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**Report on
International Seminar on
Entrepreneurship as a Social Movement:
Creating Cultural, Social and Economic Value**

**January 5-6, 2018
Kolkata**

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WHY THIS SEMINAR

Key Objectives

- Entrepreneurship is sustainable.
- Entrepreneurship creates jobs.
- Entrepreneurship embraces different forms of economic, social and cultural activities.
- Entrepreneurship caters to all sections of the community.
- Entrepreneurship enhances economic, social and cultural development

These are some of the ideas and perceptions that need to be reinforced in the community with regards to the term 'Entrepreneurship'. However, some think of entrepreneurship to mean owning a small business while for others, the term is romanticized as heroic endeavor and even thought to be socially exclusive.

Therefore, in order to address any confusion over the term and to uncover the potential of Entrepreneurship as a catalyst for value creation and for the fostering socio-economic development, the **International Seminar on Entrepreneurship as a Social Movement: Creating Cultural, Social and Economic Value** was organized by banglanatak dot com on January 5-6, 2018 at Taj Bengal, Kolkata. This seminar was supported by British Council and The International Entrepreneurship Forum based at the Venture Academy, Essex Business School, University of Essex, UK. The primary objective of the seminar was to create a platform where relevant stakeholders like current entrepreneurs, budding ones, academicians, bureaucrats, youths, all come together to discuss and facilitate the development of an ecosystem in promoting and fostering entrepreneurship. The seminar also sought to identify the potential of entrepreneurship in sustainable development, roles of key stakeholders with a view to developing a sustainable network for sharing of knowledge and resources for enabling the entrepreneurial ecosystem.



Amitava Bhattacharya, Founder Director, banglanatak dot com
welcoming speakers and guests at the inaugural session

INTERACTIVE SESSIONS

The seminar was organised across a span of 2 days with multiple interactive sessions and panel discussions. Speakers included noted entrepreneurs from different sectors like banking, finance, beauty & wellness, software, gaming, food & beverages and art & culture. The seminar concluded with a deliberation on the strategy to promote entrepreneurship and outline the role of stakeholders.

Friday, January 5, 2018

Inaugural Session: 10 am - 11:30 am

Chandra Shekhar Ghosh, CMD, Bandhan Bank (Chief Guest)
Jay Mitra, Professor of Business Enterprise and Innovation, Essex Business School, University of Essex, UK
Ashok Banerjee, Professor (Finance & Control) and Director, IIM Calcutta Innovation Park (IIMCIP)
Debanjan Chakrabarti, Director, British Council, East and North East India
Amitava Bhattacharya, Founder Director, banglanatak dot com

Tea Break

Entrepreneurship and SDGs: 12 noon - 1:30 pm

Chair: **Jay Mitra**, Professor of Business Enterprise and Innovation, Essex Business School, University of Essex, UK
Rajiva Sinha, IAS, Addl Chief Secretary, Government of West Bengal
Ananya Bhattacharya, Director, banglanatak dot com
Soumyo Mukherji, Institute Chair Professor and Dean of Student Affairs, IIT Bombay

Lunch Break

Stories of Grassroot Entrepreneurs: 2:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Moderator: **Amitava Bhattacharya**, Founder Director, banglanatak dot com
Swarna Chitrakar, Tajkira Begum, Madhumita Parhani, Shanikar Das, Babu Fakir, Harendranath Rana, Kuntal Hazra

Tea Break

Entrepreneurship - A journey with the stakeholders: 4 pm - 6 pm

Chair: **Chandradeep Mitra**, Mentor & Advisor IIMC Innovation Park and CEO, PipalMajik
Suresh Reddy, CEO, LYCOS
R Venkataraman, Managing Director and Co-Promoter of India Infoline (IIFL) Group
Rahul Bhalchandra, CEO & Director, YLG
Ananda Bhoumik, Managing Director and Chief Analytical Officer at India Ratings and Research, Fitch
Rahul Johri, Executive President & Head of Retail Banking, Bandhan Bank

Saturday, January 6, 2018

Social & Creative Entrepreneurship: 10 am - 11:30 am

Chair: **Jay Mitra**, Professor of Business Enterprise and Innovation, Essex Business School, University of Essex, UK
Harish Hande, Founder Director, SELCO
Subodh Kerkar, Founder Director, Museum of Goa
Arijit Bhattacharya, Founder Director, Virtual Infocoom
Bappaditya Biswas, Co-Founder of Bai Lou and Byloom

Tea Break

Presenting Best 5 Ideas from Eastern India: 12 noon - 1:30 pm

Moderator: **Suman Mukhopadhyay**, VP & Director, banglanatak dot com

Lunch Break

Final Session: 3 pm - 5 pm

Creating a White Paper on Entrepreneurship as a Social Movement in India

Co-ordinators: **Jay Mitra** and **Amitava Bhattacharya**.

- Key emerging points from discussion in all the sessions on:
 - Linking entrepreneurship and SDGs
 - Enabling role of technology and innovation in social entrepreneurship
 - Role and function of stakeholders in fostering transparent system of governance
 - Role of social and creative entrepreneurship in changing ways of doing business
 - Social Entrepreneurship as a convergence point for the grassroot and citizen based entrepreneurship.
- Key action points that can be developed on initiating entrepreneurship as a social movement
- Working towards a strategy – setting SMART objectives, priorities, committing key stakeholders, identifying resources and time scales

WHY ENTREPRENEURSHIP

“Entrepreneurship is all about putting the puzzle together.”

- Harish Hande

Entrepreneurship and business are often used interchangeably. But entrepreneurship is much broader than just a business venture. It can come up with innovative ways to solve problems, ranging from providing electricity to a remote village to designing a new web game.

It directly or indirectly helps in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations (UN). For example, setting up a new venture can help alleviate poverty - a new business will lead to job creation and as more people get employed and engaged in productive work, the rate of unemployment will go down. A regular source of income will further help reduce poverty.

“Entrepreneurship is essentially a social act.”

- Jay Mitra, Professor of Business Enterprise and Innovation and Director of The Venture Academy at Essex Business School, University of Essex

"Large companies are able to create 1 job at INR 1 crore whereas startups only require INR 12 lakhs to create 1 job"

- Ashok Banerjee, Professor (Finance & Control) and Director, IIM Calcutta Innovation Park

Value addition to society is an important role of entrepreneurship, be it economic, social or cultural. An entrepreneur may start with a specific focused area but as she/he starts building capacities and establishing systems, she/he can expand to include more areas and sectors.

Entrepreneurship has the potential to be taken up as a social movement. A movement that does not simply seek alternative power but identifies opportunities for empowering people, communities, the markets and civil society through the better utilization of their personal and cultural assets and the direct engagement in governance structures of new institutions created by and for them. Three requirements for this movement to commence are: entrepreneurial people, entrepreneurial organization and entrepreneurial environment.

In an attempt to initiate this movement, the Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises (MSME) department and the Government of West Bengal aspire to have 100 startups by 2020. The Global Social Enterprise program by the British Council promotes development of social enterprises in 29 countries by providing training, mentorship, funding, convening policy dialogues and conducting research.

KEY CHALLENGES

Will you lose your livelihood if your idea fails? An entrepreneur is more likely to do so than others.

- Prof. Jay Mitra

Through the discussions during the sessions, multiple challenges came to light which are important to address to foster an entrepreneurial environment.

Lack of an encouraging, positive entrepreneurial eco-system

- There is **skepticism in the society** with regards to entrepreneurship. It is not considered as a viable career option, rather something that people do when they are too lazy or eccentric for service (job) or if they have failed at everything else. Families want their children to engage in ‘secure’ jobs that guarantee a monthly salary and other benefits.
- Education systems in the country currently follow a strict set curriculum with little space for innovation and new methodologies. In government schools, especially, classes are not conducted in an interactive manner. The educational methodology fails to provide space for explorations or out-of-the-box thinking. Preference is still given to learning core subjects over creative pursuits. This indicates an **aversion to the unconventional** which is what entrepreneurship is thought of as encouraging people to do.
- Common perception is that one needs to be highly educated to be an entrepreneur. “**Degree Casteism**”, as described by speaker Harish Hande, Founder Director, SELCO is commonly seen where intentionally or unintentionally there is discrimination between persons by giving more value to an earned degree over knowledge and experience. For example, a person with a PhD in Agriculture is considered more knowledgeable than a farmer practicing farming for the last 30 years. Incubators, banks, venture capitalists are reluctant to invest in people who lack certain minimum educational qualification standards. This is why people are also hesitant to consider setting up a venture even if they have a viable idea.

In eastern India, especially, there is a craze to earn government jobs and little or no support for someone who wants to start a business.

Lacuna in mentorship and support

- There is a **lack of handholding support and guidance** for budding entrepreneurs. Someone starting a new business is not always completely aware of the details of licenses, policies, bank loans and facilities. Mentoring in these areas can be of help to the budding entrepreneurs.
- There is an **absence of active incubators** that can fund, mentor and handhold the startup for an initial period. There are entrepreneurial incubators which have been formed as per organisational mandate but they are just in name and not fully functional. There are very few like the IIM Calcutta Innovation Park that provide assistance of various types like fund, technology support, lab testing facilities, office space.
- There is **no resource or data bank** with necessary information related to starting a business like policies, market and case studies. Research reports prepared by an enterprise are not easily available for reference by budding entrepreneurs.
- There is a **lack of an active platform** where the stakeholders can come together to discuss their problems or new ideas and initiatives or to help one another.

Entrepreneurship does not develop in a vacuum, it develops in a network

"No one tells you that things are going to be hard in the first six months where you may not earn anything at all".

- Mr. Bikram Vaskar Gangopadhyay, Founder of Aurumize



Panel discussion on journey of entrepreneurs

- Catalyst organizations to come forward to support the grassroots entrepreneurs are few. Rural or disadvantaged citizens are exposed to very less amenities when it comes to developing entrepreneurial ventures.

Reluctance to pursue entrepreneurship due to risk factors

- Many business school graduates, who want to become entrepreneurs, cannot afford to take the plunge because of the burden of student loan debts. Therefore, for a good few years after college, they prefer to work jobs instead.
- There are perceptions that enterprises in the domain of art and culture serve the elite and are hard to sustain. There is a dearth of data and evidence to prove that art/culture/craft can create sustainable livelihoods.

Gaps in Policy

- Central and State Governments have quite a few schemes to help startups. However, startups face problems like having to prove past records and experiences to apply for licenses and tenders. If unable to do so, they cannot apply. Ironically, to counter this problem, incubators have been set up, but as explained earlier, they are not fully operational.



Grassroot entrepreneurs in the art and culture domain talking about their journey

ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS

"Don't report the problem; change the real life problems into opportunities"

- Prof. Soumya Mukherji

The deliberations at the seminar lead to a framework as shown below, prospective and possible roles of different stakeholders in fostering entrepreneurship.-

S.N	Roles	Entrepreneurs	Government	NGOs	Academia	Consumers
1	Identifying key sectors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Link between sectors	✓	✓	✓		
3	Building on established networks	✓		✓		✓
4	Joining the nodal points in the network	✓				
5	Identify and developing support infrastructure	✓	✓		✓	
6	Connecting to SDGs		✓	✓		
7	Underlying research & case studies				✓	
8	Disseminating / Promoting / Development		✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Developing a funding base	✓		✓		
10	Capacity Building	✓		✓	✓	

Entrepreneurs

Already established and successful entrepreneurs can help out the budding ones by mentoring, providing technical support, networking and disseminating information. Entrepreneurs can also create a funding base to support those who have viable ideas and need seed capital to start a new venture.

Government

Government has an important role to play as it is the main policy formulation body. Government should be included in achieving the SDGs. One of the major challenges in dealing with SDGs is that it treats the globe as one single unit. That makes it difficult for governments to parallelly follow the same vision and path since each country has its own policy in place. Proactive effort needs to be made in this direction. Governments should act as a facilitator when it comes to policy formulation regarding entrepreneurship by ensuring the development of a framework for entrepreneurship and development. In certain circumstances governments could be proactively involved in selected start-ups and growth of firms (e.g. to kick-start new developments and/or strategic sector/technology development).

Social Sector & Corporates

Role of the social sector enterprises is to work aligning their strategies with SDGs. Corporate can partner with NGOs, especially in their CSR endeavors. NGOs working to foster livelihood, can strengthen rural entrepreneurship. Rural artisans can be encouraged to execute their own designs, patterns and ideas and they can be taught the good practice of business, marketing, banking by the NGO. That way they will not become dependent on the NGO and can grow their business on their own, further employing other budding artists.

Academia

Introduction of entrepreneurship in the regular curriculum of schools and colleges can make young minds aware of the term, what it is all about and its potential. Academia can play an important role by adding to the data bank through their research which can be used as a reference by entrepreneurs to develop their venture. Sharing of knowledge and expertise is important. They can conduct evidence building research that supports that art/culture/craft can create sustainable livelihood.

Consumers

In today's world of crowdfunding, company names being decided by online poll and open innovation policy by companies like General Electric (G.E), consumer is an important stakeholder. It can be said that today, consumer is also the producer and vice versa.

WAY FORWARD

Entrepreneurs at the seminar have committed to a 2 hour a week mentoring session where interested people can discuss their ideas and concerns, if any. The seminar has moved positively towards creation of a network, with key roles of multiple stakeholders identified.

There will also be creation of data banks where case studies will be documented. Mere data collection is not sufficient; it will be disseminated, promoted and circulated amongst the network.

For entrepreneurship to succeed as a social movement, collective action, socio-political opportunities, community mobilization and a framing processes is required and it relies on pre-existing networks, people leadership, infrastructure and action frame.

Hosting a similar workshop in Goa around 3rd week of September in 2018, keeping Green Economy, Creative Economy and Responsible Tourism as focus.

We aim at developing 500 social entrepreneurs by 2025.

Supporting Creative Entrepreneurship benefitting youth is in our agenda and we are exploring partnerships.

At banglanatak dot com, we have sustained ourselves through revenue generated from consulting and projects (never took donation) and supported our folk mission through which we created significant impact in culture and development arena, including poverty alleviation, social inclusion & developing grass-root entrepreneurship at community art & culture domain (<https://youtu.be/d7VR1eqoBRO>). We are quite well established in our field and UN accredited too.

Now we plan to take up a few more initiatives (not limiting to 3 projects mentioned below), will need about 3 million USD in next 18 months to take it forward and we will like to explore all possible options including equity participation, crowd funding, CSR (we are TISS certified National CSR Hub partner for Bengal, Bihar and Goa) and donation from HNIs as financial option and others as partners/ advisory board members/ mentors in taking the movement forward.



Folk Institute
Tepantiar - 4 acre campus | Nimdih - 40 acre campus

The centres offer :

- Learning amidst Nature
- Workshop Space
- Open interaction area
- Boarding and Lodging Facility
- Ecotourism

Regular trainings are held at the spaces

- Self leaf based livelihood training of 10000 beneficiaries
- Training of 1800 Folk artists
- Training of 4000 Chas and Jhumur artists
- Training of 90 Bhawaiya artists
- Hold 8 Int'l music residency

What the folk art centres can offer :

- Certificate Courses on Traditional Art and Craft
- Workshop with Traditional artists
- Onsite training under masters of folk traditions and experts
- Music and Craft Residency

Investment need :

- Rs. 3 Crores
- Operational expenses Rs. 40 Lakhs per year
- Has potential to provide livelihood support to 9000 rural women every year

Creative Entrepreneurship Council
Forum for supporting Creative Entrepreneurship in Eastern India

Work towards the development of a creative entrepreneurship council to encourage youth, boost the creative economy and do advocacy for new policy development

Idea :

- Create an initial corpus of Rs. 3 Crores
- Support up to 50 projects in the first year
- Support 80-90% of the project cost



Phir Gandhi : Reclaiming Gandhi

An attempt to bring in Gandhian philosophy and way of life in Nimdih a Gandhi Ashram located at the foothills of Dalma

The project envisions to develop a Museum on Gandhi by eminent artist Subodh Kerkar who has developed Museum of Goa.

What the project envisions at Nimdih - Gandhi Ashram

- A Gandhi Lake :** Bathing facility and water conservation system
- The Gandhi Boat :** Replicas of boat used by Gandhi during his Daridh March
- Restoration of Buildings in the Premises** and using it for museum display, exhibitions, eco cottages
- Isaiah works created with recycled plastic bottles :** Using around 2 Lakh plastic bottles
- Green Geometry - Where Artistry meets Forestry :** Social Forestation with aesthetics and art
- Virtual Gandhi Experience :** Creation of Gandhi app and posters all across the Ashram. Virtual animation of posters created on Gandhi from 1920s to 1940s where he is depicted as Buddha, Christ and Vishnu
- Other artistic works on Gandhi** by eminent artists will also be displayed: Gandhi created with thorns, Gandhi with a laptop, Gandhi on a reclining chair, animation of walking Gandhi, replicas of Gandhi artifacts and sculptures by local traditional communities.

Expected Impact

- Nimdih evolves as major tourism attraction.
- Accelerator effect on local economy
- Investment need- Rs. 3 Crore in 1.5 years
- Operational expenses: Rs. 40 Lakh per year

