

Chipko Movement Leader Stresses on Protection of Biodiversity, Medicinal Plants

Noted environmentalist and Chipko Movement leader Chandi Prasad Bhatt has stressed on the need for protecting the biodiversity, traditional knowledge, agricultural products and medicinal plants of Uttarakhand with proper intellectual property rights (IPR). He was speaking at a workshop on IPR organised by the Uttarakhand State Council of Science and Technology (UCOST) at its Vigyan Dham centre in Dehradun to mark the occasion of World IP day on Tuesday.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, Bhatt stressed on the need for proper IPR for protecting Uttarakhand's rich wealth of biodiversity, aspects like traditional knowledge, agriculture produce and medicinal plants citing examples of Yarsa Gumba (*Cordyceps sinensis*)-also referred to as 'Himalayan herbal Viagra' and other agricultural crops which are native to Uttarakhand.

Speaking on the occasion, former advisor in the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, Dr Lakshman Prasad spoke on patent from the researcher's angle. Citing various examples from the engineering field, he explained aspects of the IPR in detail. Addressing the students, he said that research students should also consult the patent literature before deciding on the topic of research. Prasad further spoke on how a researcher can identify and protect the intellectual property generated from their research project.

Earlier, welcoming the gathering, the UCOST director general Rajendra Dobhal spoke about the IPR scenario from pre-independence times to the present day. He also spoke of the laws which govern the IPR in India during pre-independence era, post-independence, during industrialisation and now in the age of technical advancement. He suggested that academicians and scientist should work in their respective fields while also keeping in mind the intellectual property rights. Dobhal also reiterated the importance of protection of ideas and inventions through proper and suitable IP.

The book 'Patenting in India: Policy, Procedure and Public Funding' by Prasad was also released on the occasion.