

“Leadership and Innovation: Ideas for India”

With

Sam Pitroda

9:00 am to 10:30 am, 25 January, 2012

Travancore Hall, Technopark, Thiruvananthapuram

With “leadership, innovation and ideas” playing an important role as a lever in country’s success graph, Aspen Institute India in collaboration with Group of Technology Companies organized a session with Mr. Sam Pitroda, Adviser to the Prime Minister of India on Public Information Infrastructure and Innovations. Mr. Shaffi Mather, Fellow, Aspen India Leadership Initiative and Advocate, Supreme Court of India, Public Policy Analyst, Entrepreneur and Mr. V. K. Mathews, President, Group of Technology Companies also participated in the discussion.



Mr. Mathews started the discussion by highlighting the challenges the IT industry is facing. He said that “during the last 30 years, the IT industry has grown but still resources are becoming scarce.” He also added that another major cause of concern is that the western world is becoming more and more protective. Today, we need systems that support “innovations”. What is required for innovations is an eco-system, a mindset and all of it would require investments.

Interacting with entrepreneurs and students, Mr. Pitroda said “the idea is to build an innovation culture. The leaders should think out of the box and should be ready to take risks.”

Mr. Pitroda in this discussion urged young leaders, entrepreneurs and students to work towards building innovation as the latest culture in the country. He said that it will only be innovation that will take the country to dizzying heights. He said “We are living in very

exciting times. Evolution of Internet has brought one of the biggest revolutions in the world. Today Internet is bringing the entire global community together and this offers very different ways of looking at challenges ahead of us. The solutions for these challenges need to be thought out innovatively. Innovation offers unique opportunity to change the paradigm of conventional development. The government is also trying to bring innovation in the way it conducts a nation and the seed for the same has already been sown in various areas of e-governance, banking, health, education, etc.”

Mr. Pitroda called for bringing out new innovations, dismantle and kill old systems of working. He said “good ideas are the key to success. Imagination is more powerful than knowledge”. He also added that people with great ideas will definitely have the opportunity to implement their ideas with the right funding. But he felt that the country had a dearth of domain expertise and that was a major challenge for the economy’s growth. “We are growing at over 8% and have over 550 million youngsters below the age of 25 and lot of interesting technologies that offer unique ways to address situations and concerns. The country has got the right ingredients ready and all we need to use it in the right measure to turn into a reckoning power and make India a leader globally.

Mr. Pitroda highlighted on how leadership is a catalyst and a source of creativity and innovation. He said, with the internet bringing the entire global community together, there is a high potential for innovation and the opportunity to change the paradigm of conventional development ought to be changed.

He also added that, as a nation, India has got what it takes to build a great power to itself; all what is needed of our leaders is the statesmanship of a higher order to ensure that various pieces of the nation-building puzzle fall in the right places.

In order to know more about this discussion, please click on the video link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V100pneyMP8&list=UUlvdd1ncT8Z9OtE6gEXc8HQ&index=1&feature=plcp>