

Right time for govt institutes to get into business, AVP managing trustee says

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COIMBATORE: It is the right time for government research and educational institutes to get into business, said managing trustee of Arya Vaidya Pharmacy P R Krishnakumar. He said it was vital for research institutes to tie up with industries so that they come out with products that industries and the markets need and can use. He said this model would help institutes generate some funds within instead of depending entirely on the government for grants. Speaking at the inventor-user meet 2018 organised by the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding to showcase the many products they have released to potential buyers, Dr Krishnakumar said institutions should target meeting needs of industries and consumers in India and abroad. "In Arya Vaidya Pharmacy, we get inquiries and orders from cosmetic companies in France and Germany to make herbal products for them to sell under their brand. This was earlier done only in Western countries. We are setting up an Ayurveda hospital in Latvia among others," said Dr Krishnakumar. "All this gives us good funds and income to keep researching further," he added. Dr Krishnakumar said environmental institutions also have market potential in the education sector, with most schools and colleges now wanting their students to have some knowledge about plants. "A school recently asked me if we could conduct classes weekly for students, a Kerala government official asked us if we could create a syllabus for students," he said. IFGTB director, Dr Mohit Gera, said tying up with industries recently has helped them scale up production of their inventions, thus making it reach more people. "Our technology includes the tree rich biobooster, which uses coconut fibre instead of mud to grow plants, Tamil Nadu Paper Limited plans to plant 4 crore trees this year of which 1.4 crore trees are clones released by our institute, releases a natural colorant called Tara RED and tree tea a healthy anti-oxidant tea and bio pesticides," he said. The institute also highlighted the patented and trademark technology invented by the institute to isolate and extract DNA from any tree species, including dry species. "It does not have any biohazardous or chemical compounds," said Modhumitha Dasgupta, scientist at IFGTB. "Extracting DNA from tree species is tricky because tree tissues have metabolites which can make DNA recovery difficult. Our product priced at Rs 95 per reaction is one third cost of other products," she said. IFGTB also released a home garden kit which will consist of thulasi plant, okhra plant, okhra seeds, tree rich biobooster and biopesticide.

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