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Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council

KERALA STARTUP MISSION®

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National Entrepreneurship Conclave 2026

FOURTH EDITION

FEBRUARY
18 19 20

REPORT



#NEC 2026

| Day One Comprehensive Report: National Entrepreneurship Conclave (NEC) 2026

Date: February 18, 2026 Venue: LEAD College (Autonomous), Akathethara, Kerala
Core Theme: Transforming Startup Ideas into Executable Ventures
The opening day of the National Entrepreneurship Conclave (NEC) 2026 delivered a high-impact agenda focused on bridging the gap between raw startup ideation and practical market execution. Bringing together aspiring founders, seasoned entrepreneurs, and expert mentors, Day One established a strong foundation for building viable business models.
Here is a detailed breakdown of the day's proceedings:

Morning Schedule: Inception and Industry Insights

08:30 AM | Registration The conclave commenced with an energetic registration phase. Teams from various institutions arrived to collect their credentials, setting a collaborative and ambitious tone for the three-day event.
10:00 AM | Inauguration Ceremony The formal inauguration grounded the event in both academic rigor and industry reality.

- **Presidential Address**: Dr. Thomas George K, Director of LEAD College (Autonomous), delivered the opening remarks. He outlined the vision of NEC '26: transitioning students from a B-School mindset to an E-School (Entrepreneurship-School) reality.
- **Inaugural Address**: Mr. Mathew Joseph, Co-Founder of FreshToHome Foods Pvt. Ltd., shared his journey of scaling a startup into a massive enterprise.



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Product Launch Event Highlight: From Development to Market Execution

The ceremony reached its peak with a high-energy live Product Launch, offering attendees a firsthand look at the transition from startup development to real-world execution. The following ventures stood out for their innovation and market readiness:

Featured Launches & Recognitions

- **Feastle**: Successfully executed its formal Product Launch, demonstrating a seamless transition into the public market.
- **Parkit**: Commenced its market entry with a strategic Soft Launch, gathering initial user momentum.
- **Top Performers**: The following startups received special commendation for their exceptional concepts and execution:
  - **Loopa**
  - **Happioca**
  - **Polaroid Dosa**



Afternoon Frameworks, Ideation, and Execution

The afternoon shifted focus entirely to the mechanics of startup development. The central theme across these sessions was that an idea is only as good as its execution strategy.

12:30 PM | Session 1: Entrepreneurial Mindset

- Speaker: Dr. Thomas George K, Director, LEAD College (Autonomous)
- Session Details & Q&A: Dr. Thomas explored the psychological resilience and vision required by founders. During the highly anticipated Q&A segment, the discussion pivoted strictly to the execution of ideas. Participants queried how to maintain momentum when a startup concept hits market resistance. Dr. Thomas provided actionable strategies on overcoming early-stage operational bottlenecks, emphasizing that a true entrepreneurial mindset is fundamentally an execution mindset.

02:00 PM | Session 2: Problem First: Where Real Innovation Begins

- Speaker: Mr. Ajay Basil Varghese, Startup Coach & Serial Entrepreneur
- Session Details: Mr. Varghese challenged the participants to stop falling in love with their solutions and instead obsess over the core problems of their target market. His Q&A session was a deep dive into the granular execution of startup ideas. He fielded questions on validating market demand, building Minimum Viable Products (MVPs) efficiently, and the step-by-step processes serial entrepreneurs use to execute lean methodologies without exhausting their capital.

04:00 PM | Round 1 Following the intensive learning sessions, participants entered Round 1 of the conclave's competitive track. Armed with the execution frameworks provided earlier, teams began actively plotting the viability, feasibility, and desirability of their own startup concepts.





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Evening Experiential Learning and Networking

06:30 PM | Outbound Training (OBT) To break away from traditional classroom learning, participants transitioned into an Outbound Training (OBT) session. This experiential phase placed teams in dynamic, physical scenarios designed to test their real-time decision-making, team synergy, and leadership skills under pressure—critical human components needed to execute a business plan in the real world.

07:30 PM | LEAD Alumni Entrepreneurs Meetup Day One concluded with an invaluable, high-impact networking session featuring a panel of successful LEAD College alumni as Chief Guests. The informal setting allowed current participants to engage directly with these founders, with the conversation focusing heavily on their origin stories and the financial realities of their business turnovers.

The panel included:

- **Mr. Safvan (CEO & Founder, Espa)**: Shared candid insights into his initial startup phase, detailing the strategies that allowed Espa to scale from the ground up and hit significant revenue milestones.
- **Mr. Sirajudheen Ellathodi (Member, National Traders Welfare Board):** Provided a macro-level perspective on the trading ecosystem, discussing how early market navigation and an understanding of commercial frameworks contributed to his financial success and current advisory role.
- **Mr. Ambras KT (Founder, Edex Life School):** The edupreneur discussed his journey in the skill-development sector, explaining how a focus on practical youth transformation translated into a highly scalable and profitable educational enterprise.





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Day 02 Proceedings & Strategic Sessions

Day 02 of the summit was marked by an intensive focus on practical entrepreneurial skills, featuring a robust agenda of interactive dialogues, tactical workshops, and high-stakes pitch sessions. The day's programming was meticulously designed to transition participants from theoretical ideation to market-ready execution and capital acquisition.

Morning : Industry Insights and Narrative Building

09:00 AM | Session 3: Fireside Chat with Founders The day commenced with an engaging and transparent panel discussion featuring a diverse cohort of established founders. This session broke away from traditional lectures, offering attendees raw, firsthand accounts of the entrepreneurial journey. The discussion centered on overcoming early-stage hurdles, building resilient teams, and navigating market volatility. The esteemed panel included:

- **Mr. Shabas, Founder, Fulva**
- **Mr. Shibin, Founder, Rail rolls**
- **Mr. Arjit Majumdar, Founder, Avinya Infinity Solutions**
- **Mr. Ranjith Kumar, Founder, Moringa Promise Wellness**
- **Mr. Anas Saidmohamed, Co-founder & CEO, Oravco Pvt. Ltd. and Director, Safconuts Pvt. Ltd.**
- **Key Takeaway:** The interactive format allowed emerging entrepreneurs in the audience to glean actionable advice tailored to diverse industries, from wellness to enterprise solutions.





11:35 AM | Session 4: Perfecting Your Pitch - Crafting an Impactful Pitch Deck
Recognizing that a great product must be paired with compelling storytelling, the late morning session delivered a masterclass in communication. Led by Mr. Mittu Tigi, Director of the Merstra Foundation (and former CEO of AIC IIIT Kottayam / Chapter Lead at Headstart), this workshop broke down the anatomy of a successful pitch.

- Key Themes Explored: Mr. Tigi provided attendees with actionable frameworks for distilling complex business models into concise investor narratives. The session covered essential slide deck structures, data visualization, articulating the "why now" factor, and strategies for avoiding common pitching pitfalls.

Afternoon : Competitive Execution and Capital Strategy

02:30 PM | Round 2: Five Minute Power Pitch The afternoon shifted the event into a high-stakes, competitive environment. Startups were thrust into the Five Minute Power Pitch, a crucible designed to test their clarity, confidence, and market readiness.
Execution Focus: Founders were challenged to articulate their core value proposition, address total addressable market (TAM), outline their revenue models, and defend their competitive moats—all under a strict time constraint. This rapid-fire format mirrored the high-pressure environment of early-stage venture capital meetings.



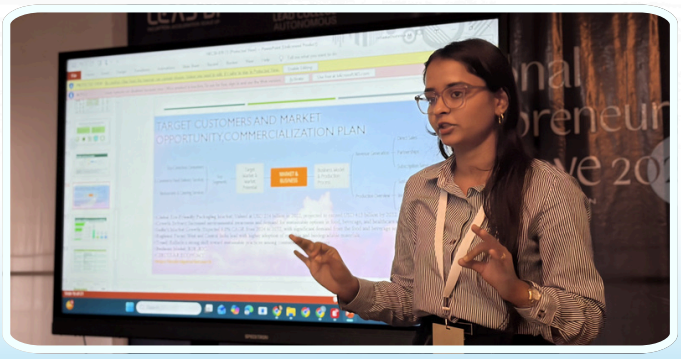


07:00 PM | Session 5: Business Idea Validation to Fundraising As the formal technical sessions drew to a close, the focus pivoted to financial viability. CS. Manu Francis, an Expert Financial Strategist and Founder/CEO of GHC Growth Lab, delivered a critical seminar on the financial lifecycle of a startup.

Strategic Overview: This deep-dive covered the entire spectrum of financial readiness. It bridged the gap between proving product-market fit (validation) and navigating the complexities of term sheets, valuations, and equity dilution (fundraising).

Musical Night Following a rigorous day of pitching and strategic learning, the schedule concluded with a dedicated **Musical Night**. Beyond just entertainment, this segment served a crucial function in ecosystem building. It provided a relaxed, informal environment for participants, mentors, investors, and speakers to connect on a human level, fostering the trust and organic networking that often lead to long-term professional partnerships.







Day 03: Final Selection, Investor Pitch, and Valedictory Ceremony

Final Investor Pitch and Grand Finale

- **Result Declaration:** The proceedings of the final day commenced early with the highly anticipated announcement of the results from the previous rounds. A total of **33 teams were officially shortlisted** to advance to the final competitive stage.

- **06:30 AM | Round 3 (The Investor Pitch):** The shortlisted finalists entered the most critical phase of the conclave.
  - **Pitching Format:** Every shortlisted team participated in the session individually, rather than in group blocks. Each team was allotted a strict window of **8 to 10 minutes** to present their refined business models.
  - **Objective:** The founders pitched directly to a panel of investors, applying the storytelling, communication, and financial strategies they acquired over the previous two days to demonstrate market viability and secure potential backing.

Afternoon Conclusion: Grand Finale and Leadership Insights

- **01:30 PM | Valedictory & Prize Distribution:** Following the rigorous morning pitch sessions, the conclave officially wrapped up with the Results Declaration and Valedictory ceremony.
- **Prize Distribution:** The session featured the final prize distribution, recognizing and rewarding the top-performing ventures that demonstrated the highest execution potential and market readiness throughout the 4th Edition of the conclave.
- **Leadership Insights:** The valedictory ceremony was elevated by the active participation of LEAD College's leadership. **Deputy Director Prof. Raj Kishan** and **Director Dr. Thomas George K** graced the event, sharing valuable insights and actionable final advice with the aspiring entrepreneurs as they transition from the conclave back into the real-world market.
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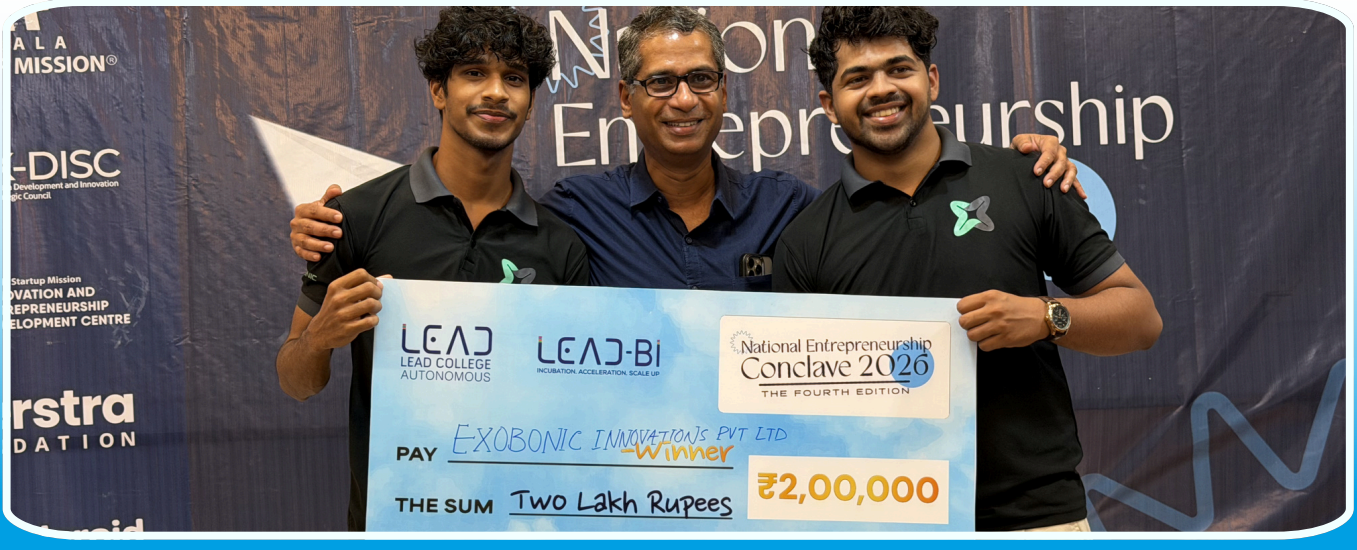

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