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To
The Editor,
Sir,

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I request that the following message may kindly be published in your esteemed daily:

StartupTN launches Agri and Food Tech Forum

Bringing Stakeholders Together to make Tamil Nadu the Sectoral Leader

StartupTN, the State Nodal Agency for Startup and Innovation operating under the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, is taking strides to make Tamil Nadu the preferred global Startup destination.

As part of its sectoral initiatives, StartupTN launched the Agri and Food Tech Forum at TNAU, Coimbatore on Tuesday. Dr.N.Senthil, Director, Centre for Plant Molecular Biology & Biotechnology, TNAU, launched the Forum in the presence of Mission Director and CEO of StartupTN, Thiru.Sivarajah Ramanathan, government officials, entrepreneurs, and other key stakeholders from the sectors.

In his address, Thiru.Sivarajah Ramanathan said that the Agri and Food Tech Forum would form a supportive ecosystem for startups in this sector. It will bring together mentors, researchers, experts, and incubators to help startups related to agriculture and food technology. While the role of StartupTN will be limited to facilitating activities, it is the panel of experts who will run the forum.

There will be frequent virtual and physical meetings to assist startups in this sector. Apart from creating the ecosystem, such forums will provide information and insights helpful in policy making and designing schemes, he said. He expressed his happiness that TNAU, which is an academic cum R&D institution, supported launching the forum.

Dr.N.Senthil stated that TNAU is eager to collaborate with StartupTN to strengthen startups in agriculture and other relevant fields. TNAU has numerous centers throughout the state supporting startups and incubation centers. They will certainly address the needs of StartupTN in creating a supportive ecosystem for startups.

TNAU is also keen on commercializing research activities within the university and transforming them into successful ventures to generate jobs for young people. The Vice Chancellor's vision is to empower students to become job providers rather than job seekers.

The university possesses a 1.2 lakh square feet constructed building in the Centre of Excellence in Biotechnology, which is ready for occupancy. An infrastructure facility has been established at the cost of Rs 4.5 crore for research activities and the development of biotech-based products. If anyone has an idea, they are welcome to the center to develop the product.

A panel discussion titled 'Seed to Table and Beyond - Powering Agriculture and Food through Startups' was held on the sidelines of the forum's launch. The session, moderated by Dr.V.Pasupathy, a Food Scientist, saw the participation of Mr.Selva Murali, Founder of Agri Sakthi, Mr.Arul Murugan, Founder of Snack Experts, and Mr.Vasanthan Selvan, CEO of Periyakulam Horti Business Incubator.

An autonomous multipurpose robot used for agricultural activities, named Mayabots-X1, was launched at the event. The robot was developed by Maya Greens Services Pvt. Ltd, Coimbatore.

On this occasion, an MoU was exchanged with the Periyakulam Horti Business Incubation Forum (PHBIF) for incubation and mentorship support for Startups in this sector.

Mr.S.Dinesh Kumar, Associate Vice President, StartupTN and Mr.A.V.Gnanasambandam, CEO, TBI, ABIS, TNAU participated in the launch.

Public Relations Officer