

# Dalit chamber of commerce signs MoU with EDII to incubate Dalit enterprise

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The Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), in a first, has signed an MoU with the Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries (DICCI) to help develop entrepreneurial skills among youth from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The MoU was signed on the sidelines of the EDII's nineteenth convocation function on Saturday at the institute's campus in Bhat village on the outskirts of Ahmedabad.

According to EDII officials, the MoU not only aims at evolving an entrepreneurial culture among the Dalit youth but also incubating them to launch and sustain their own ventures.

The EDII itself runs an entrepreneurial incubation centre on its campus since 2016 and has incubated 24 enterprises and helped find seed funding for 11 start-up ventures raising Rs 2.23 crore and 124 jobs.

DICCI founder-Chairman Milind Kamle, who is member of the EDII's governing council, presided over the convocation function.

Even as this MoU was signed, Prof Anil Gupta, founder of Honeybee network of rural innovations and entrepreneurs, spoke of the requirement of socially inclusive business models in the country.

Delivering the convocation address, he said there was need for social inclusion through "cross-subsidisation, innovative business models and public policy institutions".

Referring to Dalits and other disadvantaged sections of the society, he said there was a new restiveness among them and they were not willing to remain neglected or lag behind any more.

"While socio-economic transition takes place, a lot of values come into conflict, some for good, but some for bad. Social inclusion is one such issue which is receiving heightened attention from many entrepreneurs," said Gupta, who is also the chairman of National Innovation Foundation.

As many as 87 students were awarded post-graduate diplomas at the convocation function.

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