KERALA IT NEWS

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MAKER VILLAGE IN NEW AVATAR
WITH IMPROVED FACILITIES

Billed as India's largest electronic hardware incubator, Maker Village has launched numerous improved facilities to help the hardware startup community in the country to set up their businesses, file patents and fashion their ideas into market-ready products.

The ultra-modern facility, spread over 60,000 sq. ft. was launched in the presence of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan along with the inauguration of the Integrated Startup Complex at Kalamassery, Kochi on January 13.

Maker Village, the Electronic System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) facility and Hardware Incubator, is an innovative joint initiative of Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of Kerala and IIITM-K, Thiruvananthapuram. It currently has 65 hardware startup companies from across the country. "The cumulative investment in startup companies at Maker Village during the last year is about Rs. 16 crore which will increase

manifold with the new facilities," said Prasad Balakrishnan Nair, CEO, Maker Village.

Startup companies at Maker Village work in areas such as automation, robotics, drones, Internet of Things (IoT), autonomous vehicles, bio-medical instrumentation and energy management.As part of this initiative, Centers of Excellence (CoE) enabling

hardware product development by top global technology solutions providers will be instituted at Maker Village.

Recently, Maker Village received sanction for the NIDHI-PRAYAS scheme under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. The scheme will provide support for grants, labs and equipments for early-stage hardware startups to pursue ideas without fear of failure. The PRAYAS Centre at Maker Village was launched during the event.

Health Minister K K Shylaja Teacher, Prof. K V Thomas, MP and V K Ebrahim Kunju, MLA participated in the event. A host of senior government officials and corporate leaders were also present.

STARTUPS CAN TAKE UP IT PROJECTS FOR GOVT. DEPTS.

The State Government has given sanction to its departments and autonomous institutions to invite startups registered under the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) for implementing their IT projects that cost above Rs 20 lakh and below Rs 1 crore. According to the Government Order (GO), State departments, boards, local self-government institutions, corporations, universities and others can approach startups through limited tender.

Kerala is the first State in the country to give permission to its departments for direct procurement from startups. Recently, the State Government had increased the cap on direct purchase of software products, services and mobile apps by its departments from the ventures cleared by KSUM from Rs. 5 lakh to Rs. 20 lakh. "The new Government Order will significantly help the growth of a startup ecosystem in the State. This step will bring excellent opportunities for startups besides helping Kerala attract such ventures from other states," said Dr. Saji Gopinath, CEO, KSUM.

The B2G market in Kerala is actively providing ample opportunities for startups to implement innovative projects in government departments as a way of validating their products.

Till date, around 40 startups have been working with different government departments. It has eased the functioning and prompt delivery of services by government departments. Startups from across the country can pitch their products to government departments if they are registered in Kerala. Earlier, in a letter to the State Government, Dr. Gopinath had requested that orders be issued for selecting startups for the procurement of all types of products and services beyond Rs. 20 lakh through limited tender from among the startups registered under KSUM.

FUND FOR TRANZMEO FROM HPCL

Infopark-based startup Tranzmeo IT Solutions has secured an undisclosed amount as pre-seed fund from Hindustan Petroleum (HPCL) for its AI-powered product, the T-connect OneView. It is the only AI startup in Kerala to get PSU investment from a Fortune 500 company. HPCL will also occupy board seats in the company.

The product works on anomaly detection and prediction and generates alarms to alert the authorities concerned. The startup will be utilising the funds to accelerate research and development of its advanced, proprietary technology and product line-up, bolster business development opportunities and double the company's headcount over the next year.

The company has launched a beta version of T-connect which currently analyses 508 Km of HPCL's petroleum pipeline for anomaly detection and prediction. Tranzmeo IT Solutions, founded by Safil Sunny, opened their new facility in Infopark Phase II campus in November.

The company is also a part of NASSCOM's 10,000 Startup accelerator program. Plans are on to bring on board more tech talents, strengthen its leadership team and improve customer experience with their existing products.

SABARINATH VENUGOPALAN VISITS CYBERPARK

Sabarinath Venugopalan, Managing Partner – Nordic Consumer Industry, IBM Global Business Services visited Cyberpark where he addressed companies from the IT Park, CAFIT, Mobile 10X and KSUM, and had a knowledge-sharing session. "We cannot start an IBM model company here immediately, but tie-ups with companies here and projects on a small scale are possible," said Sabarinath Venugopalan. Hrishikesh Nair, CEO, IT Parks Kerala briefed Venugopalan on the current IT ecosystem and the various initiatives carried out by the Government of Kerala to promote the IT sector in the State. Haris P T, President, CAFIT and Abdul Gafoor, Secretary were present during the meeting and

briefed about the high potential that can be tapped from Kozhikode in emerging technologies. Representatives from IT companies at the Park, incubation hub and Nireesh C, General Manager, Marketing, Cyberpark were also present.

CYBERIA SOFTWARES OPENS IN NILA, TECHNOPARK

Cyberia Softwares, a mobile application and web development company has opened their new office on the second floor of the Nila building in Technopark. The 40-seater office was earlier based out of the Thejaswini building. Cyberia Softwares was established in 2005 in Kollam and started their office in Technopark in Kundara in 2016 before opening another office in the capital nearly two years ago.

K-DISC ABCD STUDENTS IN DEMAND

Students who have successfully completed the Accelerated Blockchain Competency Development (ABCD) program conducted by Kerala State Development and Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC) have been receiving interest from leading IT companies for recruitment. These include IBS, Faya Innovations, Uvionics Tech, Mozanta Technologies and Logidots Technologies. Launched in July this year, ABCD is a K-DISC initiative for imparting training in blockchain technology which has immense job potential in India and abroad.

A study by Indeed 2017 mentions that a Full Stack developer position had more job postings per 1 million total jobs and a higher year-over-year change in the number of postings from 2013 onwards.

The ABCD program offers two-part certification, where participants will obtain a Foundation Skills certificate in Full Stack and intermediate level skills in blockchain technology. The Full Stack program is of 124 hours duration, developed and delivered by ICT Academy of Kerala and is open to all graduates, engineering diploma holders and working professionals.

The second part of the program – the Blockchain Associate, Developer and Architect program – is developed and delivered by the Kerala Blockchain Academy (KBA), an advanced R & D department within IIITM-K.

Blockchain technology is poised to change how business and government transactions are done. As a distributed, tamper-proof ledger, it doesn't just cut out intermediaries, reduce costs and increase speed and reach. It also offers greater transparency and traceability for business and government processes.

BESTDOC TECHNOLOGY OPENS IN THAPASYA

BestDoc Technology joins the list of IT companies at Smart Business Centre in Thapasya, Infopark, Kochi. Hrishikesh Nair, CEO, IT Parks Kerala inaugurated the office. Afsal Salu, Founder & CEO, BestDoc and employees of the company were present at the function. The company works to bring convenience and efficiency through their app BestDoc to doctors and patients.

UST GLOBAL WINS TOP EMPLOYER CERTIFICATION

UST Global won the Top Employers in the APAC for 2019 certification by the Top Employers Institute for the company's locations in India, Malaysia and the Philippines. Manu Gopinath, Chief People Officer, UST Global, said, "The Certification is a testimony to our commitment to optimise, develop and work with employees to become an even better employer." The Top Employers Institute is an independent organisation that uncovers employee offerings of significant employers around the world.

MOBILE WORLD CONGRESS CALLS OUT TO KERALA

Mobile World Congress 2019, to be held in Spain from February 25 to 28 is inviting startup companies from India and Kerala in particular. As a prelude, Cyberpark, Kozhikode in association with IAMAI Mobile10X Calicut Hub, also the venue, hosted 'Opportunities for Indian Startups at MWC'19' with officials from the Government of Catalonia. GSMA Mobile World Congress (MWC) is the world's largest exhibition for the mobile industry featuring representatives of mobile operators, manufacturers, technology providers and content owners. MWC will also host a spin-off called 4YFN focussed on innovative startups. A brokerage event will assist companies to participate in the most number of meetings. Companies should have a product, technology, expertise or service related to ICT technologies. Participants get a tech tour. MWC will help global players meet local companies that operate in ICT and mobile technologies. For registering email rsingh@catalonia.com