**PRESS RELEASE**

**Kerala CM to inaugurate ‘Huddle Global’ meet on Feb. 19**

* ***KSUM’s startup summit to look at way forward in post-pandemic world***

**Thiruvananthapuram, Feb. 11**: Kerala’s robust strides in startup ecosystem and innovation will be on full display at the third edition of the annual ‘Huddle Global’ conference, which gets underway here on February 19, offering a platform for startups to showcase their products and interact with a clutch of technology and industry leaders on ways to move ahead in the post-pandemic world.

Chief Minister Shri Pinarayi Vijayan will inaugurate the two-day virtual event, billed as one of Asia’s largest startup ecosystem congregations and India's biggest networking platform for entrepreneurs.

The big-ticket brainstorming event, organised by the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM), will focus on business, investment and partnership opportunities for startups in a world that is grappling with unwelcome repercussions of the COVID pandemic.

Minister for Industries, Law and Coir Shri P. Rajeeve will preside over the inaugural ceremony that commences at 9 am.

A Blockchain Summit has been planned as part of the conference on the concluding day.

The event will set the stage for a meeting of globally-known startup founders, mentors, investors, industry leaders and representatives of government departments to deliberate a whole range of issues relating to startup ecosystem with a global perspective.

The online conclave will primarily look into the scope of entrepreneurial opportunities across the world and explore the availability of financial and technical backing for startups to accelerate their growth and reach.

The event features keynote sessions, leadership talks, tech talks, startup demo and other business-oriented activities. Startup expo of both global and Kerala-based startups is also organized along with pitch sessions and dedicated mentoring sessions, which will be led by about 30 mentors. Startups will sign MoUs with Google, Habitat, Jetro, Global Accelerator Network, I Hub Gujarat, NASSCOM and CSL etc. at the conference.

“This edition of Huddle Global has been planned on a bigger scale to look into the whole gamut of issues and opportunities concerning the ecosystem from a global perspective,” said Shri John M Thomas, CEO, KSUM.

“The role of startups has become increasingly vital in a world where technology and innovation are the driving force of developmental initiatives. We have invited world leaders to the event as that will help forge cross border partnerships and development initiatives,” he noted.

The event is being held on a platform created by KSUM to accommodate more than 2,000 people. Kerala IT Parks are also joining hands with KSUM in the conference.

Eminent startup founders and influencers in the ecosystem, who will be addressing various sessions at the conference, include Mr. Alderman Vincent Keaveny, The Lord Mayor of the City of London and partner in business law firm DLA Piper; Mrs Daisy Chittilappally, President, Cisco India and SAARC; Mr Roberto Croci, MD, Microsoft for Startups in Middle East Africa (MEA); Mr. Aman Gupta, Co-Founder and CMO, Boat, Shark Tank India; Mr. Sanjeev Bikhchandani, Co-Founder, Info Edge; Mr. Durgesh Kaushik, MD-India, Snapchat; Mr. Amit Kumar Agarwal, Founder and CEO, NoBroker.com; and Dr. Kingshuk Banerjee, Senior Vice President, Hitachi.

KSUM, the nodal agency of the Kerala Government for entrepreneurship development and incubation activities in the state, has been organising ‘Huddle Kerala’ since 2018. It is one of the major startup conferences of the country that brings together all the stakeholders in the ecosystem.

More than 5,000 startups from across the country have already participated in the event with wide participation from investors, government, academia and industry community.

For more details and registration for public participation, visit: [*https://huddleglobal.co.in/*](https://huddleglobal.co.in/)

**Ends**