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To
The Editor,

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Sir,

I request that the following matter may kindly be published in your esteemed daily:

TNAU organizes conference on “Sustainable utilization of tropical plant biomass: biocatalysts, bioproducts and biorefinery (SutB⁴)”

Increasing energy requirement and fastest depletion of fossil fuel, had forced the nations to develop energy from sustainable and renewable energy resources. In this context, biomass are the cheapest among the candidates and are available locally in plenty, requires less capital investments for conversion, reduces green house gas emissions and create employment opportunities in rural areas. Successful and economical biological conversion of lignocellulosics to fuels and chemicals under biorefinery approach depends on key technologies in the production pathway and a major role is held by biocatalysts. Apart from biofuels production from tropical biomass, resource recovery of the non-cellulosic component of biomass such as lignin and hemicelluloses would make the process economical. Above all, cellulosic derived materials and fine chemicals are ranked top and becomes feed stocks for various chemical and pharma industries benefitting humans and society. In the light of these, an international conference on Sustainable Utilization of Tropical Plant Biomass: Biocatalysts, Bioproducts and Biorefinery (SutB⁴) from biomass was organised by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University from 17th to 18th November 2016 at Radisson Blu Hotel, Coimbatore. Dr. K. Ramasamy, Vice-Chancellor, TNAU was the chairman of the conference and Dr. U. Sivakumar (Professor, TNAU) was the organizing secretary of the conference. The conference was funded by state and central government organizations.

The present conference was organised with an aim to provide a scientific forum involving experts from international arena as well as national level for addressing utilization of tropical biomass for nutraceuticals and pharmaceuticals with a focus on involvement of novel biocatalysts and their role in bioconversion of biomass, important bioproducts derived from biomass and how the integration of many value-added components to the biomass utilization program would improve the biobased economy of biorefinery. This conference brought together stakeholders and biomass

specialists for informal networking, program planning and formal educational opportunities that will meet effective biomass utilization. Finally, the issues and challenges in biomass utilization will be resolved as recommendation for implementation which will be passed on to the government and policy makers.

The conference theme areas are Biomass and Process Engineering (BPE), Biocatalysts and Extremozymes (BCE), Fermentation and Metabolic Engineering (FME) and Bioproducts: Food and Pharma (BFP). Around the globe about 300 participants registered in the conference and 30 key speakers from different countries like India, Srilanka, Russia, Sweden, Ireland, United Kingdom will deliver lectures on the recent developments and updates on the utilization of tropical biomass and biorefinery approach towards improving the economy of the whole process. Oral, poster pitch and poster presentations have been arranged under the conference theme areas. This international conference facilitate the participation of young and talented researchers from colleges, universities, research institutes and industries in tandem with associated policy makers and promote interaction among them. Interaction between the participants and experts will be encouraged through question and answer sessions and panel discussion in various theme areas. In addition round table and workshop had been arranged on feed stock issues, thermophilic enzymes, biorefinery and biomass derived products. In short, this conference will offer a novel educational opportunity, which will address important biorefinery-associated issues and provide state of the art view of this emerging field.

Public Relations Officer