at YVS Murthy Auditorium of AU Engineering College in Vizag on Friday.

Visakhapatnam: "Local talent should be encouraged and an entrepreneurship ecosystem needs to be developed to ensure generation of revenue for support of the local communities in Araku. There are products like coffee, spices, toys and honey here that could build a good market," said higher education department principal secretary Sumita Dawra.

She was participating in an entrepreneurship conclave, 'Exordia'16', organised by the IIM Visakhapatnam in collaboration with the NS Raghavan Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (NSRCEL) and IIM Bangalore, in the city on Friday to promote and build an ecosystem in cities like Vizag.

"The government is striving hard to nurture local talent, encourage employability and create the right ecosystem for budding entrepreneurs. We are training the students of government schools in tribal areas like Araku for digitalisation of local products that the people make so that they themselves can create a platform for showcasing their talent, using technology," she added.

Many prominent personalities from government, industry and academia participated in the 'Expert Talk' event to mentor students who shared their experiences. Chairperson of entrepreneurial ecosystem development (NSRCEL, IIM Bangalore) Prof Suresh Bhagavatula, chairman of Native Angels Network and angel investor Nagaraja Prakasam, founder member Saahas Wilma Rodrigues, vice-chairman of the Confederation of Indian Industry (AP) Shiv Kumar, founder of F5 Escapes Malini Gowrishankar and city commissioner of police Amit Garg gave insights about startups and product development.

The conclave began with the 'Kick Starter' which gave opportunities to budding entrepreneurs to pitch their projects to panel members. "Startups should build companies that are viable rather than just copy ideas," Prof Suresh Bhagavatula said.

Mr Garg also threw light on the perspectives of clients or customers. "Before building a product, we need to research the market, study customer behavior and mindset and the ground requirements too," he said.

Malini Gowrishankar also inspired youths with whom she shared her experiences of founding her startup which was working to make India a better place to travel for women. The Delhi gang rape case had induced her to start this venture. Other guests also shared their experiences with the gathering.

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