#OpenGovDataHack
NATIONAL AWARDS

Inaugurating the Awards ceremony, Hon'ble Union Minister, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad felicitates winners

The Digital India initiative of the Government of India is progressively underway to make the country a digitally empowered society and a knowledge economy. Realising such a widespread aim of the Government, the Open Government Data (OGD) Team of the National Informatics Centre (NIC), collaborated with Internet & Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and StartUp India, as part of the Startup Ecosystem Development Programme, and organised a Hackathon, "#OpenGovDataHack" National Challenge across the country.

A National Awards Ceremony to honour the winners of the Hackathon was held at Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on 1st November 2018. The awardees were felicitated by Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, Hon'ble Minister of Law & Justice and Electronics & Information Technology, in the august presence of Shri S.S. Ahluwalia, Union Minister of State, Electronics & IT, Shri Ajay Sawhney, Secretary, Shri Pankaj Kumar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Electronics & IT and Dr. Neeta Verma, Director General, NIC.

Congratulating the winners in his address, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad said, "IT professionals should join hands with the government to make India a digital society." He urged the IT community to reach out to the deserving and underprivileged sections and make them digitally literate. The Minister added that the

government has provided two lakh datasets on open data platform to create an opportunity for innovation. He also said that the government supports the independence of social media but utmost care should be taken to ensure that it does not affect the national fabric.

The Hackathon was conducted in two phases and organised for Students, Entrepreneurs, Innovators, Start-ups, Developers and Community to create innovative service delivery Applications & Info-Graphics, thereby nurturing innovation. It was held in seven cities i.e., Surat, Bhubaneswar, Patna, Jaipur, Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad as well as online, and was run through the OGD event portal, *https://event.data.gov.in.* Water & Sanitation, Transport, Education, Crime and Health were chosen themes for the event.

The first phase was launched by Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad on 12th September 2017. It comprised of a 24-hour event during which, all the teams built Apps and Info-graphics using the Open Government Data. 43 best App Prototypes were selected by respective juries from each city and were rewarded. In the second phase, the selected App Prototypes were taken forward for App Development. Each team was given three months of mentorship/ incubation to develop the App before submission. 36 Apps were submitted for evaluation and 20 Apps were selected for final Jury presentation by a National Screening Committee.

The esteemed Jury, under the Chairmanship of Shri Ajay Sawhney, Secretary, MeitY, evaluated the shortlisted Apps and selected winner, first runner-up, two second runner-ups and eight consolation awards, for which the National Awards Ceremony was held. The event witnessed a huge participation of around 400 people, including officers from the Government and Academia, Students, Entrepreneurs, Innovators, Start-ups, Developers, Community, Media, awardees and finalists for the #OpenGovData-Hack National Awards Ceremony.

The Open Government Data Platform (*https://data.gov.in*) India, an Open Data initiative of the Government of India, is at the forefront of promoting innovation in Open Data ecosystem in the country. It has been set up by NIC, in compliance with the Open Data Policy– National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy (NDSAP) whose objective is to provide a platform for proactive access to Government-owned shareable data. These data sets are directly published on the platform by the Government Departments.

Such initiatives by the government provide an opportunity to young talents of the country to showcase their skills and introduce innovative ideas. The Awards Ceremony concluded on a successful note and it was followed by an insightful panel discussion on "AI for futuristic use of OpenGovData". The session was attended by Shri Desi S Valli, Founder & CEO, FOOP - from Netree, Shri Jatin Kataria, Founder & MD, WE Group - Volcano of GloCal Solutions, Shri Sandeep Amar, Digital Leader and Founder, Inaaj, Shri Saurabh Moody, Chief Data Scientist & CEO, RealBox.ai and Shri Subrat Kar, Co-founder & CEO, Vidooly.

With active deliberations from the industry experts, the session provided thought-provoking ideas and broad perspective on the emerging trends in Artificial Intelligence and the role of Open Government Data challenges. Such a discussion brought forward experiential and rational viewpoints, which, if actualised, could prove to be instrumental in mutual growth and development. ■

With inputs from **OGD TEAM, NIC HQ**