

'We aim at empowering agriculture with biotechnology'

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Dublin's Science Gallery International has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Karnataka state government to set up Asia's first science gallery in Bengaluru's IISC campus. The gallery will exhibit innovations and latest developments in the field of science.

Speaking to *BioSpectrum* at the signing event, Mr SR Patil, minister, IT, BT, S&T revealed a few initiatives undertaken by the government to foster the agricultural sector of India.

Q. What are your unique plans to develop science and technology in India?

India is an agricultural country and 70 percent of our people still rely on it. Development of the agricultural sector of the country will be a hallmark approach towards making India a developed country. The economy of the country too, largely depends on the agricultural sector. We are planning to revolutionize the practices through biotech-led innovations and research. The country is aiming at forming an Agro-Biotech Vision group that will nurture the Indian agricultural sector with biotechnology solutions and improve the economy.

The vision will encourage biotech research in innovations by providing funding and expertise to enhance research in the agro-biotech field, thus empowering farmers with biotech supported agriculture. We will harness the power of biotechnology in solving major agricultural problems and also develop innovative solutions to foster the agro sector in India.

Q. What will the main focus of the Agro- Biotech vision group?

In the past, the intersection of biotechnology and agriculture has led to unique crops like Bt Cotton that had huge financial benefits as it prevented crop failures by protecting them from boll disease. Keeping the interest of the society in mind we aim at bringing in biotechnology-led solutions to solve agricultural problems. We are planning to develop safe and better biotech solutions for agriculture that can help in boosting innovations and encouraging biotech-led agriculture in the country.