

**Pi Jam Foundation Brings Together J&K's Innovation Ecosystem to Strengthen Pathways
for Student Innovators.**

16-07-2026: Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), through its Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (CIED) and the Centre for Good Governance and Policy Analysis (CGG&PA), in collaboration with the Pi Jam Foundation and the Department of School Education, Jammu & Kashmir, organised the Project Conclave, "Raah: Strengthening Pathways for Student Innovators," at its Innovation Campus in Awantipora.

The conclave brought together key stakeholders to promote innovation, entrepreneurship, and collaborative initiatives aimed at strengthening pathways for student innovators.

The programme brought together student innovators, educators, academic institutions, government departments, industry representatives, incubation centres, mentors and ecosystem partners to explore collaborative approaches for creating structured pathways that enable young innovators to transform their ideas into impactful solutions and entrepreneurial ventures.

The event was inaugurated by Prof. Shamim Ahmad Shah, Registrar, Islamic University of Science and Technology, who appreciated Pi Jam Foundation for organising an initiative that connected innovators, entrepreneurs, mentors and aspiring startup founders on a common platform. Addressing the gathering, he emphasised that startups require sustained guidance, mentorship and encouragement to translate innovative ideas into successful enterprises. He encouraged students to identify local challenges and develop sustainable solutions while highlighting the importance of mentor-mentee relationships, stakeholder collaboration, experiential learning and nurturing an entrepreneurial mindset from the school level. He urged young innovators to focus on long-term impact, continue learning, build meaningful partnerships and contribute to a vibrant and self-sustaining innovation ecosystem in the region.

Representatives from the Department of School Education Kashmir, Islamic University of Science and Technology, National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar, Samagra Shiksha, the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE), IIM Jammu, JKEDI, Atal incubation Centre and several organisations working in education, innovation, entrepreneurship and incubation participated in the programme.

A major highlight of the event was the Student Innovation Showcase, where 18 student innovators from around 10 schools across Kashmir, accompanied by their teachers and parents, presented projects addressing real-world challenges. The showcase enabled students to interact directly with educators, government officials, incubators, industry experts and ecosystem partners, receiving valuable feedback while exploring opportunities for mentorship, collaboration, incubation and further development of their ideas.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Shoaib Dar, CEO, Pi Jam Foundation, said that Raah is an effort to bring together stakeholders who can shape the journey of young innovators. He noted that while students across schools are developing innovative solutions to real-world problems, many projects fail to progress beyond exhibitions or classroom presentations due to limited access to mentorship, incubation and professional networks.

"Whether a student wants to develop a project further, pursue entrepreneurship or build a startup, they need access to mentorship, incubation, networks and opportunities. Through Raah, we hope to strengthen collaboration across the innovation ecosystem and create clearer pathways for young innovators to take their ideas beyond the classroom," he said.

Addressing the participants, Prof. Parvez A. Mir, CEO, CIED-IUST Foundation, highlighted the transformative impact of Artificial Intelligence on industries and stressed the need to build strong intellectual capital to remain competitive in a rapidly evolving world. Referring to the growing mismatch between job demand and employment opportunities, he underscored the importance of promoting entrepreneurship and encouraging youth to establish businesses. He urged aspiring entrepreneurs to focus on commercialising innovative ideas and building sustainable startup ventures capable of generating employment, driving innovation and contributing to India's vision of becoming a self-reliant and developed nation.

The organisers said the initiative reflects a growing commitment to creating stronger institutional linkages among schools, universities, government agencies, incubators and industry partners so that promising student innovations receive the support required to evolve into scalable solutions and successful enterprises.