

Press Release from District Administrative Centre (DAC), Gangtok

The Eighth and final Workshop of Project PAILA (Program for Aspiring Innovators and Local Achievers) was successfully conducted on Sunday, 1st March, 2026, at the Conference Hall of District Administrative Centre (DAC), Sichey, Gangtok, as part of the ongoing efforts to promote entrepreneurship and innovation in the district. Project PAILA is a joint initiative of the District Administrative Centre (DAC), Gangtok, under the banner of Sikkim INSPIRES, in collaboration with the CSR Department of Sun Pharma, and is being implemented by Stars of Hope.

Project PAILA continues to nurture entrepreneurship, innovation, and self-reliance by providing aspiring entrepreneurs with a structured platform to transform their ideas into sustainable and impactful ventures through mentorship, interactive workshops, and hands-on learning experiences. The Eighth Workshop was conducted on the theme “Team Building, Leadership, Growth & Scaling.” The session aimed to equip participants with strategic leadership capabilities and the practical tools required to present investor-ready business proposals. Additionally, a special session on DPR (Detailed Project Report) preparation was held to help participants understand how to effectively design and present project proposals.

Mr. Pravesh Chettri, Founder of Travel Gangtok Tourism, shared his entrepreneurial journey and insights into building and scaling a successful tourism enterprise. He highlighted the importance of strong team dynamics, visionary leadership, resilience, and customer-centric growth strategies in sustaining long-term business success. His interaction encouraged participants to think beyond survival and focus on scalable and impactful ventures.

The technical session on leadership, financial structuring, and sustainable growth strategies was delivered by Mr. Anupam Upadhaya, Chartered Accountant (CA). He provided practical guidance on financial discipline, strategic scaling, compliance frameworks, and structured expansion models suitable for startups and emerging enterprises.

The special DPR preparedness focused technical session was conducted by Mr. Bikash Thapa, founder, Stars of HOPE on the preparation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) and crafting an effective presentation for the upcoming pitching session. He walked participants through the essential components of a strong DPR.

The workshop was graced by the presence of Mr. Abhijeet Patil (IAS), SDM Gangtok (HQ), who addressed the participants and elaborated on the broader vision of this initiative by the District Administration. He also highlighted the proactive role of the District Administrative Centre in bridging departments with entrepreneurs and the public, facilitating convergence of schemes, and ensuring that aspiring innovators receive institutional guidance and support.

He further explained the purpose behind conducting the eight structured workshops under Project PAILA to systematically build the capacities of participants from ideation and market validation to financial planning, compliance, operations, marketing, leadership, and final pitching readiness. He encouraged all participants to confidently present their ideas during the upcoming pitching session and wished them the very best for their entrepreneurial journey.

With the successful completion of the eighth and final workshop, participants are now fully prepared to present their business ideas before the designated panel during the upcoming pitching session.

Adverts, banners, and a promotional video announcing a pitching session under SIKKIM INSPIRES will soon be displayed across Gangtok District and its Blocks, inviting applications from aspiring entrepreneurs. The dates for the pitching session have been set from 16th-20th March, 2026.

Multiple winners will be selected and will receive very limited seed funding, subject to the availability of funds under Sikkim INSPIRES, for their startups. The judging panel will comprise local entrepreneurs who have been part of the project as mentors and speakers associated with the workshops under Project PAILA.

The pitching session will be open to all, with preference given to regular workshop attendees. Participants will be required to prepare a brief presentation of their business idea and register through the links and information provided in the official adverts.

Participants who may not meet the specified criteria during the pitching session are encouraged not to feel discouraged, as the DAC team will continue to guide and connect them with other suitable schemes and opportunities aligned with their aspirations in the future. The initiative reflects a broader commitment to building for the future, with a long-term vision of fostering sustainable entrepreneurship and economic self-reliance in the district.

The topics covered in the previous workshops under Project PAILA consisted of:

- I. Workshop 1 theme: Onboarding Session
- II. Workshop 2 theme: LISTEN • ASK • THINK – “From Challenges to Ideas, From Ideas to Action”
- III. Workshop 3 theme: Market Research and Validation
- IV. Workshop 4 theme: Business Planning, Legal & Compliance
- V. Workshop 5 theme: Financial Management