

After tapping silicon valley, TN eyes Tamil diaspora in 38 countries

The association is participating in this event, as the US Desk for Guidance agency is set to support and promote the startup ecosystem.



Published: 27th October 2020 04:59 AM | Last Updated: 27th October 2020 04:59 AM



By C Shivakumar

Express News Service

CHENNAI: After reaching out to the Tamil diaspora in the US, the State is planning to expand the ‘Yaadhum Oore Global Conclave’ initiative, the brainchild of Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami, to link Tamils from 38 countries through a 3-day virtual programme from on October 29.

Launched in 2019, the initiative has paid rich dividends, as investments started pouring in for the startups chosen by American Tamil Entrepreneurs Association (ATEA), a Tamil diaspora group in US.

ATEA co-founder Lena Kannapan said, “We plan to have major investments in the State from the US diaspora,” while also highlighting the role of State government in promoting US-based startups.

The association is participating in this event, as the US Desk for Guidance agency is set to support and promote the startup ecosystem. Along with the conclave, ATEA is also reinforcing two key programmes — ATEA Digital Accelerator and ATEA MentorConnect. Lena added that majority of those who are keen to invest in the State are from Tier-2 cities.

TN has already received investment from startups in San Jose, which include Srivaru Motors Private Limited, which has proposed to establish a project for making e-bikes at an investment of Rs 150 crore and employment potential for 2,000 people.

The company is in the process of identifying land in Coimbatore. The other major investor is Cloud Enablers, which has planned an Autonomous and Continuous Governance for Enterprise Cloud project with an investment of Rs 35 crore in Chennai.

Prior to 2019, the State struggled to tap into the strength of Tamil diaspora, while neighbouring States like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala were successful in their efforts. “Even the Union government has launched the ‘Pravasi Divas’ (a day to celebrate the contribution of overseas Indians towards the development of India). We later found that among the successful Indians abroad, more than 50 per cent are from TN,” said a top official from Industries Department. The idea behind tapping the Tamil diaspora is to promote the State abroad.

“The diaspora people could be the real ambassadors of the State as they can highlight the strength of TN,” added the official. Initially many in the diaspora, who wanted to start businesses in the State, were dependent on middlemen and brokers. “Now the State wants to be a bridge in promoting the investments from the diaspora,” said the official. The theme for this conclave is “Redefining the engagement with the Tamil diaspora”. AR RM Arun, President, South Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) said that the conclave will be inaugurated by Palaniswami, where a Coffee table book will be launched.