

BITS opens door to BIRAC BioNest incubator

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BITS Pilani, Goa Campus at Sancoale, recently launched an incubator-BIRAC BioNest Innovation Lab. Inaugurated by Prof Varun Sahni, vice-chancellor, Goa University, the incubator is set up with financial support of Rs three crores from Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), new Delhi.

The incubation's thrust area will be healthcare and environment. It is expected to give incubation support to entrepreneurs by providing them equipment, space and supporting facilities to test ideas, prototype in the lab and take to the market.

In his inaugural address, Sahni emphasized on the role of interdisciplinary research for innovations and welcomed joint research by Goa University and BITS faculty members. Prof. Raghurama G director, BITS Pilani, said that, the facility would aim to solve the pressing environmental problems of the country and give affordable sustainable solutions in healthcare.

Prof. Mridula Goel, incubator in-charge, invited scientists and startups from the state to use the facility to take their ideas to proof of concept. She said that, incubatees would be provided technical guidance technical directors- Prof. Sunil Bhand, professor of chemistry and Prof. Srikanth Mutnuri, head of biological sciences department.

Dr Manish Diwan, head of strategic partnership & entre-



Prof. Srikanth Mutnuri explaining the facility to Prof. Varun Sahni, Dr. Shekhar Salkar and Prof. Raghurama G

preneurship development, BIRAC, explained how the journey from ideation to commercialization involves solid teamwork and harnessing mutual advantages. The inauguration was followed by a panel discussion on "Opportunities in Healthcare" with Dr N Sriram, director, Molbio Diagnostics, Dr Shekhar Salkar, head of oncology department, Manipal Hospitals, Dr. Praveen Khullar, head of global development center, Sanofi-Synthelabo and Vibhav Joshi, the co-founder of Sattva Medtech along with Dr. Diwan.



Varun Sahni, vice chancellor, Goa University, inaugurating the incubator facility