

# Avinashilingam Institute launches Sisal Centre to boost rural livelihoods and sustainable growth

COIMBATORE, JUN 4:

Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women inaugurated the Centre for Sustainable Sisal Systems (C3S) at its Campus II on Wednesday, marking a significant step towards promoting sustainable agriculture, rural entrepreneurship and community development.

The Centre has been established as a pioneering research and outreach initiative aimed at advancing sisal cultivation, value addition and livelihood opportunities in rural areas.

The inauguration function was presided over by Dr. T.S.K. Meenakshisundaram, Chancellor and Managing Trustee of the Institute. In his address, he lauded the initiative and congratulated the team involved in establishing the Centre. Dr. V. Bharathi Harishankar, Vice-Chancellor, welcomed the gathering and highlighted that the Centre reflected the successful realisation of the institution's "lab to land and land to market" vision.



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The Centre was formally inaugurated by Dr. N. Kalaiselvi, Director General of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Secretary, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Government of India. In her inaugural address, Dr. N. Kalaiselvi underscored the importance of sustainable natural fibre systems, innovation-driven rural development and the role of academic institutions in developing socially relevant technologies. She stated that

Avinashilingam Institute would serve as the South Indian hub of the National Sisal Mission, taking a leading role in its promotion, outreach and implementation. She said the University would function as the central hub, working collaboratively with partner institutions, organisations and stakeholders as spokes to expand the reach and impact of the Sisal Mission across the region.

Dr. Thallada Bhaskar, Director of CSIR-Advanced Materials and Processes Research Institute (AMPRI),

Bhopal, felicitated the initiative and highlighted the immense potential of sisal-based industries in strengthening India's bioeconomy and creating sustainable livelihoods for rural communities.

Established in collaboration with CSIR-AMPRI under the National Sisal Mission, the Centre is anchored on a dedicated 10-acre sisal farm at Campus II. It will focus on cultivation of Agave sisalana, fibre extraction, product development, value



addition, research, training and extension activities. Through research, training and extension programmes, the Centre aims to create a model ecosystem connecting farmers, researchers, industry partners and local communities.

A key feature of the Centre is its strong community engagement component. It will work closely with National Service Scheme (NSS) volunteers and extend its outreach to the 26 villages adopted by the institution, supporting farmer livelihoods,

skill development, entrepreneurship and rural capacity building.

The programme commenced with a prayer by the Department of Music. Dr. H. Indu, Registrar, delivered the welcome address, while Dr. R. Vanithamani, Coordinator of C3S, proposed the vote of thanks. The inauguration marks another milestone in the Institute's efforts to integrate research, sustainability and social responsibility for the benefit of rural communities and the nation.