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## **Women must learn to take calculated risks to become successful entrepreneurs: Rekha Sharma**

Ahmedabad, To mark the International Women's Day, the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII) organised a 'Women in Leadership Conclave' at its campus on 6th March 2023. The conclave was inaugurated by Smt Rekha Sharma, Chairperson, National Commission for Women (NCW) as the chief guest in the presence of Guest of Honour Dr. Pankaj Mittal, Secretary General, Association of Indian Universities, Special Guests, Ms. Mona Khandar, Principal Secretary, Finance Dept (Economic Affairs), Govt. of Gujarat, Mr. Romit Sen, Vice President, Corporate Sustainability, HSBC India, & Dr. Rachana Gemawat, Chairperson, FICCI FLO, and Dr. Sunil Shukla, Director General, EDII.

Addressing women entrepreneurs, students, and academicians as well as experts from different sectors, Smt Rekha Sharma in her

inaugural speech said, "There has been a growing awareness about raising the social and economic status of women in society with an increased focus on education, training, and handholding.

Dr. Shukla in his opening remarks said, "The economy can experience balanced growth only when women are encouraged to nurture their creativity and spirit of innovation. It is great to see how New India is providing winning platforms to women through innovative schemes and networking opportunities.

Guest of Honour, Dr. Pankaj Mittal, Secretary General, Association of Indian Universities, said, "Women do step out with big dreams but as they progress towards the top, their participation and representation decreases glaringly. Women should refrain from creating an invisible glass ceiling of contentment and

continue to rise. Society also needs to stop stereotyping women and give them a more warm welcome for bigger, unconventional roles. Women need to hold hands of other women and encourage each other on the way."

In his address, Mr. Romit Sen, Sr. Vice President, of Corporate Sustainability, HSBC India said, "Skill development has really played a big role in bringing women to the forefront. Along with women, society as a whole also needs to be sensitized so that there is an encouraging systemic change.

Ms. Mona Khandar, Principal Secretary, Finance Dept (Economic Affairs), Govt. of Gujarat, "Gujarat has a significant presence of MSMEs and women play a major role in this. There are some immensely progressive government schemes and subsidies to encourage women to become entrepreneurs. Women-led

startups are coming up now in various promising domains, and I see a future where women will establish their strong identities in the sphere of entrepreneurship."

Dr. Rachana Gemawat, Chairperson, FICCI FLO Ahmedabad said, "We as a society need to support women in breaking barriers and handhold them in donning the role of enablers. This will lead to significant growth for the economy. A conducive support system that instills confidence in women and encourages them to rise above the fear of failure will work wonders on helping women rise and shine."

The inauguration was followed by a panel discussion with esteemed panelists focused on understanding the gaps in the ecosystem for women empowerment and entrepreneurship, and deliberating on the ways of plugging gaps.