

## Today's Paper » NATIONAL

Published: November 28, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: November 28, 2012 05:06 IST

### Prathibha scholarship programme launched

Special Correspondent

*Chandy stresses need to attract youngsters to science*



Fostering talent: Chief Minister Oommen Chandy, K. Muraleedharan, MLA; DRDO project director Tessy Thomas, and Kerala State Council for Science Technology and Environment executive-vice president V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai at the launching of the council's Prathibha Scholarship Scheme in Thiruvananthapuram on Tuesday.—Photo: C. Ratheesh Kumar

Chief Minister Oommen Chandy has stressed the need to encourage more students and young researchers in Kerala to take to science as a career.

Speaking after inaugurating the Prathibha scholarship programme launched by the Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment (KSCSTE) here on Tuesday, he said the quality of basic science education was a key factor in attracting youngsters to science.

“The quality of scientific research is an indicator of development and economic progress. Though Kerala has achieved remarkable progress in literacy, it has lagged in development. There is a need to equip human resource to address this issue.”

The Chief Minister said the Start-up Village project had given a fillip to student entrepreneurship in Kerala. Hundreds of college students have responded to the government initiative.

Mr. Chandy said the Central government move to take over the Centre for Earth Science Studies (CESS) was a recognition to the research work done by the institute. He complimented Ajayaghosh, outstanding scientist at the National Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies (NIIST) who won the Infosys award for 2012.

The Prathibha scholarship is aimed at encouraging school students to pursue higher education in science and take up scientific research as a career. The scheme is designed to identify and nurture a core group of students to pursue higher studies in basic and natural sciences (B.Sc. degree/Integrated M.Sc. degree course) at universities or institutions in India.

Scholarships are offered for students who have qualified meritoriously in the Higher Secondary examination in science subjects from any of the boards of education – CBSE, State Board, or CISCE – from Kerala.

Mr. Chandy also launched a website for online registration of women scientists in Kerala. .

Tessy Thomas, Project Director, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), initiated the database. K. Muraleedharan, MLA, presided over the function.

V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai, executive vice-president, KSCSTE; K.R. Lekha, Head, Women Scientists' Division, KSCSTE; K.K. Ramachandran, member-secretary, KSCSTE, and Prameela Devi, member, Kerala State Women's Commission, spoke.