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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to address the Grand Finale of the largest ever online hackathon in the world on 1st August 2020 through video-conference

Grand Finale of 4th edition of Smart India Hackathon (Software) - 2020 to be held from 1st – 3rd August, 2020 – Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’

In view of Covid-19 pandemic, the Grand Finale for SIH 2020 shall be organized online by connecting participants pan-India over a specially-built advanced platform

More than 10,000 participants to compete for 36 hours during online Grand Finale to develop innovative digital solutions for some of the daunting problems of government departments and industry

New Delhi, 27th July 2020

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi will address the Grand Finale of the largest ever online hackathon in the world, from 7PM onwards on August 1, 2020, through video-conference. Announcing this, the Union Minister for HRD Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ today said that the Grand Finale of Smart India Hackathon 2020 (Software) will be held from 1st to 3rd August, 2020. This hackathon is being organized by the Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India; All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Persistent Systems and i4c.

Union Minister for HRD Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ today chaired a high-level meeting on Smart India Hackathon and discussed achievements of the already conducted hackathons. The meeting was attended by Secretary, Higher Education, Shri Amit Khare, Chairman AICTE, Shri Anil Sahasrabudhe, Additional Secretary, MHRD, Shri Rakesh Ranjan and Chief Innovation Officer, MHRD Shri Abhay Jere.

<https://twitter.com/DrRPNishank/status/1287711738108903425?s=19>

The Union Minister said that Smart India Hackathon is a unique initiative to identify new and disruptive digital technology innovations for solving the challenges faced by our country. It is a non-stop digital product development competition, where problems are posed to technology students to suggest innovative solutions. Students would have the opportunity to work on

challenges faced by Government departments and private sector organizations for which they can offer out-of-the-box and world-class solutions.

For SIH 2020, the first level screening of students' ideas has already taken place in January through a college level Hackathon and only the winning teams at the college level were made eligible for the national round of SIH. Again at national level, ideas were screened by Experts and Evaluators and only the shortlisted teams will compete during the Grand Finale.

Shri Pokhriyal said that considering the Covid-19 pandemic, the Grand Finale for SIH 2020 shall be organized online by connecting all the participants throughout the nation together over a specially-built advanced platform. This year, we will have more than 10,000 students competing to solve 243 problem statements from 37 central government departments, 17 state governments and 20 industries. Each Problem Statement carries a prize money of Rs. 1,00,000 except the student innovation theme which will have three winners, 1st, 2nd and 3rd with prize money of Rs. 1,00,000, Rs. 75,000 and 50,000 respectively.

Considering the growth of SIH, Shri Nishank said that we have conducted three editions of SIH successfully. The first edition of SIH-2017 saw participation of 42 thousand students which substantially increased to 1 lakh in SIH 2018 and later to 2.0 lakh in SIH-2019. SIH 2020 is even more massive as compared to SIH 2019 and the first round saw participation of more than 4.5 lakh students. We are very keen on encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship culture in our education institutions. Our flagship initiative, Smart India Hackathon has now evolved into world's biggest open Innovation model. Moreover, SIH is also one of the best examples of public private partnership.

As outcome of Smart India Hackathons till date, around 331 prototypes have been developed, 71 startups are under formation, 19 startups are successfully registered. Further, 39 solutions have already been deployed at various departments and around 64 potential solutions have been funded for further development.

The HRD Minister said that there should be constant tracking of the ideas which we receive through SIH. He said that in order to develop an Atma Nirbhar Bharat, we need to ensure that the teams should be carefully mentored from ideation stage to prototype stage. He said that once the idea has come from the student, it should be the responsibility of the mentor to ensure that the idea gets implemented either through the start up or the department. Ideas should never go wasted, and the Department/Ministry should ensure that they get a platform to for getting started. He emphasized that the gap from prototype to establishment of startups should be filled so that ideas turn into startups. He also suggested that an ecosystem should be created by coordination with Ministries so that successful ideas in hackathon can be mentored and implemented properly.

Shri Nishank said that Secretary MHRD, will coordinate with all secretaries to ensure that selected ideas should reach on the ground. MHRD will be the coordinating ministry for ensuring implementation of ideas in SIH. 90% of ideas which do not form startups will be given to the department to implement. Enabling provisions will necessarily be developed. The Minister also said that he will request the Cabinet Secretary to make ideas developed in the SIH as a part of the agenda of the Committee of Secretaries.

In order to promote innovative culture in our country, the Minister said that innovation should start at the school level itself and ATAL tinkering labs should be harnessed for this purpose. A proper linkage should be made between students of schools and engineering college curriculum.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.sih.gov.in/>