

Atal Mission ropes in ISRO & 4 Ministries

By TIOL News Service

NEW DELHI, SEPT 10, 2020 **ATIL** Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog, yesterday launched one of its most awaited programmes, the Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE-Atal New India Challenges, to spur applied research and innovation in Indian MSMEs and startups.

The programme will be driven by Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), four ministries—Ministry of Defence; Ministry of Food Processing Industries; Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs—and associated industries to facilitate innovative solutions to sectoral problems.

Speaking at the virtual launch of the initiative, Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Shri Nitin Gadkari said, “MSMEs are the growth engine of the country and there are a lot of expectations from them. I am sure this initiative will help identify and promote innovations necessary for boosting this sector.” Recalling Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi’s vision of focusing on scientific research, he added, “Science should help solve socio-economic problems and scientific research should be extended from the labs to the land.”

Agreeing with the Hon’ble Minister, NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar said that the initiative will help promote technopreneurs who deserve to be supported because of their immense potential of taking India forward. “This is a historical day as crucial personalities from the science and technology sector have collaborated with us for boosting the MSME sector,” he said.

The Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE-ANIC programme will support deserving applied research-based innovations by providing funding support of up to Rs 50 lakh for speedy development of the proposed technology solution and/or product.

“Other than ISRO, which is a great promoter of technology, Indian departments and big companies never encourage and promote new startups that have done unique work. For ARISE-ANIC’s success, the government must become the first buyer. I am sure AIM will be able to break new grounds with these challenges, which will lead to the creation of new Indian products,” added NITI Aayog CEO Shri Amitabh Kant.

While it is essential to have science and technology advancing products, it is equally important to have an opportunity to procure those products, said Principal Scientific Advisor Prof. Vijay Raghavan. “Government policies have changed dramatically over the years to allow this to happen. Now it needs to permeate across state governments’ procurement mechanism and Indian-made products given a chance to go to market. I assure our fullest support to ARISE on the scientific domain,” he added.

Being a crucial part of the ARISE-ANIC initiative, ISRO Chairman Dr K. Sivan said, “ISRO has extensively supported the MSME sector. I am sure that there are a number of startups and MSMEs that require handholding to transform their ideas into viable products and with this initiative, we look forward to achieve this goal.”

AIM Mission Director Shri R. Ramanan added that MSMEs are a vibrant and one of the fastest-growing sectors that will undisputedly play a crucial role in attaining the PM’s vision of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

“The fifteen Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE challenges are a pioneering initiative to stimulate Make-in-India innovations in the associated MSME startups’ sector and a unique opportunity to make advanced research and development ideas market viable, and field deployable MSME products that can be procured by the government,” he concluded.

Sidelights:

- ISRO to adopt 100 Atal Tinkering Labs from Atal Innovation Mission
- Officials stressed on attracting innovators using the Mahatma Gandhi Challenge method

- Minister of Road Transport and Highways laid emphasis on developing the MSME sector with the help of the ARISE-ANIC initiative under Atal Innovation Mission