



National Startup Awards 2021

For Prelims: National Startup Awards, Startup India Initiative

For Mains: Startups in India and challenges in achieving the true potential of start-ups, Steps taken to promote Start-ups

Why in News

Recently, the Union Minister of Commerce & Industry presented the **second edition of National Startup Awards 2021**.

- It was also announced that **16th January (Startup India Initiative was launched on this day in 2016)** will be celebrated as **National Start-up Day**, to take the Startup culture to the far flung areas of the country.
- The '**Blockchain-enabled verification** for Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) tax incentive certificates', '**Digilocker** enabled DPIIT Startup recognition certificate' were also launched.

Startup India Initiative

- It envisages **building a robust Startup ecosystem in the country** for nurturing innovation and providing opportunities to budding entrepreneurs. It was launched in 2016.
- The action plan of this initiative focuses on following three areas:
 - Simplification and Handholding.
 - Funding Support and Incentives.
 - Industry-Academia Partnership and Incubation.

Key Points

- **Designed by:**
 - Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
- **Aim:**
 - To recognize and reward outstanding Startups and ecosystem enablers that are building innovative products or solutions and scalable enterprises, with high potential of employment generation or wealth creation, demonstrating measurable social impact.
- **2021 Awards:**
 - The second edition of the awards invited applications across **15 sectors and 49 sub-sectors**.
 - The 2021 edition of the awards also recognized exceptional Startups innovating solutions to promote Indic languages and to compliment national efforts to combat **Covid-19**

pandemic.

- All applicants were **evaluated against six broad parameters** namely Innovation, Scalability, Economic Impact, Social Impact, Environmental Impact, and Inclusiveness and Diversity.

▪ **Prize:**

- The winning startup founders will get a cash prize of Rs. 5 lakh and an opportunity to present their solutions to relevant public authorities and corporates. Incubators and accelerators will get Rs. 15 lakh as the winning amount.
- 46 startups along with 1 incubator and 1 accelerator were honoured with the award.

Status of Start-ups in India

▪ **About:**

- Today, India is the **third largest start-up ecosystem globally** (by number of start-ups) with more than 15,000 start-ups established in 2020, up from 5000 in 2010.
- The underlying enablers of this startup ecosystem include smartphone and internet penetration, **cloud computing, application programming interfaces (APIs)**, and a national payments stack in place.
- Additionally, amid the **Covid-19 pandemic**, India has witnessed more number of **Unicorn startups (startups having valuation of over USD1 billion) in just 2021** than it did in the period 2011-20.
- However, still there are many challenges (Building and Scaling an Indian Startup, Diversity and the **Digital Divide**, Complex Regulatory Environment) that act as a hindrance in realising the true potential of startups in India.

▪ **Other Related Initiatives:**

- **Ranking of States on Support to Startup Ecosystems**: It is an evolved evaluation tool aimed to strengthen the support of States and UTs to holistically build their startup ecosystems.
- **SCO Startup Forum**: The first-ever **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** Startup Forum was launched in October 2020 to develop and improve startup ecosystems collectively.
- **Prarambh**: The 'Prarambh' Summit aims to provide a platform to the startups and young minds from around the world to come up with new ideas, innovation and invention.
- **Startup India Seed Fund Scheme**: It aims to provide financial assistance to startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry, and commercialization.
- **Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge**: The Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying In association with Startup India, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry inaugurated the **Fisheries Startup Grand Challenge**.

Source: PIB

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