

DST-CII Tech summit deliberates on S&T collaboration opportunities between India & Portugal

The joint annual flagship DST-CII Technology Summit inaugurated by Union Minister for Science & Technology, Health & Family Welfare and Earth Sciences, Dr. Harsh Vardhan and Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education, Government of Portugal, Prof. Manuel Heitor, deliberated on collaboration opportunities between industry, academia and research intuitions from India and Portugal in the areas of agritech; water tech, health tech, cleantech, energy, climate change; IT/ICT/ emerging technologies; innovation and start-ups and space-ocean interactions.

“The time is now ripe for us to take the Indo-Portuguese partnership to the next level, and the three days offer a good opportunity for the participating companies to explore prospects for bilateral investments across relevant sectors and take the collaboration to the next iteration by encouraging new solutions based on cutting edge technologies such as machine learning and artificial intelligence, Union Minister for Science & Technology, Health & Family Welfare and Earth Sciences, Dr. Harsh Vardhan said in his inaugural address at the summit.

He encouraged the industries, institutions, and research organizations participating in the summit to discuss bilateral research cooperation for co-creation of knowledge in the fields of water, health, information and communication technology, cleantech, energy for addressing future challenges and building a shared future by harnessing the power of science, technology, and innovation for social good.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan also urged the participating companies to support start-ups from both sides, undertake collaborative research and human resource exchange for future businesses.

The Union Minister informed at the summit organized virtually on December 7, 2020, that India has nurtured over 50,000 startups over the last 5 years, of which about 33 have achieved the Unicorn status with their valuation over USD 1.0 billion, and with these startups, the government is encouraged to launch Mission Startup India 2.0.

He emphasized that Portugal too is becoming the most attractive startup hub in Europe and is building a flourishing startup ecosystem spurred by an open culture and a keen focus on entrepreneurship and innovation.

Minister of Science, Technology and Higher Education, Government of Portugal, Prof. Manuel Heitor, highlighted the importance of collaboration and said that there is a need to open collaborative research with free mobility and access for the students. He also spoke about the future of science after the pandemic, which calls for a new kind of balance between development and environment, and also about the relationship between science and employment.

Prof V K Saraswat, Member, Niti Aayog, stressed that the current pandemic demands the need for greater collaboration in healthcare between the two countries, and the DST-CII Technology summit could harness such collaboration and foster it between industry, academia, and institutions. He hoped that translational research could get a major boost through this summit.

Prof Ashutosh Sharma, Secretary, DST, mentioned that this summit will see the signing of several MoUs and agreements amongst stakeholders from both sides. “Given the success of our STI partnership, I am sure that these agreements will result in increased bilateral trade between our nations as well as new solutions to address global societal challenges,” he added.

Prof Sharma urged all the delegates to network and make use of the B2B meetings facility to deep dive and explore collaboration possibilities.

Prof. Helena Pereira, President, Board of Directors, The Foundation for Science and Technology, FCT, Portugal, briefed about the India Portugal collaboration in science and said that the two countries have shared common vision on S&T and innovation and engaged in several bilateral programmes.

Mr. Vipin Sondhi, Chairman, CII National Committee on R&D & Innovation and Chairman, Technology Summit and CEO and MD, Ashok Leyland, said that this summit will provide unprecedented opportunities for both countries to create scientific collaborations for social goods.

Mr SK Varshney, Adviser & Head, International Cooperation, Department of Science & Technology encouraged researchers, academicians and industrialists of both countries to make good use of three days interaction of the Technology Summit which is providing a platform to explore collaboration in hi-tech areas to provide solutions to challenges being faced by two societies.

The annual summit cum-exposition of the world’s best in technology and research in different sectors organised jointly by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, provides a platform for Indian industry, academic and research institutions to forge collaborations with global partners and boost policy to trigger investment in research & development and technology.





