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Sustainable Mountain Development Summit

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Why is in news? Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Bhupender Yadav addresses the Inaugural session of Sustainable Mountain Development Summit-XI

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change attended the inaugural session of Sustainable Mountain Development Summit-XI, (SMDS-XI) being held at Leh, Ladakh UT from 10-12 October, 2022.

The **theme for SMDS-XI** is '**Harnessing tourism for sustainable mountain development**'.

The main focus of the summit is to **reduce the negative impacts of tourism** while harnessing its positive contributions to building climate and socio-ecological resilience and sustainability.

The minister also highlighted the **establishment of G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (GBPNiHE)** and its one Regional Centre at Leh, under MOEFCC which is particularly mandated on research and development activities for sustainability of the Himalayan environment.

He emphasized that various unique landscapes of the country like the Himalayas, Western Ghats and Thar desert need special attention of the scientific community.

R&D organisations under MOEF&CC like **GBPNiHE, ZSI, BSI, WII** have been **conducting research on various pertinent issues** like plant genetics for rapid breeding, digitization of Indian flora and fauna and reintroduction of Cheetahs in India for correcting ecological wrong to ecological right.

Government has schemes like **Skill India and various portals** like **National Career Service Portal, e-Shram Portal, Udyami and ASEEM portals etc.**, which are **promoting financial literacy and integrated capacity building** even for remote areas of the country.

National Career Service Portal already has 1 crore applicants with 10 lakh employers which provided 4.28 lakh employment opportunity, largest so far. This portal is being further upgraded.

The work on connecting remote landscapes by building tunnels like **Atal Tunnel and ongoing Zoji La Tunnel** will reduce carbon emission in the mountain environment.

The minister suggested that the youth should follow **the formula of LiFE** in true spirit to ensure sustainable future for our country. He expressed confidence about achieving **Prime Minister's vision for "Carbon Neutral Ladakh"**.

The **Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS)** is a **flagship annual event** of International Management Institute (IMI), a civil society-led forum working across the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR).

It was first started in 2011. The IHR that comprises 10 mountain states, two union territories and four hill districts

In addition to the central event, two integral components of the SMDS include the Mountain Legislators' Meet (MLM) and the Indian Himalayan Youth Summit.

Kamaraj IAS Academy

Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040

Phone: **044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477 / Whatsapp : 09710729833**