

BLOCKCHAIN SUMMIT : GENESIS

13 April 2018

Summit on 'Exchange of knowledge on Blockchain & its Applications'

Department of Information Technology & Electronics, Government of West Bengal has embarked upon a journey to promote emerging technologies in the State, believing that it is time to inform and educate the young students and professionals about the potential of emerging technologies and identify the various service areas in different organisations that can benefit from these emerging technologies.

Considered as one of the most important next generation emerging technologies, Blockchain has the potential to disrupt every industry and gradually rewire the world economy. The state's vision is to move towards a decentralised and transparent ecosystem, where the government and every industry will be able to leverage benefits of emerging technologies such as Blockchain.

To further this movement towards increasing Blockchain related awareness and capability development, a day long workshop has been organised on 13th April 2018 at Biswa Bangla Convention Centre, New Town, Kolkata, by the State DIT&E in collaboration with WBEIDC and NASSCOM. The goal of the event was to exchange knowledge on how the government entities, educational institutions, industries and corporates are driving capacity building and awareness generation in Blockchain domain. Eminent speakers from diverse fields shared their views on awareness generation, capacity building and deliberated on various aspects of Blockchain.

In his welcome address Shri Aninda Chatterjee, Managing Director, WBEIDC, mentioned that the summit has been envisioned and rolled out by the Department of information technology & electronics. He wished the august gathering "HARDIK SHUBHO NABO BARSHO" and invited eminent guests of the inaugural session on stage.

Eminent dignitaries of the inaugural session were Shri Arijit Chakraborti, Partner, PWC, Shri Ambarish Dasgupta, Principal Advisor to the Department of Information Technology & Electronics, Govt. of West Bengal, Dr. Santanu Paul, Principal Advisor, Department of Information Technology & Electronics, Govt. of West Bengal, Shri Debashis Sen, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Information Technology & Electronics, Govt. of West Bengal, Shri S. K. Bhattacharyya, IAS, Additional Secretary, Department of Information Technology & Electronics, Govt. of West Bengal, Shri Atul Agarwal, Chairman – NASSCOM East and Shri Diptiman Dasgupta, Founder, Bengal Blockchain Believers. The organisers felicitated eminent dignitaries with flower bouquet.

Shri Aninda Chatterjee, Managing Director, WBEIDC requested Shri Debashis Sen, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, DITE, Govt. of West Bengal to deliver his inaugural welcome address and set the tone for the event.

In his inaugural speech Shri Debashis Sen, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, DITE, Govt. of West Bengal said that Govt of West Bengal is partnering with a lot of people to make Blockchain and other emerging technologies buzzing in Bengal. Along with Webel, PwC and Nasscom perhaps for the first time in the history of India that an unorganised online enthusiastic group named "Bengal Blockchain Believer" has helped to network with their members to enlarge presence throughout the online community. He referred to Estonia who are experimenting in using Blockchain in the field of governance. He emphasised that everybody must understand and appreciate the technology known as Blockchain.

He quoted from the Economic Times report that came out on a survey of the job hunters group as reported officially that Blockchain engineers are one of the 5 top most soft crafted technical skilled that will be in demand in the next financial year. In India alone at least 18-20000 Blockchain engineers would be required as fresher. So everybody should be clear about that this opportunity entails and how to get into this place. The Government is also keen to encourage the digital players to get into this and that is the objective of the summit. Everybody should take a message home that tomorrow if we have to make a mark in the nation, in the world, in technology such as Blockchain, shall have to be a master.

This was followed by a 3 minutes presentation by Shri Kaushik Das from PriceWaterhouse Coopers Blockchain Lab on Public Project financing through Blockchain.

The first session of the day was named "De-mystifying Blockchain" conducted by Shri Diptiman Dasgupta, Executive IT Architect & Chief Architect Blockchain, IBM and Shri Debojyoti Das Lead Architect Blockchain, IBM, who are a part of the group "Bengal Blockchain Believers"

After the tea-break the next session was "Blockchain in Government | Future synergies" conducted by Shri Saurabh Bhattacharya, Director, PWC.

Shri Bratya Basu, Hon'ble Minister-in-Charge, Department of Information Technology & Electronics, Government of West Bengal joined the summit at noon and Shri Debashis Sen, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Dept of IT & E, Government of West Bengal accompanied him to the stage.

Shri Bratya Basu, Hon'ble Minister-in-Charge, DITE, Govt. of West Bengal formally inaugurated the summit by lighting the inaugural lamp.

He said that the growth of Bengal is fuelled by both agricultural sector as well as Industry and one cannot prosper at the cost of the other. ICT as an industry is less land-intensive, more skilled personnel extensive, very high revenue generating, and environmentally clean industry. In such densely populated state like West Bengal it is the most suited industry to adapt for growth. He mentioned that Hon'ble Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has in her quest for creating job opportunities in a sustainable and inclusive development model placed importance in the IT and Electronics Sector. Drawing inspiration from her we have made it our mission to become one of the top 3 states in India in twenty twenty in IT&E Sector.

Blockchain is a rapidly growing emerging technology which everybody believe have been revolutionised everywhere from farmer to entertainment from insurance to the Government sector. The market will grow significantly in next few years. The Department of Information Technology & Electronics decided to reach this opportunity to generate potential employment.

The Blockchain summit shows the attempt to reach industry leaders, academia, research scholars, other developmental organisations and individuals that they come forward and share their knowledge and vision in this field and be a part of the journey towards being the number one IT destination of the nation by 2020.

The next session was on "Blockchain | India perspective" conducted by Shri Jitan Chandanani, partner and Blockchain Leaker, IBM.

The last session before lunch break was a panel discussion on "How do Corporates envisage Blockchain Technology | Entrepreneurs' viewpoint". The Panellists were Shri Atul Agarwal, Chairman – NASSCOM East,

Shri Rangin lahiri, CEO, Qlikchain, Shri Sugata Roy, CEO, Arodek, Shri Avelo Roy, Founder, Kolkata Ventures and Shri Anand Raje, Head of Internet Governance Initiatives, Cyber Peace Foundation

The post lunch session started with a quiz on Blockchain conducted by Shri Prodip Mukhopadhyay, CEO, WIL. Shri Aninda Chatterjee, Managing Director, WBEIDC, awarded medal to the participants who gave correct answer.

After the Quiz there were two consecutive sessions, first session was on "Blockchain | A Global Scenario", conducted by Shri Ramyanshu Datta, Program Director – Industry Solutions & Offering, IBM US and the second was on "Blockchain | A trusted backbone & driving force in the financial sector" conducted by Shri Debasis Pramanik, Vice President, Accenture.

There was a Panel Discussion on "How Blockchain can change the future of Fintech". The panellists were Padmashree Dr. Bimal Roy, Centre Head – RC Bose Center for cryptology and Security, ISI, Dr. Santanu Paul, Founder – TalentSprint, Shri Vishal Anand Kanvaty, Senior Vice President, NPCI, Shri Rajesh Dhuddu, Senior Vice President, Quattro Processing Services and Ms. Indrani Saha, Associate Vice Presedint, CTS

The takeaway session was conducted by Shri Ambarish Dasgupta, Senior Partner and Founder at Intueri Consulting LLP. He said that each and every line that the speakers presented is a takeaway. It is unbelievable that such an emerging concept could be so quickly embraced by Government Department. He suggested that it may be a good idea to do a country-wise survey of the adaption pattern of the Blockchain and therefore seeing that which are the countries which are more quickly adapting this technology and whether Bengal can start catering or make target in marketing to those countries.

The summit concluded with Vote of thanks delivered by Shri Debashis Sen, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Information Technology & Electronics, Govt. of West Bengal.