

## **MANAK District Level Exhibition showcases creativity of young minds**

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India during the recently concluded 107<sup>th</sup> Indian Science Congress called for innovation for the people and by the people is the direction of New India.

In congruence with this, school students from all over the country are exhibiting the power of their innovation through ideas and prototypes at the District Level Exhibition and Project Competitions (DLEPC) of the annual INSPIRE Awards – MANAK. Million Minds Augmenting National Aspirations and Knowledge (MANAK) is a flagship programme on Innovation by school students jointly implemented by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and National Innovation Foundation (NIF) – India.

Students are addressing problems of society through their imagination, creativity, and innovative thinking rooted in Science & Technology. Students are overcoming barriers, challenging the status – quo dimensions of the given problem at hand, and taking the non-conventional route of not accepting to live with the problem for long. They are expressing themselves, their innovative thinking, competing and eventually getting shortlisted on the merit of their innovative ideas and now participating in INSPIRE Awards – MANAK's DLEPC – District Level Exhibition and Project Competitions (DLEPC) across the country.



It's a platform to display their creativity and innovative solutions to the world, and an opportunity to either move to the next level of competition or consolidate their learning curve. In either case, the platform prepares the ground for students to take a deep dive into their innovation and constantly aim for improved solutions.

The District Level Exhibition & Project Competitions (DLEPCs) of the INSPIRE Awards - MANAK are being organised by the District & State Education Authorities in close coordination with the NIF. The key purpose underpinning the exhibition – cum - competition is to create an opportunity to clearly articulate, demonstrate and bring forward the practical dimensions of already existing innovation-oriented and creative skills of the students, which contribute towards their overall exposure to Science and Technology.

For example, when they get to see the prototypes of their peer group from other schools, this creates an opportunity to learn from each other. Not only, they gain much needed confidence while presenting their ideas and innovations through their prototypes, but also get feedback on what more could be done by them with their innovations.

Apart from experts who adjudicate the DLEPC's much needed feedback, students also learn from their peers whom they wouldn't have met before. This creates a binding force that facilitates the exchange of further innovative thoughts amongst young innovators.

In a new year that has just begun, during the very first week itself, a total of 3943 INSPIRE - MANAK awardees from 117 districts spread across 10 States & UTs participated in 31 DLEPCs. A lot more on innovation is yet to be witnessed as the INSPIRE Awards - MANAK (Million Minds Augmenting National Aspiration & Knowledge) as it moves to its subsequent stages.

For the year 2019-20, a total of 3.92 lakh students participated from all the States & UTs of the country, out of which a total of 42,143 students have received award money of Rs. 10,000 each through DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer) to develop prototypes on their own ideas and innovations based on Science and Technology.



The INSPIRE Awards - MANAK scheme is aligned with the "Start-up India" initiative launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. The scheme aims to motivate students in the age group of 10-15 years and studying in classes 6 to 10 to become future innovators and critical thinkers. If the original ideas and innovations rooted in Science and Technology by students get incubated, it will foster a culture of creativity and innovative thinking among school children. It will help address the societal needs through science and technology and nurture them to become sensitive and responsible citizens and innovation leaders of tomorrow.