

Smily Academy XP Concludes with Emphasis on Indigenous Solutions for Climate Challenges



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Panbaree Machans, Kaziranga: The inaugural Smily Academy XP drew to a successful close yesterday, marking the departure of participants from four continents to their respective countries. The five-day event, held amidst the breathtaking landscapes of Panbaree Machans, Kaziranga, focused on immersive learning experiences with indigenous communities to develop innovative solutions to local and global challenges, aiming to inspire a new generation of "eco-preneurs".

Conceived as a special project of the Indigenous People's Climate Justice Forum, founded by esteemed figures such as climate activist Rituraj Phukan and Padma Shree Jadav Payeng, the Forest Man of India, Smily Academy garnered attention for its unique approach to environmental stewardship and community empowerment. Co-founded by Prof. Claudia Laricchia, Matteo Salerno, and Munmuni Payeng, Smily Academy stands for 'Sustainable Mindset and Inner Level for Youth', reflecting its mission to cultivate sustainable entrepreneurship among urban youth.

Participants and speakers at the event included a diverse array of individuals ranging from Senator Roberto Rampi to former Kaziranga Director Jatindra Sarma, all contributing their expertise to the endeavor. The event featured workshops, discussions, and project work, alongside cultural experiences such as yoga sessions, traditional food tasting, and the celebration of the festival of colors, Holi.

Addressing the significance of indigenous knowledge in combating climate change, Rituraj Phukan stated, "Indigenous people protect 80% of the remaining biodiversity on Earth. Smily Academy aims to reconnect urban youth with nature and inspire them to prioritize planet-friendly, sustainable models of entrepreneurship."

The event also marked the announcement of a three-year partnership between NNEdPro Global Institute for Food, Nutrition and Health and the Smily Academy, focusing on One Health and the indigenous factor. Professor Sumantra Ray of NNEdPro expressed enthusiasm for the collaboration, highlighting the potential for knowledge transfer and innovation in addressing global health and environmental challenges.

With support from 30 partners, including GammaDonna, Sumus Italia, and Youth 4 Climate, Smily Academy is poised to make a significant impact in fostering regenerative entrepreneurship and environmental stewardship worldwide. Partnerships such as those with the G7 Engagement Group on Gender Equality, Women 7, underscore Smily Academy's commitment to inclusive and sustainable development.

As participants depart with newfound insights and inspiration, the legacy of the first Smily Academy XP continues to resonate, laying the groundwork for future collaborations and initiatives aimed at shaping a more sustainable and equitable future for all.

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