

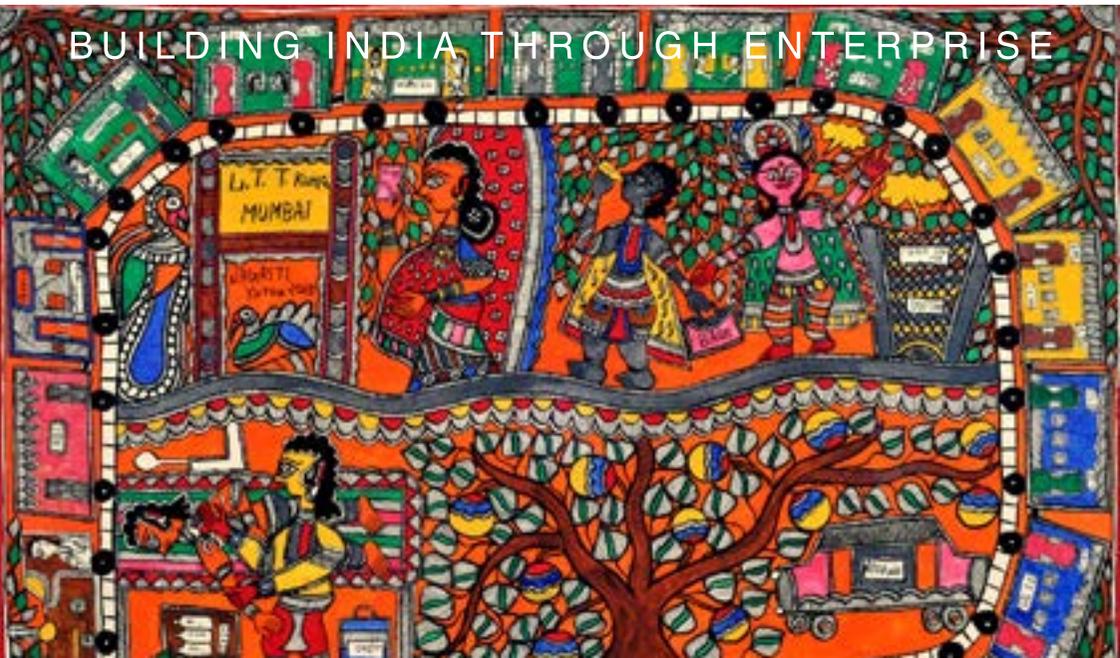
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Yatra Saar



BUILDING INDIA THROUGH ENTERPRISE





Jagriti Yatra

2013

INTRODUCTION

From the Jagriti Yatra Team

This has been a 6th consecutive Yatra for the Jagriti Yatra team and a 6th consecutive Yatra Saar from our Yatris. We are publishing this version of the Yatra Saar one month after Republic Day - a time when the entire nation stands united - to remind ourselves of the power of team-work and unity that we deeply experienced on the Yatra.

Like every Yatra, the 2013 Yatra had its share of challenges. The visit to Vijayawada was unexpected and the team had to pull together to create a relevant programme for Yatris. Our delay in arriving at Madurai was unfortunate and we had to dart in and out of Aravind Eye Care. Our communication lines inside the train were cut and we had to work together to maintain smoothness in operations. But through thick and thin, Yatris and the team stuck together, reminding ourselves that the challenges of running the Yatra were similar to those we would face in running an enterprise in this country. The team also showed its entrepreneurial spirit in new innovations - like wi-fi run radio transmitter which allowed us to translate content for non-Hindi and non-English speaking Yatris; and through the implementation of existing innovations in catering, crowd management, housekeeping etc

For the first time, the team conducted a Youth Pulse poll which showed that over 50% of Yatris are motivated to start commercial/social enterprises and would do so in the next 10 years. Yatra 2013 also saw a more structured approach to the business plan competition (Biz Gyan Tree) - which took inputs from the world-famous 'start-up weekend' model.

During this Yatra, Yatris met thought leaders like Subroto Bagchi, grassroots leaders like Joe Madiath and inspiring souls like Anshu Gupta; they interacted with grandmothers in Tilonia and villagers in Deoria; and learned from Yatri stories like Sangeeta Devi and Aarti Devi.

This Yatra Saar will try and capture the churning and experiences on the Yatra. For the Yatri, it will act as a reminder of the 15 days spent at home on a moving train. For the reader, it will offer some insight into the Yatra spirit.

As we conclude, we request our readers to view this document through the lens of 450 Yatris - as a collection of multiple insights collated in a very short span of time.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Buddha and his disciple, Anand, were on a walk. They met three men, one after another, and Buddha asked questions about God's existence.

The first man said that he believed in his existence. Buddha said to him, "There was no God and this is all complete nonsense". The second man said that he didn't believe in God's existence - to which Buddha replied, "No, no! God is all around us, look for him." And when the third said he was unsure of His existence, Buddha said, "I am also on the lookout for God; if you meet him let me know."

Anand was curious and appalled as he came across these replies. In fact, he was annoyed and asked what was going on with all the different replies. Buddha smiled and replied, "The moment I tell them whether God exists or not, they will start believing in my words and won't look for answers. Their search would stop. So, I allowed them to look for the answers by asking them to go out and explore."

Jagrati Yatra exemplifies the kind of exploration Buddha is talking about. We could have sat in an auditorium with all the comforts of an AC and invited speakers: but that would have kept our mind in chains. Our search would have stopped there itself. But the real exploration lies beyond these comforts, into the unknown.

Exploration has long been associated with innovation, moving out of our comfort zones and putting ourselves in unknown places. Exploration is what prepares a person for becoming an entrepreneur, throwing away fear and developing one's own will-power. Jagrati Yatra was our journey in entrepreneurial learning through exploration.

As we journeyed for almost 9,000 kms by train and on buses, we saw opportunities to serve society. We saw real people make sustained efforts in verticals (sectors) where change is needed. As we travelled, there was deep introspection and an arising agitation in the mind. We were exposed to many truths in their bare naked form but were also inspired to embed HOPE into the future: for every success story is a balance between Truth and Hope.

This confrontation with reality and our meeting with 'doers' has left an impact on our minds; and many of us, whether already entrepreneurs or aspiring to be, have decided to contribute to nation-building. Our nation has had its share of thinkers. Our nation has had its share of protest. Our nation has had its share of problems. It is time to put a brick in the damaged wall rather than critiquing the eroding colors of paint.

The immediate aim of the Yatra is somewhat achieved, but the larger aim of building this beautiful nation is ahead of us. Some of us have already started planting our ideas. Some have started exploring ways to connect to Middle India and serve it. A true definition of a Yatri is fulfilled when he/she creates more than he/she consumes and when (s)he builds more than (s)he criticizes. Let's together, build India block by block.

Editorial team

JOURNEYS TO BUILD NATIONS

Shashank Mani, Chairman, Jagrati Yatra

Jagrati Yatra is a train journey that circumnavigates India in a specially chartered train with 450 young participants on board. It covers over 8,000 km crossing 12 rivers and 4 mountain ranges. Participants come from smaller towns and villages of India and approximately 40% are women. The journey introduces them to iconic role models who are building India bottom up. Jagrati seeks to build India through enterprise, and sends a message that young citizens can find purpose and meaning through travel and exploration.



For the past 5 years, every December, we experience the adventure of a national expedition, laced with humanity and humour. Back in 2008, as the train hurtled down to the south of India, we failed to stop twice to pick up a national award-winning role model. When we finally got him on board, his natural annoyance turned into a wry smile as he entered our 17 bogie train and sighted a 200 seater common room and shower cabins. The clatter of our catering staff with a 24 x 7 mandate to feed a virtual army on the move is worth witnessing; the constant background hum of walkie-talkie conversations that inform our days and nights; our unique New Years celebration - swaying to the rhythm of a moving train; our teams gritty resolve not to be deterred when the

Mumbai train station was hit by terrorists a few weeks before our first Yatra. Underlying the Yatra is a strong belief that to build a country of substance, we must have the courage to venture out and discover the India of small towns and villages where 70% of India still resides.

The Yatra is a celebration of our vast and amazingly beautiful country, as we circle this largest democracy in the world. Over the past 5 years the Yatra covered over 40,000 km which happens to be circumference of the earth. But more than the physical journey, the Yatra celebrates the inspirational human stories that bind India as a nation. Let me introduce you to two such individuals who have inspired me as I travelled with them.

Savita Munde came to the Yatra from Vadali village of Buldhana district in Maharashtra. A young lady with a beaming smile, she got elected to be the Sarpanch or village head at the age of 21. She brought to the Yatra a quiet dignity that characterizes village life. On returning to her village, she brought back the mantra of enterprise to a reluctant community long dependent on government aid, and set up an Agro Processing unit. This was her way of telling her village that enterprise and self help can transform her region.

Every year we look forward to meeting Joe Madiath, who leads Gram Vikas; an organization focused on water and sanitation. We meet him in the deepest forests of Orissa. Joe is originally from Kerala, became the president of Madras University, but chose Orissa as his place of service for the last 30 years. Neat and clean houses that line his tribal villages have 100% sanitation. His humour and languid wit belie the urgency in his voice when he says that the poor do not need poor

solutions.

The only night spent off the train is in the village of Barpar, known for a 200 year old banyan tree. Participants experience the bone chilling cold of a north Indian village in early January as they sleep on a mattress of straw. They get up early to the task of creating business plans on areas like Healthcare, Energy, Agro industries that will bring about rural development.

The journey ends in Sabarmati ashram with a valedictory function where we are blessed by the spirit of Gandhi at a place he called home.

On his return from South Africa, Mahatma Gandhi too set out to discover India in a train. He was following in the Indian tradition of Yatras which are undertaken to places called tirtha's, which translates to crossing points or fords. Yatras are often taken by the ordinary men and women who travel to show faith and to discover meaning. Much before India was organized by its Emperors and King, it had been defined by its citizen pilgrim, the Yatri. Travellers to India have remarked at the cultural unity they perceive in this diverse land. Well, the ordinary Yatris over thousands of years of travel have to be given credit for this as they criss-crossed this country and made it whole.

Nations have also been re-defined by critical journeys that form collective crossing points. Let me catalogue three national journeys in USA, China and India that have served as crossing points at the birth of these nation states.

In 1804 the Lewis and Clark expedition was flagged off by Thomas Jefferson and covered over 14,000 kilometres, re-mapping the US west for what later became the USA. The journey laid US claims on this vast land mass and re-defined and institutionalized the pioneering spirit that opened up the west.

The Long March of China was a seminal journey where an 80,000 strong Red army was decimated to a mere 10,000 as they fought a rearguard action against Chang Kai Shek's

forces; and to frostbite. Much of the lore of Communist victory, Mao's willpower and the adage that 'power comes from the barrel of a gun' was shaped by this journey and still influences the self image of modern China.

Many in this hall know of the Dandi march. A 350 km walk by Gandhi from Sabarmati to Dandi, swelled into thousands and later millions and spread across the country in the form of Salt Satyagrahs. This march moved the freedom struggle from comfortable drawing rooms in Delhi and Mumbai to small towns and villages of our country. The power of thousands of ordinary men and women on the move also re-defined the equation with the British Empire. Gandhi famously quipped with his toothy smile - 'we are in charge'.

Today, the world many not need exploration in opening new frontiers like the Lewis & Clark expedition, the military escape of the Long March or the attempt to throw out a colonial regime. But collective journey's that showcase a purpose driven approach can create new crossing points for young nations.

As a relatively young nation India is being re-built by its citizens across all those 28 states from where our participants come from. Through successive Yatras the participants, our 2,200 strong alumni and those who witness the journey are attempting to forge a new identity for themselves and the country. An identity that moves beyond grant and subsidies to self help, an identity where an emerging middle class is not seen as job seekers, they are seen as job creators; an identity where change is celebrated and women in particular lead it; an identity which moves beyond protest to building.

Many developing nations like India, China, Brazil, in Africa and Latin America where almost 4 billion of the 7 billion humans of this planet reside are attempting a building process unprecedented in their scale and scope. India alone will build 56 smart cities over the next 10 years. But we seldom see

this because we focus on the few who protest, often in city squares. These are the Jasmine revolution, Tahir square, Jantar Mantar events that get significant column inches. Nation building in these countries is being pushed back as national dialogue is limited to the easy sentiment of protest, often against an ineffective government. We see this in Brazil today with a genuine clash of purpose - excessive dependence on a government which is not equipped to build. When Governments don't deliver to a modern day promise and the elite are insular to the rest, youth feel particularly let down. This manifests itself in the urge to take to the street, or sometimes even to the gun.

But journey's to build nations provide us an alternative viewpoint. By taking participants out of their context, shaking them intellectually, physically and emotionally, they are reminded of their duty to their place of return. By travelling with inspiring co-travellers like Savita they invoke dignity, discipline and humility. By showcasing the work of visionaries like Madiath in the interiors of a nation they highlight enterprise in smaller towns and villages. In this process young men and women are exposed to a more fundamental human urge - to build. The act of building, much like setting out on an Yatra is difficult, often starts slowly, needs long term discipline of enterprise creation, but once started can lead to lifelong meaning. It can provide a positive outlet where the young see life beyond the prism of protest.

Journey's to build nations through enterprise are starting to happen across the world. Whether they become collective crossing points; only time will tell. A Yatri from 2009 went back to the USA and has forged a train journey that reverses the Lewis and Clark expedition, from San Francisco to Washington with 40 entrepreneurs. Similarly Yatris from Odisha and Himachal Pradesh in India have done smaller Yatras, and Yatris in France, Ghana, South Africa and other nations are gearing up for their own Yatras. They are realizing that

citizenship has to be broader than voting; it has to graduate to building. They are realizing that protest may be required to bring down ancien regimes, but cannot provide long term locomotion to a nation. The building message on the other hand can give youth a talisman that Mahatma Gandhi would be proud of - even in a small spinning wheel lie the threads of dignity, self help and enterprise.

Journeys bring the realization that ours is a shared destiny. A future that is greater than the sum of our pasts. This was brought into sharp realization by that one journey of exploration that still continues for human kind - to outer space. When astronauts on the Apollo 8 went to explore the moon to prepare for the moon landing, they turned their cameras towards earth. And at that moment they were struck by the beauty and harmony of our own planet.

Only by leaving what you are comfortable with, do you realize that your home needs to be nurtured and built afresh.

YATRI ALUMNI WHO WORK WITH ROLE MODELS

Shweta Rao, Jagriti Yatra 2011

1. Tell us something about your background and how you landed at Barefoot College.

It was through Jagriti Yatra that I got a chance to visit Barefoot College for the first time in 2012. I was looking forward for this particular role model visit, because we had read about Tilonia in our CBSE Hindi textbook. Well, Barefoot College is too broad a concept to be understood in just a day's visit. It was two months later, in March, that I decided to visit again and write my Master's thesis on the role of traditional media and solar engineering programme. I stayed in the Barefoot campus for a week, understood more about the nature of work, their community, the people and how they come together to materialize the vision of Mr. Bunker Roy through Barefoot approach. I went back with lots of learnings which made me think about starting my career with Barefoot College. I wrote to them and luckily they accepted. I initially joined for a period of six months not knowing how difficult or different my life would be. But I found a new family here. And I could never leave this place after six months. It has been one and half years now and I guess I am going to be here for a while.

2. So, what are your working conditions, working hours and what are the projects that you're putting your energy in?

The working hours are generally from 9 am to 5 pm. But for me its not time bound and since the work is often interesting, I tend to stay up late in the nights too. My first project was designing a training manual for the Barefoot Solar Engineers. That was a big learning in itself because I do not come from any technical/ electronics background. But when I saw these women with no educational qualification, learning everything from circuit making to installing the entire home lighting system, I thought why not me! Two of my

college friends (Gowtham and Rajesh) assisted me in designing the manual. When we started working on it, we had more text and few pictures to support the content. But after several discussions with Bunker Ji, Meagan, Bhagwat Nandan Ji, and all master trainers, we arrived at a conclusion of using only pictures as a visual tool to explain every process of Solar Engineering. We had to let go of the methodology we were using which meant discarding three months of work and restarting it with a new approach of turning the book into a visual picture story. We looked at it as another learning of not getting emotionally attached to our efforts so much that it becomes a hindrance to the final output. It took almost 8 months to finish the manual, which definitely proved to be a good support and reference material to the Barefoot Solar Engineers.

At Barefoot, it's never a specific one kind of job that one does. Everybody plays versatile roles. I also get involved with many activities, which vary from one department to another. For instance, I who had no idea about craft section before, got involved with the preparation of exhibition held at Bangalore and it was fun working both in terms of learning and the excellent exhibition that we all managed to put up for a week in Bangalore. The current project that I am a part of is called Khamayati. It is an effort to support and facilitate the musicians to showcase their music by documenting and using modern methods to reach out to newer audience all over the world. We recently launched our new website <http://khamayati.org/> during the 10th Lok Utsav organized at Barefoot College from 1st Feb - 4th Feb 2014. This website records the vibrant repertoire and enables lovers of this great tradition to connect directly with musicians. The project will look at their music, and the community's socio-economic conditions. It will help create

a better environment for developing their musical tradition. The Khamayati team works under the guidance of Ms. Aruna Roy. Barefoot College, was initiated into understanding this extraordinary musical tradition, and collaborated with Rupayan Sansthan and Komal Kothari in organizing Lok Utsavs since 1984. Komalda was the touchstone for these activities. He always provided space for discussion so that the artists and performers could participate in discussions about their own problems.

The biggest opportunity that I have got here is a chance to work and learn directly under the guidance of Mr. Bunker Roy and Ms. Aruna Roy. While Bunker Ji believes in us and gives us freedom to experiment and work on our ideas, Ms. Aruna Roy is like an affectionate grandmother to all of us, who constantly shapes us into becoming a better person.

3. As far as we know, the remunerations at Barefoot are bare minimum; how do you manage with such little amount of money?

Yes, the remuneration at Barefoot College is bare minimum. It's the daily wage that all of us earn here which is based on equality and removing the disparity in salary structure.

But it is also a conscious decision that I have made, to leave behind the comfortable life of a city and work in rural India. So I think I am prepared to deal with the situation and manage with the little resource that I earn.

4. What are the most-important lessons you have learnt from this work-experience and how has it changed you as a human being?

The way entire system runs here is a miracle in itself. Tilonia has its own pace and its own approach of making things happen. It abandons all the mainstream assumptions, which define the stereotyped version of running any system. For example, professionals such as doctors, teachers, and architects who have degrees but have no experience or understanding to deal with grass

root problems. The solutions they bring are often top down and not sustainable. Instead, a local mid wife, or local teacher would be more capable of dealing the problems using the traditional knowledge that he/she learns from the community. Such solutions are always simple, bottom up, and sustainable because there is no dependency from any external agency.

Unlearning and relearning has been one of my biggest lessons here. Everyday here is new and offers something interesting to learn from. Being a part of the Tilonia community for one and half years has definitely had a huge impact on me and has changed my perspective in several ways. Letting go of the narrow educational approach we have been taught and relearning it through practical experience by getting inspiration from the local people who have been making history since forty years.

5. How was your JY experience back in 2011 as a Yatri? Would you like to come back on the train and share your experience in coming editions?

For me it all started with Jagriti Yatra, when I realized about the kind of work different organizations are doing in rural India. And every time someone asks me about how I landed at Barefoot, the answer goes back to explaining this extraordinary train journey that introduced me to Tilonia for the first time. And this connection can never be erased from the story of my life. It has been a pleasure to welcome all the yatris at Tilonia for two consecutive years. But given a chance, I would definitely like to be a part of this journey again.

6. What are the best things about living in Tilonia or any general village for that matter?

People, the practical knowledge they have, their consumption habits which is bare minimum unlike the over- consumption attitude of city dwellers, peaceful environment, pitch dark nights with star studded sky, beautiful sun-set and the Aravalis, Bansji ji's mithai ki dukan (sweet shop) and the big Tilonia family.

Harshie Wahie, Jagriti Yatra 2011

1. Tell us something about your background and how you landed at Goonj?

I belong to the hills of Uttarakhand, namely Mussoorie where I have the memories of my school days. My studies took me first to Chandigarh for graduation and then to Delhi where I completed the most sought after course known as Masters of Business Administration i.e MBA.

During my MBA days, for the first time, I came across the term “social entrepreneurship” which sounded very fascinating. The more I learned, the more interesting it turned out. A friend told me about Jagriti Yatra, a unique way to explore this country via a train journey, and I was soon sure that I will be a part of the same. It is through role model visits during the yatra, where I came to know about Goonj. However, never knew then that I would be joining this organization after few months.

Settling down and coming back to the normal life after Yatra, I was engaged in helping a girl from interior part of Bihar with her basic English and computer skills. It occurred to my mind that she would learn and explore more at Goonj. So, I took her to Goonj’s office and processing center. But to my utter surprise, instead of her, I was the one who joined Goonj full time.

I will soon complete three years@Goonj, but I still wonder how Goonj “just happened” in my life. I never went with an intention to join the team, but it was just a moment, a minute where I took this decision and am continuing till now.

2. How’s Goonj a very unique NGO doing extraordinary work?

Some insights here -

- Goonj along with its hardcore work has been able to focus on most common yet ignored issues - receiver’s dignity, clothing, Menstrual Hygiene which was not heard of before..

- No fundraising department yet. Has been sustained through people’s trust
- No cost on advertising yet - has been spread through word of mouth & volunteers
- People are taken to join the team formally - based upon their zeal for the cause. Qualifications sometimes are not even referred to.
- An organization that thinks that skills can be inculcated in an individual - therefore, the processing unit team is generally taken on the basis of their income level.
- An organization that gives high value to an initiative therefore gives support to even those organizations which are at the initiation stages but talk of change and independence.

In short, the work that Goonj has presented speaks for itself and this makes Goonj an extraordinary organization to work with..

3. What are the working hours, working conditions and the kind of projects that you usually get involved with in your stint at Goonj?

The usual working hours are Monday to Saturday (9.30 am – 5.30 pm). The working conditions are basic and comfortable enough to work properly both at office and field. People at Goonj are considered more as a family, where the personal problems are also discussed and taken care of.

Usually my work involves interaction and coordination in the city - like organizing collection camps, stalls, sessions, exposure visits. I am also looking after the organization mail Id where people write their queries. Apart from this, my job also includes updating facebook with activities and stories from the field/city. Apart from this, various activities come up where the responsibilities extend beyond fixed roles. This is how people at Goonj

multi-task.

4. How right would it be say that Jagriti Yatra changed your life completely?

JY came into my life when I was introspecting about myself and asking “what next”.It helped a lot in shaping up my thought process. Meeting various role models, Yatris, and Yatra team restored the faith that I can look beyond the usually set horizons; and of course later on encouraged me to take the path which was much different from what my friends/relatives and people around me had adopted.

5. What have you learnt from this work-experience and how has it changed you as a person?

Goonj has opened up the world of development sector in front of me, where I have met/known passionate people who are trying to work on the most unconventional issues. It is an inspiration to know about such people. Apart from working and learning from day to day tasks/challenges, Goonj has made me more observant on the issues prevailing in the country and do something on them...Having Goonj as a part of my daily life ensures me to be more receptive and upfront with various situations. Most importantly. It has made me a more conscious citizen of the country.

6. If you had to choose one work from the array of projects that Goonj involved itself into that you think creates the maximum impact and needed our complete attention, which one would that be?

The initiatives viz. cloth for work, School to School, Not just a piece of Cloth and RAHAT are well thought of, equally crucial and need complete attention. The focus should be to take these initiatives to more need based areas in most interior parts of the country. Also, to work on challenges such as transportation and space given the amount of material Goonj deals with.

●●● ROLE MODELS

Bunker Roy, Founder Barefoot College, Tilonia



Sanjit Roy is an amazing person who has connected every dot between literacy & education. Born at Burnpur in West Bengal, Roy went to Doon school and St. Stephen's College and made this shift that has not just changed a small village but several communities all over the world. He made the world believe illiterate or semi-literate grandmothers can be nurtured as scientists, engineers or doctors at Barefoot College in Tilonia, Rajasthan. Popularly known as Bunker Roy after his brother Shankar Roy, he founded the college in 1972 when he accidentally came to solve the problems of drinking water during a survey of water supplies in 100 drought prone areas. He is influenced by the philosophy of Mao Zedong & Mao's Barefoot Doctors. Barefoot College, officially known as Social Work & Research Center (SWRC) caters to solving issues related to drinking water, electricity, health, sanitation & unemployment.

Bunker Roy was awarded with many awards like Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship – 2003, St Andrews Prize for the Environment – 2003, Jamnalal Bajaj Award - 1985 for Outstanding Contribution in Application of Science and Technology for Rural Development, The Stockholm

Challenge Award for Information Technology, the NASDAQ Stock Market Education Award & the Tyler Prize. He has been with Jagriti Yatra as a role model & speaker since its seeds were sown in Azad Bharat Rail Yatra.

Context & Vision

Bunker Roy established Barefoot College, aiming for a self-sustaining village where illiterate or semi-literate villagers are trained to engage in alternative livelihoods. Illiterate or semi-literate grandmothers from several countries come here and become experts in a field of study. They go back after 6 months of training and train others in their own place through the establishment of training centers. They have lit their streets and villages with solar powered lights, significantly transforming their communities. Train the trainers is a concept practiced to bring skill training in villages & Bunker Roy is a pioneer in this method.

Building an Enterprise

Barefoot College takes students -primarily women from remote villages - and teaches them the art of making, installing & repairing solar lamps & water pumps. The participating villagers will decide on the rates of the solar panels & decide on which poor villagers will attend the training.. The college doesn't provide any sort of certificates and the entire process runs on trust & brotherhood. The college has also brilliantly used the native art & craft works by fine tuning the design & presentation & developed those into products for international quality.

Financial Model

It is basically driven by grants but also from proceeds of art & crafts

Impact

Barefoot College is a place in Tilonia, Rajasthan where illiterate women become solar engineers and engage in alternative livelihoods. There are barefoot dentists, barefoot lawyers, barefoot acupuncturists, barefoot graphic artists, architects and so on. Women themselves make solar cookers and lanterns and even low cost sanitary pads - using the technology obtained from Arunachalam Muruganantham of Tamil Nadu - among many other utility objects. There are 13 such barefoot colleges in India in various states, all being run by the graduates of Tilonia College.

Standout Comment

One of the standout comments of Bunker Roy for Yatris: "Sustainability is achieved when the solution comes from within rather from external solutions. There are no urban solutions to rural problems. There are only rural solutions to rural problems."

Subroto Bagchi, Founder, Mindtree.



Subroto Bagchi was born on May 31, 1957. He is an Indian entrepreneur and business leader.

He is best known for co-founding Mindtree Ltd and for being a business author. He studied Political Science at the Utkal University. He had an all through first class career and won several scholarships. In 1974, he underwent training with the Parachute Regiment of the Indian Army and successfully completed the 5 mandatory jumps to earn the "Para Wings". In 1975, he was adjudged the Best NCC Cadet of India at the Republic Day Parade in Delhi where he was awarded the Prime Minister's Cane Honor. In the same year, he won the chancellor's cup as the best debater of the University.

Subroto Bagchi has been the Chief Operating Officer at Mindtree since its inception in 1999. Mindtree was hit by the global economic slowdown and the unfortunate events of 9/11. Many early-stage companies collapsed during this time. Bagchi moved to the US and helped the leadership team stay together through the difficult years. During this time, he articulated a new positioning for Mindtree as the best mid-sized company from India. With dedication and perseverance, this soon became a reality.

Context and Vision

In his own words: "We walk under the shadow of giants". Bagchi realizes the size and potential of his company and his mission is simple - To walk with giants.

Some believe in the power of numbers. Some believe in the power of technology. MindTree believes in the power of people; and the impact that people can have on technology. Their roots grew from the belief that people with diverse points of view could come together to build a different kind of technology company: one that puts people first. And this belief drives their vision for tomorrow - to build technology experts who are focused on one goal: helping their clients succeed. Today, a wealth of information is opening up a world of possibilities. Realizing those possibilities takes more than numbers. It takes more than

technology. It takes people. People who can turn the potential of information into meaningful solutions. Solutions that simplify businesses, improve governments, propel societies forward.

Financial Model

They are a for profit organization. They provide IT solutions to their clients. They provide employment to 11,000 people. They were a \$ 435 million company till the end of the fiscal year 2012-13.

Impact

Having been adjudged the best mid-size company of the country, they provide employment to 11,000 people and bring wealth in the country from across the globe. They provide IT support to many of the Indian companies and are a backbone of the Indian IT sector.

A lot of small IT and software companies are popping up in India - but without the right mentorship and support, they are not able to deliver under tough market conditions. The values and principles showcased by Mindtree offer young and novice companies the right guidance and benchmarks. e.g. MindTree has a proven model code of conduct for its employees which exacts integrity from every employee. They have taken immediate action against defaulters for the smallest and largest of violations committed: showcasing organisational discipline and equal treatment for all.

Feedback

Mindtree, in 14 years, has done a tremendous job and the country really needs such companies to help and support the IT sector of the nation. We need more of such companies. If Mindtree were to nurture small and upcoming companies and help young entrepreneurs to start up, not just with the inspirational books, but through mentorship and acceleration

programs, their contribution to the enterprise ecosystem of India will be much more impactful.

Anshu Gupta, Founder, Goonj



Definition of disaster varies for everyone-for someone Tsunami is a disaster, for someone winter is a disaster. Goonj came into existence in 1999 when Anshu Gupta realized that vast stocks of everyday necessities-from clothes to medicines- lie as idle surplus in the homes of the rich. He thought of converting them into a substantial economic resource for the country by channelling them efficiently to rural people. Anshu is facilitating an economic bridge between urban rich india and impoverished rural India. Goonj uses clothes as a subject, as a tool to meet this goal.

Context & Vision

Working as a relief agent in Uttarkashi in the aftermath of an earthquake, Anshu was moved by the poor condition of rural masses. The sight of an old man working in a field and wearing a sack to cover his upper body haunted Anshu for years. This prompted him to think of cloth as a "subject".

Anshu's vision is to use cloth as a tool for development and for fighting against various problems prevailing in society.

Building an Enterprise

Anshu Gupta started Goonj in 1999 with clothes as an effective entry point. Later on, other items were added to the list. Goonj has a 5 member governing body. Anshu does not believe in hierarchical layers of administration. Goonj now works in almost 21 states across the country. From 67 articles of clothing, Goonj's monthly disbursement has increased to over 10,000 kgs.

Anshu believes in "know thy customer". Anshu ensures that Goonj precisely matches the needs of poor communities, through detailed surveys that carefully analyze the different region-specific lifestyle patterns - gathering data pertaining to gender ratio, dress and food habits, cooking practices. Goonj has an extensive and detailed feedback system to know which person in which village got clothes. These reports are backed up with personal visits to talk to the villagers directly, to get first hand insight.

Financial Model

There are three ways in which financial expenses of Goonj are met

- 50% of the finance of Goonj comes from donations.
- Self-generated funding by selling articles which are made from recycled waste materials
- Funding from funding agencies for some projects for certain period of time.

Impact

Social: Goonj provides clothes to the needy thus helping them in living a dignified life.

Political: The initiatives of Goonj of building bridges and digging wells in Khandwa (M.P.) have been taken over by MNREGA.

Economic: Goonj has emphasized mainly on developing the infrastructure of the villages by building roads, bridges, ponds, schools.

Initiatives

Cloth for work-Turning old age charitable acts into dignified giving.

School to school- Turning under-utilized school materials into motivational tool.

Rahat-Distributing need-based relief material in the aftermath of natural or man-made disasters.

Aanganwadi -Goonj made an effort to turn aanganwadis into more child friendly places.

Vapsi-Bringing back livelihood.

My-pad -Turning old waste cotton clothes into clean and bio-degradable sanitary napkins.

Replication

The model of Goonj can be replicated in other contexts as well, not necessarily urban-to-rural channelizing. Anshu has replicated the existing model to medicines, toys, stationery and other goods.

R. Madhavan, Farmer, Chennai

"I had a passion for agriculture even when I was young. I don't know how my love for agriculture started. I only know that I have always been a nature lover." said Madhavan, a former IIT-ian converted into a farmer. Being a mechanical engineering student from IIT Madras, R. Madhavan went on to work for Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) for over nine years to save up enough funds to invest in his dreams. He then bought six acres of land in Chengelpet near Chennai. With the intention to transform his studies into what he loves, he came up with his ideas about mechanisation of farming. Lost all his savings in the first three years of his career but even that couldn't hamper his spirit. He went to Israel to learn about their water technology and that was the eye opener in his life. Then he understood how drip irrigation is remarkably

more profitable compared to flood irrigation which is carelessly followed all over India. He implemented his learnings back in his land along with the guidance of Dr Lakshmanan, a California-based NRI, who has been farming for over 35 years. From then on until today he has brought about so many changes in the agricultural front with his integration of technology into agriculture. This led former president Dr Abdul Kalam to personally visit his farm and say that "We need not one, but one million Madhavans!".

Context & Vision

His vision is to minimize expense and maximize yield with the technique of contract farming. He wants to bring down the number of people engaged in farming activities using smart techniques and instead create more employment in villages for other activities like food processing and value added services. His aim is to do farming on a sustainable basis using modern scientific farming methods and modern farm equipment, the soil is well tested and crop rotation is implemented with proper irrigation techniques to increase the yield phenomenally.

Building an Enterprise

His enterprise began in the year 1993 when it was purely on the basis of trial and error. As he didn't have any guidance in his first few years, it cost him all his savings. In 1997, after his Israel trip, along with Dr Lakshmanan's guidance, he understood the techniques of sustainable farming and that is when he started making profits. Today, he leases out lands from farmers instead of spending money on buying them. So, in this way, the farmer gets to make some profit and along with it the farmer also has the option of working in the same farm if he wishes to. He uses scientific technology to test the soil which would help in maintaining proper nutrition and also he uses advanced seeds which are produced for good yield. He believes

in the right usage of nutrition and fertilizers along with proper drip irrigation methods. These are the components of his successful enterprise.

Financial Model

His model is financially sustainable because of more than one reason. Firstly he completely eliminates the middleman existence by exporting his produce by himself. Secondly instead of buying the lands, he leases them out from farmers so it reduces the expense and in turn he can invest them in the crops. So, these two concepts have resulted in multifold increase of profits compared to usual business practices.

Impact

India - being a country where 60 percent of the population is involved in the agro-industry - needs enterprising farmers like Madhavan. Madhavan's farm provides more income to the farmer and also provides knowledge about latest technology-based farming to them.

Replication

It can be replicated easily in different parts of India, as only 20 percent of agriculture is about soil tilling and remaining 80 percent is about the technology implemented. Replication of scientific techniques to ascertain soil nutrition and needs is possible.

Feedback

We are inspired by R. Madhavan. Nothing would define happiness better than doing work that provides livelihood for other people. He not only provides employment for farmers but his work also leads to development of our country on the whole. His life would definitely motivate the youth to work towards the prime source of our country, Agriculture.

Mr. Manoj, Naandi

Through Naandi, Mr. Manoj pioneered a sustainable model of outsourcing government programs and demonstrated successful large scale implementation of the programs. He has also been a change agent in creating social businesses in critical areas such as agriculture, elementary school education, training and placement of youth in corporate jobs.

Context and Vision

The government has allocated funds for midday meal programs to the government school students. The program is based on required nutritional intake for a typical child. Before Naandi, the children were not really benefitting from the program because of corruption and ineffective implementation. Naandi sought to change the reality through its vision of eradicating poverty. Food which is not only critical for survival but also for creating healthy functioning human beings is one of the many thrust areas.

According to the Social Development Report, one out of every four people in India, live in poverty. Naandi views this as an opportunity to make a difference – for every one person in poverty, there are three other people who can help him come out of poverty.

Building an Enterprise

With its humble beginnings in 2002, by partnering with the AP government in implementing the ambitious mid-day meal schemes, Naandi has steadily built a social enterprise. It works with government, corporates, civil society and communities in devising innovative approaches to solve large-impact social sector issues. One of such issues is the implementation of government funding schemes to alleviate poverty. Presently, Naandi operates in 13 states, with in the programme verticals of child rights, sustainable livelihoods, safe drinking water, hunger and

malnutrition, and other research projects.

Financial Model

In its Public-Private Partnership activities, as the Midday Meal Scheme, Naandi receives around 5 rupees per child from the government, and it provides the same nutrition in around 3 to 4 rupees per child. Naandi has set the kitchen on its own, raising money from the corporates on the order of 3 crores. The government provides cereals for free. In the scale that Naandi operates, it has not incurred any loss. For its other initiatives, such as the Mahindra Pride Schools, it is supported by CSR funding, and the social for-profit Tuition programme for poor learners in government schools is sustained with a small fee from the students.

Impact

Through its work over the years in various states in the country, Naandi has touched millions of children, youth and families. The marginalized communities have become empowered through knowledge, skills and sustainable livelihoods. The 400 million people living under the poverty line has dropped to 250 million now. Right from healthy children being more efficient in their academics to marginalized youth being trained for employable skills for gainful jobs to farmers with improved incomes in organic farming of coffee beans and horticultural products, this has had positive implications in the socio-economic and political fabric of the country.

Replication

Naandi's success has been largely due to its innovative models of implementation and replication across the country. The government has various schemes for the underserved communities. This is an opportunity for replicating Naandi's model. Our idea was to implement the PPP model through a Women

Empowerment Cooperative called Kalashram which works in partnership with the Ministry of Textiles and Handicrafts. Kalashram will train women groups to create marketable handicrafts and garments and will assist them in producing the handicrafts on a larger scale through rural business hubs. Under their scheme, the government will provide support in sourcing the raw materials and machines.

Feedback

The public-private partnership is not a model that can be used for every venture or initiative. The scope of the partnership is largely in social-sector issues that has the government, corporates and the public as their stakeholders. By itself, the PPP model does not guarantee sustainability. However, one can achieve sustainability through larger scale of operations and efficient implementation. One drawback of PPP model is the slow pace of government operations and release of funds. There are also certain issues of corruption one has to deal with. Given these bottlenecks, for PPP model to be successful, one has to have a strong inner drive and a deep sense of purpose to effect and engineer a social change. It is this flame that propels leaders like Manoj to be the change they want to see in the world.

Vishnuteerth Agnihotri, Educational Initiatives

About the Speaker

Vishnuteerth Agnihotri, an Alumni of IIT Madras and IIM Ahmedabad - he is interested in knowing how students or people learn and is interested in leadership development. After his college days he worked for various corporate companies for over 14 years until he found the right field for his dreams. He then joined his friends, two other alumni from IIM Ahmedabad, in their enterprise called Educational Initiatives and has been working with them for the past seven years. He is the vice president of the

organization and he works in the field of new assessments and human resources.

Context & Vision of Educational Initiatives

EI's vision is that quality education study should be made accessible to every student. Every child should learn with understanding. They believe that education isn't just quantitative but it is qualitative. They wanted to test the knowledge level of students. For this, they specially designed tests at a school known as 'ASSET'.

Building an Enterprise

Educational Initiatives is an enterprise that began in the year 2001. They focused on measuring education. Unlike other small start-ups their thought processes were totally different. Their aim was to achieve large scale impact. They conducted almost 120 workshops in the first one and half years of their enterprise. They have been constantly improvising their methodology. While they started off with tests that were subject specific, they realized later that they tests should be more concept related and structured it to create 'ASSET'. Apart from this, EI has also designed a personalized and adaptive learning tool called 'Mindspark' which is developed on a strong base of Research. As of now, it is mostly implemented by private institutions. Mindspark is a fairly new initiative and it helps promote learning through visual demonstrations.

Revenue Model

This enterprise addresses the immediate need for qualitative analysis of education. Educational Initiatives helps in understanding the epicentre of the problem: whether it lies in the teaching methodology of the teacher or the learning ability of the student. Once this is identified, it is simpler for schools to work on the specific issues for overall development. Educational Initiatives has made its programs

a necessity thereby ensuring financial sustainability.

Impact

The impact created by this enterprise is phenomenal. EI helps in the personal development of each and every student. Whether they learn through the techniques of Mindspark or get their knowledge-level assessed by the ASSET test. Either way, it helps them realise where the problem truly lies and act accordingly. Taking the question quality of ASSET and Mindspark forward, schools have started improving the quality of tests and started focusing more on conceptual understanding.

Replicability

The model of EI is easily replicable. Today, technology is improving at a fast pace and companies like EI are focusing on quality education at larger scale through the use of technology. Schools are also catching up and have started using advance technology to improve learning levels. Education sector is started changing and enterprises like EI are paying key role in the change.

S. N. Saran, Desi Power

Director, De-centralized Energy Systems (India) Pvt. Ltd, (DESI POWER)

Company is an independent rural based power producer involved in and committed to socio-economic development of villages through provision of electricity and energy services. It has a mission to reduce endemic rural poverty through local job creation and assured income generation.

Jointly promoted by DASAG Energy Engineering Ltd., Switzerland and Development Alternatives, New Delhi to

develop, package, promote, build and operate renewable energy based Independent Rural Power Plants (IRPPs).

It is now committed to building Empower Partnership projects in 100 villages to establish and demonstrate their viability for socially responsible investment on a big scale by private sector.

Context, Vision & Mission

One of the main contributing factors for the chronic poverty and poor progress in rural areas in India is inadequate and unreliable supply of electricity and the lack of modern energy services, preventing non-traditional productive activities. In spite of all official claims, the fact is that the largely fossil fuel based, perpetually-in-deficit centralized power sector has failed to meet the national needs of reliable and quality electricity.

DESI Power's promoters have long believed that centralized power distribution alone will not be able to meet the development needs of Indian villages. Acting on this conviction, they started DESI Power in 1996 to showcase self-reliant villages with a decentralized electricity-driven development process integrated with job creation, based on local value addition of agro-residues, renewable energy and other resources. DESI Power's initiative required a long gestation period for:

- Learning to work with clever and willing but uneducated villagers
- Testing and adaptation of technologies capable of being managed by local people
- Exploring and finding ways for organizing village groups
- Training villagers, especially women, to run and manage local enterprises
- Finding funds to build and run pilot projects during the start-up and proving

phases.

Building an Enterprise

It is built on the philosophy of Gandhiji's vision of self-reliant villages. The imminence of climate change, the rising costs and adverse impacts of fossil fuel combustion, the availability of almost universal connectivity and the maturity and affordability of sustainable new technologies make Gandhiji's basic concept of decentralised development even more relevant today than it was during his life-time.

DESI Power's program uses renewable energy sources most suitable to a given location. In many cases, the optimum solution turns out to be a hybrid system with more than one energy source to take care of the daily or seasonal variations in availability. In some cases, hybridization with fossil fuels also become essential for reasons of technology, availability of the renewable source of energy or the security of power supply.

Impact

- Decentralized, environmentally clean, acceptable and affordable green power and energy services to the rural community
- New jobs and income-generation
- Trained villagers
- Creation of an Empowered rural India where decentralized green energy is a means to achieve sustainable economic development of the region.

Joe Madiath, Gram Vikas

Joe Madiath is an Indian social entrepreneur. Born in December 1950, he founded Gram Vikas, a non-governmental organization based in Orissa, India of which he is now executive

director. He completed his studies in English literature from Madras University. As a student, he was elected as the President of Madras University Students' Union and founded the Young Students' Movement for Development (YSMD) to harness positively the student disenchantment prevailing during that period. In 1969, as a student, he journeyed across India, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka on a bicycle for a year.

Gram Vikas, today, is one of the largest NGOs in Orissa, reaching out to about 36,000 indigenous and poor families living in 560 rural habitations. Gram Vikas uses common concerns on water and sanitation to unite and empower rural communities, including adivasi communities. Some of the pioneering efforts of Gram Vikas have been in biogas promotion, community forestry, rural habitat development and education. Gram Vikas' current approach to convergent community action with water and sanitation as the entry point is evolving into a movement influencing local democratic self-governance and poor people's control over development processes.

Gram Vikas' "total habitat development model" has been awarded the Most Innovative Development Project Award, 2001 (by the Global Development Network), the World Habitat Award, 2003 (by the Building and Social Housing Foundation, UK), Tech Museum Laureate in Economic Development (by the Tech Museum of Innovation, San Jose, California), Kyoto World Water Grand Prize, 2006 at the 4th World Water Forum (by the Kyoto Municipality and the Soroptimist International) and Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurs 2006 by Skoll Foundation, California. Gram Vikas is also one of the winners in the Ashoka Changemakers competitions in 2006 - "Health for All" and "How to provide Affordable Housing for all".

Context and Vision

Gram Vikas uses local resources and workers

to bring about change. They work towards bringing the local community and its resources together and build water distribution channels, bathrooms, domestic pipelines, sanitation pads and employment schemes for the upliftment of the society as a whole. They also seek and encourage all the external help they can collect. In the words of Joe, "We rely on your expertise".

Their policy is to ensure that the whole village have at-least 3 taps in every home. Their aim is to replenish the local water sources and to keep them unpolluted, to maintain the water supply in every home in every village using the water from the local sources and to restore the dignity of the locals in every household.

Building an Enterprise

Gram Vikas is built and sustained around principles. In all their activities, even one family refuses to abide by the laws of Gram Vikas, then the model is not implemented in the whole village. And yet, Gram Vikas has brought in a lot of varieties of flora and fauna from various parts of the country. They cultivated the whole area and planted a lot of trees and plants. They have also adopted a very unique policy to curb open defecation.

How do they implement policies?

- They charge 100 rupees from every person who defecates in open. So, people who want to earn some extra money usually go and sit on top of trees and catch anyone who tries to violate the sanctity of the local water sources!

- Their water pipelines are maintained by the local community and households pay only INR15 per month as maintenance charges of the pipelines. Joe claims that the water is more suitable for drinking purposes than any Kinley or Bisleri bottle we buy for 20rs per litre.

- They have survived a cyclone – Phailin in Odisha in October 4th 13. The whole area we

visited was devastated by the cyclone: but the spirit of Joe and his team was intact. They were confident that they will restore the whole area as soon as the nature allows them to.

Financial Model

The model is also supported by the various govt. schemes from where they manage their various other development costs and which finance their expansion cost. T

Impact

Till now, 1043 villages have adopted the model and out of them 500 villages operate with water pumps and electricity.

Replication

The model is a fantastic example of using natural resources and local people to ensure societal upliftment. The model can be easily replicated in any village with little tweaks and customization. The idea is very generic and can be and must be implemented to ensure the protection of our natural resources and maintain good health in all parts of the country. The work done by Joe inspires and motivates all the local parties to look up to the model and adopt its policies and schemes in other districts as well.

Feedback

The organization has a huge impact on the lives of locals. Women have better sanitation facilities. Kids have better health and every household has ample water for drinking, cleaning and irrigation purposes. In their simple lives where health is their biggest asset, clean water is their most important resource. It is a self-sustaining model. They consume what they make and sometimes the surplus is sold out to bring wealth to the community.

The overall model is self-sustaining. But the question still remains as to whether the efforts

taken by Gram Vikas can be executed in all the villages without a constant check, whether people in all the communities are motivated and capable enough to expand and sustain the policies. How are they going to deal with natural disasters and are they prepared for it? Do they have manpower and dedicated resources to expand and reach out to the other areas as well. Will government interference be accepted to expand and what impacts will it have? How will they clean the cyclone hit area without manpower and how much time will it take?

Sachin Desai, School without walls

"I am a school drop-out and realised that India's huge 70 per cent drop-out rate is because students don't learn skills and not every child is intellectually inclined." – Sachin Desai

Sachin set up the programme in his native village of Dhamapur in an 80-year-old house.

"It would be interesting to note that the education system is not vocational training in the usual sense. It is based on four principles — learning while doing, multi-skill training, community services and instructor as entrepreneur. Our education programme has been recognised by the Maharashtra State Board as well as the NIOs (National Institute of Open School, Delhi)," says Sachin Desai of Syamantak.

"No ambition, No insecurity." - Sachin Desai

Context and Vision

"School Without Walls" is a real life education system of Syamantak, a voluntary organisation. This is school, run by the students - for the students. Education here is based on hands-on practical activities and innovations. To nurture the spirit of social-entrepreneurship among students of "School without walls", the concept of Incubation - A Resource Centre at

Syamantak has emerged.

The key strategies of "School Without Walls" to address problems of present education system are as follows: -

- Give through education, the capability to act.
- Increase awareness of the local problems

Building an enterprise

The programme encourages personal interests and stimulates a marriage between mind and hands. It gives students opportunities to learn trades like engineering, carpentry, agriculture, animal husbandry, fabrication and computers. Syamantak's success stories are many. Sachin points out that 800 students have started businesses and are doing well. Self employment prevents migration and sustains village enterprises and development. The children have developed a small mechanism for underground water prospecting. Other innovations include a low cost bio-gas system which runs on kitchen waste instead of cow dung. This makes it ideal for people in cities and in villages. Students take kitchen waste from homes and collect flour from mill floors. Sachin says, "We give them carbon credits (points which are converted into rupees at the end of the year) for saving on LPG gas."

Financial Model

This is school, run by the students - for the students. School runs by donations. There is nothing like a business plan or financial model

Impact

Sachin says, "Our motto is to provide technology to villages. We have integrated School without walls into higher secondary school programmes where we run IBT (Introduction to Basic Technology). This can become the technical resource centre for

respective villages and cities. Students do community work. Here, they find opportunities to earn while they learn. For example, boys made LED batteries and sold it in the local market. Aditi, who came all the way from Rewa, Madhya Pradesh conducted a playgroup for village kids in which she earned Rs 500. Students undertake projects in villages like electrification and construction of houses. “They have to earn a minimum of Rs 1,000 during the year. There is no gender bias in the curriculum. Boys stitch while girls work in the fabrication workshop,” says Sachin. Students have also made a guest house —costing between one to one-and-a-half lakhs. It’s a low cost housing made in ferro-cement. By demystifying science and technology and by emphasising the necessity for innovations at local levels, education lives up to its true meaning of developing a student’s innate capacities through the medium of instruction.

Feedback

Our education system doesn’t really educate. Rather, it is focused on things that don’t quite help when we need it. We know how to add two numbers but we don’t quite know, as kids, why we add at all. There is too much pressure on young minds to achieve things through hard core academics: which stunts innovation. Hence, we need more and more schools like Sachin Desai’s “schools without walls” for skill development.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture

Moderated by a past Yatri from Chennai - Divya

Panelists

- Mr. Madhavan, Engineer turned Farmer
- GNS Reddy, Akshaykalpa
- Ashutosh, Villgro Stores
- Shashank, Farms & Farmers

GNS Reddy

He is the chairman, managing director at Akshaykalpa and an Ashoka fellow

Akshaykalpa is a first of its kind and unique private sector initiative to incubate rural-entrepreneurship based business models in Indian agriculture landscape. Akshaykalpa vision is to elevate Indian agricultural production practices from existing subsistence to enterprise levels, thereby generating attractive livelihood opportunities for rural youth.

Organic Milk produced by Akshaykalpa has surpassed international standards.

Mr. Reddy said that Farming and dairy are attractive, with lots of monetary benefits for businessmen. He feels there is a need to remove drudgery from agriculture, and dairy. He is in favour of no subsidies in his model.

R.Madhavan

Madhavan is an engineer turned farmer, having a big farm at a village in Chennai. He believes that there is enormous scope for making profit in the agriculture sector if it is done scientifically e.g. Irrigation needs to be done properly, which can then result in enormous yields.

Ashutosh Sinha

Ashutosh is Co-Founder and Chief Executive

Officer of Villgro Stores (formerly Rural Innovation Network). Ashutosh has a BS. Agriculture and a M.Sc. Plant Breeding from Rajendra Agriculture University as well as a Post Graduate Diploma in Agribusiness Management from the National Institute of Agriculture.

Villgro Stores aims to be a leader in the rural distribution of innovative products and services by creating, developing and strengthening fluid supply chain networks, which provide access points that are readily available and have significant positive impact on rural India’s livelihood.

Shashank

Founder of Farms n Farmers (FnF) - who work with small & marginal farmers to empower them and improve their current socio-economic condition through innovative ways of farming.

Discussion

1. Is formal education in agriculture important?

There was a mixed response to this. Madhavan said that Agri degree is useless, and one

can learn everything while on work. Madhavan said that it is not a pre-requisite to have a degree. The curriculum being taught are obsolete with present day requirements. So, learn the intricacies on the field.

Ashutosh said that Agri-degree is good for learning the basics. It can provide a good foundation.

Dr. Reddy said that --- Passion and Intuition are the keys for success in any field.

2. What should one do to get the land for farming?

Madhavan talked about leasing the land, rather than buying it. One can lease the land from a farmer, and make him a partner.

Yatri Presentation on Enterprise Model – Crowd-funding in Farming

Vision and context

The vision is of an enterprise crowd-funding from general public. The collected funds are utilized by the farmers to invest in quality seeds, storage facilities, irrigation techniques, and other technology options for better production. In return, the public get fresh and good quality crops at lesser price than market rates. The enterprise buys the harvested crops from the farmer at a higher price compared to other distribution agents, thus empowering the farmers.

The enterprise then processes the collected harvest into various marketable products such as ready-to-make food packages, snacks items, cereal flours, etc. Initial investments to set up the enterprise could come from banks, cooperative societies, and government schemes for promoting agricultural entrepreneurship.

Impact

This business model would empower the farmers as well as their end customers i.e. the general public. Farmers would get good worth for their harvest, role of middle man would

be completely eradicated, and problem of fluctuations in food pricing would be solved. This model would encourage people to take up farming and agriculture as a profession.

Panel Discussion: Nation Building

Panelists

Ms. Rajni Bakshi (moderator)- Journalist and author

Dr. Chandrashekhar Hariharan- Founder, BCIL

Mr. Nipun Mehta - Service Space

Mr. Sudheendra Kulkarni (via video-call) - Journalist and author

Discussion

On the last day of our 15 day odyssey, we summed up the experience by focusing on introspection, inspiration and reflection at the Sabarmati Ashram - Gandhi's home for almost 13 years - with Virenbhai Joshi from the NGO Manav Sadhna; and later by reflecting on Gandhi's work through a Panel Discussion on Nation Building (held at the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII) in Ahmedabad).

The participants were none other than Ms. Rajni Bakshi, Mumbai-based acclaimed and awarded author and Gandhi Peace Fellow at Gateway House, Dr. Chandrashekhar Hariharan, renowned economist heading Biodiversity Conservation India, known as the ZED group for its 'Zero Energy Development Solutions', Mr. Nipun Mehta, founder of ServiceSpace.org (a volunteer-run organization delivering millions of dollars of web-related services to the non-profit world for free), board member of the Seva Foundation, Dalai Lama Foundation and Airline Ambassadors as well as recipient of the President's Volunteer Service Award; along with Mr. Sudheendra Kulkarni, former aid to the Prime Minister of India Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji, Chairperson of Observer Research

Foundation and author of a book on Gandhi in the Internet Age.

What brought all these panelists together was a deep understanding of Gandhi, usually married with personal, or at least close to personal, experiences of him. Both Ms. Bakshi and Mr Kulkarni had put their study of Gandhi into print in books and Dr. Hariharan and Mr. Mehta (even though he stressed that he preferred to be called Nipun) had studied Gandhi closely and put his values into practice in different ways in their work, Dr Hariharan, through the focus on Swaraj in sustainable and eco-friendly solutions and Nipun both through 're-living' his life, by repeating the Dandi March with his wife and living Gandhi's messages of love, decentralization and self-governance in all his endeavours.

Here are a few examples of thoughts and messages shared with us.

Answering the question of what values was Gandhi after, Nipun pointed out that Gandhi's greatness is often incorrectly reduced to being a freedom fighter. "He was much more than that. Gandhi was led by inner transformation and externalizing beliefs." He really lived the way he taught, and 'walked the talk' as many would have put it today. He was a man of "principle first, then strategy". Live the way you teach 100%, then think about what you need to implement and how.

To the same question Ms. Bakshi answered that approach matters, your attitude matters. As she put it "It's the attitude not the aptitude that defines you altitude." or as she said that Gandhi probably could have put it "Mind the mind, and no matter matters." She further emphasized words such as simplicity and adherence to truth.

Mr. Kulkarni shared that there are alternative ways of looking at progress from those of the western industrialized world that accepts economic growth as the only sustainable way

to build prosperity for future generations. Mr. Kulkarni pointed out how alternative theories and degrowth movements have developed in parallel with the classic growth-supporting theories, mentioning among others Herman Daly, the 'Father of Ecological Economics and Steady State Economics', as well as JC Kumarappa, an important Indian economist and thinker developing a school of economic thought that he coined as 'Gandhian economics', which Mr. Kulkarni referred to as 'Economy of commoners'. Gandhi and Mr. Kumarappa were close associates and followed similar values. Where Gandhi would talk about the importance of the three values of decentralisation, a cooperative spirit and self-reliance, Kumarappa would build his economic theories on being locally adjusted, equitable - in other words building on a fair sharing of resources. On this note, Mr. Kulkarni closed his views on how Gandhi's values could form the base for economic theories which would guide entire societies.

Nipun continued by adding how Gandhi himself would not own things. His possessions were not what made him original - it was his ideas that made him unique. "He could not own things, since he said that you need to keep only what you need to be comfortable. He had people look up to him all the time, asking him for directions." Nipun went on to tell the story of a man that had a picture of Gandhi on the wall, and above him a number of pictures of ordinary people. When asked why he kept the photo of Gandhi on the wall he answered "They're my master's master", and when asked who the other people in the photos were, he answered "That's my master's master". Nipun further commented that the word activism fell short of describing what Gandhi and Mandela did. What they did was giftivism, always focusing on love and giving back. (Even though he also mentioned that Gandhi did not particularly like '-isms'). Everyone can share, if not everything, at least something. Nipun summarized it through the quote "The negativity with which

you strike me is much weaker than the love with which I receive your hit." He explained by telling the story of an occasion when Gandhi was attacked by a mob of 800 goons who started hitting him with sticks, with the aim to kill him. Rather than taking cover, he demanded to see the leader of the gang. When his followers wanted to take him there to have him covered securely, he simply said 'No, I'll go by myself' and went, talked to the leader and ended up turning him around to the effect that the leader of the mob said, 'I'll not let you walk out through this group by yourself, I will follow you or they will kill you on the way back.'. Gandhi would always live by principle first and striving towards finding common ground in our oneness.

On a final note on how Gandhi's ways and values are still relevant today, Nipun commented that we have now come to the age of communicating many-to-many, as opposed to what was possible during Gandhi's days, which was either one-to-many or one-to-one. Many-to-many platforms such as Facebook and Youtube create an immense opportunity to create a true context for love. When answering the question of who's a Gandhian today, Nipun said that "Gandhi does not excuse you and me. We can't follow all vows, but at least follow one? We can all be that change in some small way. So don't ask who's a Gandhian. Ask 'How can you and I connect? In a many-to-many context? To live and share Gandhi's values?'"

BIZ GYAN TREE

The Biz Gyan Tree exercise this year struck a positive chord with Yatris as they found the exercise very useful to understand the ideation and execution phases of a business plan. The exercise began even before the Yatra, with participants being encouraged to submit a reflective note on the vertical they had chosen, the issues around the vertical that they had observed and what their own ideas and aspirations were for that sector.

The seven verticals defined in the BGT were Agriculture & Agro Business, Health Care, Energy, Education, Water & Sanitation, Manufacturing and Art, Culture & Sports. The four horizontal were Information and Communication Technology, Public Private Partnerships, Financial Services and Business Services.

A session titled Enterprise 101 was conducted at Vijayawada by Startup Weekend's Regional Operations Manager, Sheikh Shuvo to kick start the Biz Gyan Tree exercise. The session provided an interesting introduction to Enterprise building with introductions to ideation, replication, customer validation and the lean methodology by using Japanese, watching movies and exercising!

Shashank Mani and Ashutosh Kumar conducted the Introduction to Biz Gyan Tree session enroute Patna, where Yatris were introduced to the ideas of social and economic startups, the seven verticals and four horizontal for BGT and the context of Deoria in particular. The expectations and goals of the exercise were more practically explained with an important fact that 42.3% of India's population resides Tier 3 districts like Deoria motivating the Yatris to really test their ideas through this exercise.

This year we initiated five power sessions of 30 minutes each, which were conducted to give the BGT Teams expert tips and clarify doubts.

Actor, Writer and Director Yog Jappee captivated the Yatris attention as he asked them to introspect on their 'Core Values and Ethics' for enterprise building. From explaining dilemmas and non negotiables, his session concluded with the poignant question i.e. if every single person on this earth decided to follow you, where would you take them?

This session in the realm of idealism was followed by one of extreme realism by Satyam Darmora, Lead of Family Economic Stability at the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, who addressed the most pressing concerns of the Yatris through his session on 'Finance and Strategy'. The practical advice on what funders really look for i.e. the importance of the horse and the jockey were most valuably shared in this session.

The third session moved to the operational methodology needed to execute one's social and financial goals. ITO Service Delivery Excellence head at Hewlett-Packard Enterprise Services - Mahendra Pyati, titled his session 'How to make a cup of tea: People, Process & Technology'. He simplified flowcharts for the Yatris giving them the professional discipline they would need to maintain standards, quality and efficacy in their execution

The fourth session was held by Sheikh Shuvo, who conducted a very interactive session on customer validation calling it 'Build. Measure. Learn'. The session explained the tools such as building a Minimum Viable Product, to actually creating something that's valuable. An exciting live demonstration was conducted on an existing idea, adding to clarity required in enterprise building.

The final session for the day was held in the lawns of St. Xavier's College, Patna where Heidi and Sarah Fraser conducted a session on Brainstorming with a few guidelines and a practical activity with the BGT Teams.

For their insight, crispness and direct skills imparted, the power sessions were clearly the highlight of the Biz Gyan Tree exercise this year.

After a few sessions, implementing this in their discussions, the Yatris reached Deoria where an entire day was spent in visiting the villages for customer validation and testing the feasibility of the ideas. The yatris visited nine villages, e.g. Ejarah, Sakrapar, Balua, Baltikara, Seweji, Kesobari, Cheriha, Kariha and Belwabajar. Local resources were allocated to every team so that relevant information may be known. The mentors also helped the teams as they reformed their business plans. A three minute elevator pitch was scheduled to happen early next morning and some of the teams worked well into the night refurbishing and improving their business plans.

Early next morning, the atmosphere was charged up, as the teams got ready to give a three minute pitch for their business plans. The judging panel consisted comprised of eminent mentors like Ravi Shankar, Mahendra Pyati, Yog Japee, Heidi, Shalini Menon, and two local judges. The parameters for evaluation consisted of :

- a) Innovation
- b) Feasibility- Social, Technical and Financial
- c) Scalability
- d) Replicability
- e) Local Inclusiveness
- f) Effective Use of Technology

Twenty Two teams were selected for the Round 2, i.e. the Deoria Residential Immersion program, scheduled to be held in Deoria from February 27,2014 to March 13, 2014.

Three of the selected ideas for Round 2 are mentioned below:

1. Go Gud

Go Gud is a social enterprise that links value-added products of sugarcane to rural and urban markets. It aims to do this by facilitating end-to-end processing of sugarcane through the establishment of village-based industries. Go Gud will do this in a two-pronged method:

- a) facilitating jaggery production at source through trainings, exposure visits etc. in an eco-friendly manner. Go Gud will procure and sell this jaggery to urban and rural markets
- b) facilitating the use of bagasse, a by-product of sugarcane processing to make hand-made paper. Go Gud will also procure and sell this paper to urban and rural markets.

2. Green Tekno

“STOP!! Don’t waste your waste give it to us” - we will use that waste material to generate eco-friendly energy and employment in villages.

Green Tekno has taken up a mission to provide agro-residue and biomass residues (sawdust, bark, wheat straw, barley straw, and sugar industry waste material etc.) based fuels for the replacement of LPG and diesel.

Here is the potential of the plan: If one wants to boil 10 liters of milk, the LPG cost is Rs.90, the Diesel cost is Rs.120 and the Bio Pellets cost is Rs.50 so by this they plan to save more than 40% against LPG and diesel.

3. Narishakti

Narishakti aims to provide vocational training to the women of Chaturbhuj village.

Vocational training center would be set up in government schools which would train the women to make school uniforms for the children studying in schools.

This would help to create a self sustainable model, which will also cater to the local need and also create employment opportunities for the local educated and uneducated women of the village.

JAGRITI YATRA VALEDICTORY

The Panel Discussion was followed by some inspirational speeches by Mr. R Gopalakrishnan, Former Board member of Tata Sons, Mr Venkatesh Kini, President of Coca Cola India and South East Asia and Mr Shashank Mani, founder of Jagriti Yatra. These constituted a core part of the Valedictory Ceremony.

Mr. Gopalakrishnan cheered us on to never lose our battery of inspiration. He further commented on India’s wonder of development and growth, emphasizing how India still manages its democracy, without losing the focus on creating happy people. Mr. Gopalakrishnan pointed out how corruption is one of the biggest issues to be tackled, emphasizing how this should not be seen as unique to India, but is a sort of ‘measles and chickenpox’ that a growing economy simply needs to go through in order to be cured. He further encouraged us to always see how we can bring some sunshine and happiness, while always keeping an eye on our battery charger. As he put it “Unless you are inspired by the task you are going to do, your battery will run out.” And he finished his speech with the following words: “India is waiting to blow the world away. Keep dreams alive.”

Mr. Kini mentioned how he had travelled 55 countries of the world and had seen that countries usually had working roads, a continuous flow of electricity and clean drinking water. Since these people were no different from us, he always wondered why India could not implement same. Then he further observed that “There is no country in the world that has more passion and optimism than India.”. He concluded by saying “There’s a cyclone in every one of you. Jagriti Yatra has opened your bottle to help the cyclone come out. This is the awakening that the country needs. Go out and awaken the country!”

And as a suitable final note, Shashank Mani’s ending words in his address to the Yatris at the EDII in Ahmedabad

“Protest is important, but building is far more important.”

“Build awareness in all parts of the country.”

Speech to Yatris: Ahmedabad, 7th Jan 2014 by **R.Gopalakrishnan, Ex-Board member of Tata Sons**

Ignoring for a moment, the by-election results of last week, we Indians seem to have a sense of gloom and doom with respect to India’s economic situation. “Has India blown it?” many young people ask. The subject has so little merit that I find myself struggling, both for words as well as the time to express my thoughts. So I felt I would use this opportunity to view the subject rationally rather than emotionally.

The expression ‘blow it’ literally means ‘to spoil your chances’ or ‘to lose an opportunity.’ So the questions I address are:

- Has India lost an opportunity and, if so, over what time frame?
- Did other nations also blow it?
- What are the simple indicators?

I wish to explore these aspects in this speech.

Time Frame

The time frame over which you judge the question is important. Time is relative and is what is perceived by the viewer. When you are reviewing the progress of a vast nation or society like India, there has to be some perspective of time: but it cannot just be last week’s SENSEX or the next month’s CHOGM meeting.

To emphasize the importance of the time perspective, imagine that you are examining the proposition "Sachin Tendulkar has blown it." If you disagree with the proposition, you will find plenty in the full cricketing career of the iconic player to prove your point. But if you were to review only his last 20 test matches and compare his performance with his peers in their last 20 test matches, here is what you would find:

That Sachin's score of 1070 runs in 33 innings ranks last among Brian Lara, Rahul Dravid, VVS Laxman and Ricky Ponting, whose run scores are in the range of 1128-1953.

That Sachin's per innings average is 33 runs against his peers of 34-53 runs.

That in his last 20 test matches, Sachin's highest score was 94 whereas his peers scored between 176-226 runs.

That in their last 20 test matches, his peers scored between 2-8 centuries, but Sachin scored zero centuries.

So did Sachin blow it? If you review only his last and recent performance, the answer is YES. But that is not true, you all know it! It is important to have a perspective of time.

Comparisons

Therefore, I viewed India's progress or lack of it over the 13 years of the new millennium. This has the added advantage that it covers an NDA as well as UPA period. I also benchmarked with non-China BRICS economies like Brazil and Indonesia to make the comparisons as relevant as possible. Please note that I am reviewing the country, not the UPA government, in my analysis.

I compared IMF data on the acceleration of annual GDP growth between the last 13 years of O.M. (old millennium, 1986-1999) with 13 years of the N.M. (new millennium, 1999-2012). Europe decelerated by 102 basis points;

Indonesia accelerated by just 10 basis points; Brazil added 95 basis points but India added 120 basis points, second only to China.

Urbanization is a good driver of economic growth. Since 1991, Indian urbanization grew by 250 basis points per year, matched by Indonesia, but both countries were far ahead of Brazil which was half the rate at 120 points. That is like a bullet train.

In the new millenium, India's real annual growth rate of disposable income advanced at a whopping 650 basis points, compared to Indonesia at 400, and Brazil at 360. In the N.M, India's ranking in agricultural production improved enormously.

In the new millennium, India has emerged as the Number 1 global producer of milk and fruits, the Number 2 global producer of vegetables, cotton, wheat and sugarcane. India has surpassed Thailand as the number 1 rice exporter in the world.

India's production of passenger cars grew in the N.M. by 1500 basis points per year, compared to Asia Pacific of 1200 and Brazil's of 700.

India's per-capita income changes

So we have experienced the best 13 years in our 5,000 year history, and what do we do? We perpetually debate whether India has blown it! Rather odd!

Would you treat the serious business of economic and social progress of 1.2 billion people by the yardsticks of cricket, where a batsman is judged by his last few innings?

My audience might think that I have conveniently avoided talking about China. For many centuries, the Chinese economy has been bigger than India in total money terms. In per capita terms, China and India had the same per capita income in 1970. Today, admittedly, China has three times the India level on this measure.

Although China liberalized 13 years before India, India's per capita GDP lags China by only 8 years, and in per capita private consumption, India lags China by only by 5 years. India's per capita consumption of steel, cement, soda ash, soaps and many others—all lag China and the developed economies by a factor of 10-50%.

The headroom for growth should send anybody in a tizzy; it is unbelievable. You have to view all this data as an opportunity rather than as a problem. In that case you will get "blown away" with India rather than debate whether India has "blown it"!

Corruption

I should add a brief word about corruption, which is undoubtedly a distressing feature of India. Without accepting it as a necessary evil, I would respectfully point out that corruption is like a virus. It affects every society, it travels and its effects are disastrous. Every society has to keep vaccinations as a preventive and medicines as a curative. India is no exception.

But let us not forget that though India is 5,000 year old civilization, it is an adolescent, 22 year old in its incarnation as a capitalist democracy. When other countries were at a similar phase in their development--US, UK, Korea, Taiwan—history tells us that they faced similar crises. The British Parliament would not have despaired about its bleak future in 1893, nor would Teddy Roosevelt have done so for America in 1906.

Switzerland is generally regarded as a clean, corruption-free economy. Considering that it has recycled into dignity Nazi money, dirty money from African politicians, black money from Indian businessmen, it qualifies as the world's biggest hawala operator. Is it right to place it on top of Transparency International ratings? It is worth pondering the subject.

Conclusion

So does all this mean that India has seized every opportunity and missed no opportunities? No, of course not. Life is all about missing many opportunities, but grabbing some others. The issue is whether you are grabbing your opportunities well enough compared to others in a competitive sense.

And India has done exactly that.

At the equivalent stage of India's current economic development, Britain took 170 years from 1700 to 1871 to double per capita income; America took 50 years from 1832 to 1882 to do so. India, at the recent growth rates, since 1996, doubled per capita income in 14 years.

A citizen, I would have liked India to grab more opportunities. But I can, with sobriety, think of many opportunities I have failed to grab during my career and life. But I would staunchly refute any suggestion that with respect to my life, 'I have blown it.'

The nation just needs citizens – young people, entrepreneurs, and business – to have the confidence that India will recover soon. This requires an acceptance from the political leadership that a new action agenda is required. This possibility is a real one.

The greatest obstacle to a recovery is having a population that does not expect it! I hope young people do not despair. If that happens, then I am sure that India would surely have blown it!

ARTICLES

The Jagriti Yatra Inertia Apoorva Tapas

Travel does strange things to you. Recently, I set out on Jagriti Yatra, to “find” myself. I decided to go with no expectation. Those 15 days passed; I lived the bittersweet moments with complete enthusiasm, and found myself detaching from my existing identity. What a dramatic declaration to make - when throughout the Yatra I was whining about how nothing was happening to me. I was wrong. The change was happening at such a fundamental level that it’s only just hit me.

Each moment that we exist in our ordinary lives, we are existing within a giant box of expectations, past experiences and desperate hope for the future that define our entire perspective. Somewhere along the way... I suddenly lost this box.

Travel liberates you. Once you’re out of your comfortable box of beliefs, the world is infinite, you are infinite. The way the land before you stretches on, so do you. There is no one around from your box to limit you, your expression or your experience. You are who you want to be and you are enough. You are enough to fill infinity.

I am so grateful to all the people for having unknowingly helped me realise this liberation. For once, I wasn’t expressing something I was led to believe about myself through years of conditioning, but just being myself unapologetically, gave me confidence to express myself without hesitation and really enjoy the warmth of a group. Nothing defines me other than this moment and what I choose to believe and do.

This liberation happened subconsciously and I’ve only realized it now. It is not often that we can claim pure spiritual happiness, but I’m so

glad to have experienced just a slice of the exquisite happiness you find when you simply let go.

Did I learn anything “useful” on the Yatra? Sure. The places we visited on this Yatra were built with labour and effort over a long period of time. These visits taught me that true liberation comes from a solid foundation based on sweat and toil and a thousand dreams and ten thousand dashed hopes.

I also learnt about entrepreneurship and business planning. While all of this will surface when I need it, I am impacted more by what I learnt about myself.

International Perspective Miranda Edner

On the return flight from Mumbai; on my way back to Sweden. Reflecting on the past two intense and amazing weeks. The warmth, the caring, the sharing, the authenticity, the love, the growing, the daring and the humility.

One thought strikes me. I hope I will be able to maintain this feeling of humbleness when returning to a world that in so many aspects cherishes other values than those we have been celebrated on our journey across India.

Already, when boarding the plane at Mumbai airport, it becomes clear that having money earns more respect and better treatment. After a three hour delay, when everybody’s tired and just wants to get on the plane; and a lot of people have been queuing up for a long time to be able to board, they are pushed aside to let business class people through. Everyone travelling in tourist class is required to walk through at least one compartment of the business class section just to be shown how spacious and comfortable these ‘finer’ seats are. A way of saying ‘money buys you respect, buys you value, buys you better treatment and therefore makes you ‘a more worthy person’.

After two weeks of amazing sharing, queuing and lovingly trying to fit into confined spaces, I can’t help but think - what if we were to treat the most honorable and loving people with the best seats on the plane? The ones that had shared most selflessly, given most lovingly and learnt and listened most carefully; the one’s who payed respect to the people around them? Or even better, the ones in most pain, with the most aching bodies in most need of such seats? For example, my recently cancer infected co-traveller sitting next to me was in quite some pain and without complaining a word, was only sharing how much she cares for the integration issues in Sweden and the rights of immigrants, a topic dear to us both. Why should we even make a distinction

at all? Is there not enough space on this transcontinental plane to share equally and lovingly between everyone?

It becomes so obvious that I am now on my way back to the conventional world, where the ‘rat race’ for material, status, money and fame (if you so would like to call it) is the prevalent model for ‘success’. I know it will require some effort to maintain the focus on the values that we have shared on the Yatra, – the values of love, selfless giving, caring and sharing.

Let’s just think back at those two weeks, connect back with and find strength in each other, look at the photos, read the Yatra Saar, continue studying and maybe contributing to the role models -so we can continue building on that amazing energy that has been so vibrant; and has been a motor for change on this train. Let’s continue building that change and never forget! Yaron Chalo!

International Perspective Ian Kwong

My objective

It is difficult (and unfair) to quantify my learning from this 15-day train journey across India. That said, like many other Yatris, I arrived at the TATA Institute of Social Science on the first day with certain objectives, namely:

- (a) learn from Yatris, JY team and role models (every one has something to offer);
- (b) initiate/facilitate cultural and intellectual exchange (after all I did sign up to be a “facilitator”!); and
- (c) figure out my next job (as of today (i.e. 11 January 2014), I am still unemployed!),

and the hope that by the end of the journey I would leave with some sort of inspiring/enlightening takeaways.

My Takeaways

While I did not walk away with a target job or

a “billion-dollar” start-up idea, I did come to understand two things about life at large:

(a) Obstacles (often in the form of fear) in life are self-imposed: When I first learned of Jagriti Yatra, I found it interesting and immediately signed up without thinking too much (or at all). It only hit me right before boarding the train that I might (i) get sick from the food/weather, (ii) screw up in facilitating my group (Group T, feel free to provide feedback in private) and/or (iii) fail to fit in with the other Yatris – the list goes on.

Fortunately my panic-attack came a tad bit late and I walked out this journey, together with my fellow 450-plus Yatris, alive and inspired. If I had caved to my fear (which was really just some self-induced “fascination”), I would have given up the friendships I made, the wisdom I gained through discussion and the opportunity to sleep, eat and shower in an Indian train.

(b) A small courageous step forward leads to countless opportunities: This is the common thread among the role models we encountered. In respect of Dr. Venkataswamy’s work, it was said that “what was possible, was beyond anything reasonable”; meanwhile Bunker Roy urged the young generation to “follow their conscience” and “take a step forward”. Each role model had taken a path that was unconventional and unpopular at the time, yet true to his/her own conscience and belief. The road less taken made all the difference.

My Journey

It is certainly easier said than done to follow the examples of Bunker Roy, Anshu Gupta and Dr. V. Until now, I have always succeeded in convincing myself to put aside my childhood dream of being a “Jerry Maguire” sports agent by listing out the benefits of a stable legal career and the potential difficulties I would encounter in making a sudden (and unrelated) career change.

This short yet rewarding journey has taught me

to quit giving myself excuses, to stop turning a deaf ear to the voice in my heart and to take a courageous leap of faith. I am trying and I urge you to do the same.

Until next time.

P. S. I would like to share with you an extract of a poem titled “Don’t quit”:

“...Success is failure turned inside out;

*The silver tint of the clouds of doubt;
And you never can tell how close you are,*

It may be near when it seems afar;

So stick to the fight when you’re hardest hit;

It’s when things seem worst that you mustn’t quit.”

~ Dream On Yatris ~

Ten Learnings from the Yatra

Although there are a million small things that we have learnt on the Yatra, here are ten learnings for you to ponder over -

1. Be comfortable even in discomfort - JY taught us to adjust and be comfortable: especially in situations that are different from what is known to you
2. Patience- It’s not easy to manage and run a programme of this scale. JY taught us lessons in patience and the importance of not rushing things through; the importance of thinking and planning before execution.
3. Attitude of exploration- It is easy to listen to TED videos or path-breaking innovative ideas sitting in the comfort of our homes but JY brought to us the naked truth through experiential learning
4. Appreciation - We often forget to appreciate and be grateful for gifts that we receive. JY made us appreciate the simple things in life like food, water (both for drinking and bathing!) and space.
5. Expanding horizons- With life on a moving train, you pretty much see a very different view every morning outside of the window. New situations, new places, new people everyday can be unsettling but it also teaches you to expand your horizons.
6. Being happy- When you come across people who have so much less than you do and are still willing to share some love with you, you learn to be happy.
7. Having a holistic view- JY taught us to blend with lot of different kinds of people. JY gave us the ability to hold one’s ground in a discussions and at the same time remain open towards

others’ opinions.

8. Travel makes you humble- Travelling to different cities and visiting role models who have dedicated their entire lives to bring about change and development in the society is an experience n humility

9. Have fun- Yatris taught us to have fun and make the best out of every situation, every opportunity.

10. Make the world a better place, one day at a time- Small meaningful efforts are going to lead to bigger, greater results over time. So start early, start small and take the baton in your hands!

YATRA IMPACT

Jagriti Yatra has been executed successfully for 6 consecutive years and has impacted the lives of more than 2000 Yatris. Experiences of past Yatris best capture this impact.

99% of Yatris recommend the Yatra as a 'Must-have Experience'

Soonrita Sahasrabuddhe 2008 Yatri

I don't feel alone anymore — I am no longer the odd one out. I am connected to a sea of young India that is positive, enterprising and ethical.

100% of our Role Models believe that the Yatra is changing the mindset of the youth.

Anshu Gupta Founder, Goonj

Bringing about behavioural and thought level changes in people is quite a challenging job. In Jagriti Yatra the impact is massive and deep. We at GOONJ have seen this first hand with the Yatris. There is a vast change in their vision, thoughts and behaviour after the Yatra. The Jagriti Yatra, to me is a source of energy and inspiration, from the brightest 400 youth from all over the country.

Measuring the Impact of the Yatra

Jagriti Yatra has evolved in its reach and impact, year after year. It has turned into a movement – a movement of Enterprise-led-development – which aims to unleash a generation of entrepreneurs.

Impact on India

Jagriti Yatra has impacted lives of thousands of individuals, directly or indirectly, since its inception

Creating Entrepreneurs

16% started their own enterprise after the Yatra

Around 45 enterprises are being created by the Yatris every year. Even those who were entrepreneurs before coming on the train are benefitted immensely from the exposure and networking opportunities presented by the Yatra.

Kalyani Khodke 2008 Yatri and Founder Range Design Studio

After having worked at Tata Motors for 3 years, Kalyani decided to quit her job and instead start her own business. Range Design Studio is a product design and management firm which designs like electric toy car for kids, an electric personal mobility vehicle for adults and those products which will address common man's important day to day necessities. Her dream is to develop products and solutions that are going to make life better, more comfortable and happier.

Impacting Middle India

47% of the enterprises have been started in the small towns and villages.

Remaining 53%, while they are based in metros, they must be impacting the Middle India in some or other way. For instance, by having their operations in small towns and villages, resulting in generation of employment there. These enterprises are spread across a spectrum of sectors – Agriculture, Healthcare, Manufacturing, Education, Livelihoods, Online Services, and others – thus contributing to nation-building.

Joining social enterprises and start-up's

20% joined social enterprises and start-up's after the Yatra

Jagriti Yatra is creating a pool of passionate youth who want to work with social enterprises and start-up's. These youth may not be ready to become entrepreneurs on Monday morning. Rather they want to gain more experience by working at the social enterprises and start-up's. And then later take the path of enterprise. This excludes around 4% Yatris who joined entrepreneurship courses, development studies, business studies, and took fellowships such as Teach for India, Gandhi, and Piramal fellowships.

51% of the Yatris are directly involved in nation-building activities

Impact on Globe

Jagriti Yatra has set a global Example of a Unique Youth Program. It has generated great interest in USA, UK, South Africa and France where similar programs are now being developed. In the US, the Millennial Train journey, was led by a JY Alumnus, was successfully completed in August 2013

Intangible Impact

The impact created by the Yatra on the lives of the Yatris goes far beyond the 15 days of train. Toughest to measure, intangible impact on the Yatris is the most significant impact. What emerged to be the most helpful to the Yatris in their personal and professional pursuits are:

- Exposure
- Entrepreneurial skills

- Understanding of different career choices
- Networking
- Interpersonal skills
- Greater understanding of multiple cultures

SUPPORTING JAGRITI YATRA

1. Sponsor Jagriti Yatra

We are looking for partner-sponsors who are genuinely driven by the vision and mission of Jagriti.

Our corporate partners recognise that entrepreneurship is critical not just for job-creation but also to spur innovation and development in agriculture, healthcare, energy, education and other vital sectors that take the economy forward.

How will your sponsorship impact Yatris?

Life-Changing Experience to 450 Youngsters, mostly coming from small towns and villages.

Our corporate partners have helped take 450 future nation builders and potential entrepreneurs each year on this journey of awakening.

Over 60% of our participants hail from small towns and villages where the need for job creation is vital. The exposure, learning and network gained from the Yatra is instrumental in their entrepreneurial journey.

Sponsoring opportunities

Apart from massively transforming the lives of Indian youth on-board the train, the Yatra also has a wide and deep reach through its messaging on the train and local transport, merchandise and products, branding, media coverage and year-long support activities. This gives an equal opportunity to our partners to find a relevant audience for their brand.

How do you benefit?

If you are motivated and inspired by our vision, and find value in our impact on India's youth and its entrepreneurial potential, we are happy to offer a customized value proposition that associates your company's brand and values with Jagriti Yatra's core characteristics of enterprise, innovation, collaboration, and transformation.

By collaborating with Jagriti Yatra, you automatically get the benefits of reach and impact –

- Associating with a unique youth movement of entrepreneurship
- Projecting the brand as supporter of the youth of the country involved in nation-building effort
- Penetrating into the small towns and villages of the country through year-long activities and media-led campaigns
- Accessing our ever-growing strong alumni network of youth across the country

Contact sidhartha@jagritiyatra.com for more details.

2. Sponsor Nation-Builders

If you are a business, foundation, trust or an individual who strongly believes in the Jagriti Yatra concept, don't miss this opportunity to support the Yatris – our future Nation-Builders.

Sponsor Deserving Yatris

The 'experiential learning' provided by the Yatra exposes India's youth to role model enterprises. These can be adapted and replicated

in their own setting. Jagriti Yatra has led to deep impact for the Yatris, 40% of whom get involved in some form of business and social entrepreneurship post the Yatra experience.

Your support will provide an opportunity for these nation-builders to be a part of this transformational experience.

Sponsor Women Yatris

40% of our Yatris are women, and we aim to take this to 50%. We firmly believe that women must play an equal role in the Nation-Building process.

Don't miss this opportunity to sponsor a future woman entrepreneur and to encourage more and more women to be a part of the Yatra, so we can see this 40% ratio grow.

Sponsor Yatris from Your Own Community

Do you already support a community or village or youth group? You can sponsor candidates from such groups, provided they clear our selection process.

Contact aarti@jagritiyatra.com for more details.

3. Volunteer for Jagriti Yatra

We look for committed volunteers round the year for these roles:

Selectors Panel

If you have a knack for finding talent, volunteering for the Selectors Panel can be highly rewarding for you. As a selector, you will be required to assess candidate applications for the next Yatra.

Criteria

- Resonance with our vision of Enterprise-led development
- Ability to identify potential social/business entrepreneurs through applications submitted by candidates
- Expertise in academia as professors, entrepreneurs (both social and business), innovators and various other vocations
- Experience of work with youth, social or professional

Time commitment – 3 hours per week

Contact vibha@jagritiyatra.com for more details.

4. Awareness Ambassador

If you've had a life-changing Yatra experience, then share the joy and opportunity with others! 'Awareness Ambassadors' for Jagriti Yatra are those past Yatris who are keen to help us spread awareness and create interest in the Yatra amongst others. Jagriti Yatra has a thriving Campus ambassadors program (CAP) all across India.

By doing so, you can get deserving candidates to learn about the Yatra and encourage them to apply.

Contributions

- Conduct awareness presentations in colleges/institutions, NGOs
- Organise press meets involving local press
- Deliver presentations in your town/village and surrounding areas

Time commitment – 2 hours per week

Contact awareness@jagritiyatra.com for more details.

5. Engine Room Club (ERC)

Are you a Yatri who is excited by the sheer scale of operations of the Yatra ?

Helping organise Jagriti Yatra is a tremendous experience and often a next step for those who have already experienced it as Yatris. The ERC makes sure the train reaches the next stop on time, that everyone onboard has been served fresh, delightful meals and that the experience is smooth and conducive to learning. Join the Engine Room Club to help with the operations, programming and media on the biggest train event of its kind in the world!

Contributions

Volunteer in various departments like catering, house-keeping, programming, media management, train punctuality, etc

Time commitment – Full time from December 1 to January 10, 2013

Contact ashutosh@jagritiyatra.com for more details.

GANDHI: THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MAN

Little things that our popular understanding of the man has not helped us know...

By Dr. C.Hariharan - Founder, BCIL (panelist in Ahmedabad)

1. WHEN boarding a train one of his shoes slipped and fell on the tracks. He removed his other shoe and hurled it onto the platform near the first one. To help any person who would find the pair.
2. BECAUSE one of his first teachers of English was an Irishman, Gandhi spoke English with an Irish accent.
3. HE wrote his autobiography in Gujarati. Later it was translated by Mahadev Desai into English. Desai stayed by him until 1942 when he passed away.
4. CHRIST was crucified on Friday. Gandhi was born on Friday. India got her freedom on Friday. Gandhi was assassinated on Friday.
5. GANDHI never once travelled in an aircraft.
6. HE hated cinema. He never once saw one, from every account so far. He didn't think cinema to be a medium to propagate his ideals. But in his last years, he used Radio. While in England in 1931, he made his first radio broadcast for the United States. The first thing the people of the United States heard him say was, "Do I have to speak into this thing?!"
7. GANDHI never set foot on American soil, but he had many American

- fans and followers. One of his more unusual admirers was Henry Ford. Gandhi sent him an autographed charkha through a NYT journalist. During the darkest days of the Second World War, Ford, who was struck by the charkha's "mechanical simplicity and high moral purpose", would often spin on "the symbol of economic independence" that Gandhi had sent.
8. GANDHI was ambidextrous. He long-handed all his writings, and when he got tired he changed hands and continued to write his notes on the back of mail covers. The official record of his sayings and writings runs to more than 90 volumes
9. NEHRU on Gandhi : Babu's kooky pronouncements on sex are "abnormal and unnatural" and "can only lead to frustration, inhibition, neurosis, and all manner of physical and nervous ills... I do not know why he is so obsessed by this problem of sex".
10. THERE is a myth that Gandhi fought apartheid in S Africa. The truth is when a newly arrived Gandhi was ejected from a first-class railway carriage at Pietermaritzburg after a white passenger objected to sharing space with a "coolie" (an Indian indentured laborer), Gandhi demanded to be allowed to travel first-class and it was accepted by the railway company [unlike what you saw in Attenborough's film, Gandhi].
11. WHAT followed is not known to the popular world. Rather than marking the start of a campaign against racial oppression, as legend has it, this rail episode was the start

of a campaign to extend racial segregation in South Africa. Gandhi was adamant that "respectable Indians" should not be obliged to use the same facilities as "raw Kaffirs" [meaning the African blacks]. He petitioned the authorities in Durban, where he practised law, to end the indignity of making Indians use the same entrance to the post office as blacks, and counted it a victory when three doors were introduced: one for Europeans, one for Asiatics and one for Natives. As most people of the times, Gandhi was a racist.

12. THOUGH Gandhi was racially prejudiced against native Africans when he arrived in SA in 1893, it was also the sign of the times when all races were prejudiced against one another—Indians looking at native Africans as less civilized than themselves and the whites looking at all dark races as genetically inferior in all aspects. However, to Gandhi's credit, over a span of twenty years he evolved to realize that the struggles of native Africans is no different from his own for the Indians and he came to empathize with their plight.

13. GEORGE Orwell on Gandhi : I found Mohandas Gandhi personally disgusting, nonetheless found him to be a much more idealistic (for good and bad) version than any I have been used to. Mohandas Gandhi leaves a clean odour behind him after his murder.

14. GANDHI was the traditional overbearing Hindu patriarch, making his wife and children do what he intended for them. It is doubly sad because Gandhi himself benefited immensely by the early death of his father in that he could chalk out his own path in life, by

going to London to study Law and on return to India, moving to Bombay to seek a career as a lawyer. When he failed in that endeavour, he chose to leave for South Africa, all of which being possible because his father was not around to force him to stay in Porbander and do what he thought was best for him. Gandhi seemed to have reflected little on all this as he chalked out the paths for all his four children, much against their wishes.

15. THE Tamil community in S Africa of 1890s accepted Gandhi completely as their leader much more than his own Gujarati community, even though Gandhi could not speak Tamil. The Chinese community, led by Leung Quinn, also joined the struggle. Interestingly, the Chinese saw the struggle in a broader light as a struggle to 'restore the pride of Asia and the Asiatics'.

16. HE was a walking enthusiast. Walking, he said, "is justly called the prince of exercises". He began enjoying long walks in high school, preferring lengthy rambles to organized sports. As a law student in London, he saved money by walking as many as eight to ten miles a day. It was primarily those long walks, he said, that "kept me practically free from illness throughout my stay in England and gave me a fairly strong body". All those years of walking served him well during the Salt March of 1930 when, at the age of 60, he walked 241 miles from his ashram to the sea at Dandi.

17. THE same caisson, or gun carriage, that bore Gandhi's body during his funeral in 1948 was used in 1997 for Mother Teresa's funeral.

18. GANDHI inspired 5 world leaders

who got the Nobel Peace prize—Martin Luther King Jr. (USA), Dalai Lama (Tibet), Aung San Suu Kyi (Myanmar), Nelson Mandela (S. Africa) and Adolfo Perez Esquivel (Argentina). All have acknowledged the fact that they were influenced by the philosophy of Gandhi. Yet, Mahatma Gandhi; the man who inspired these Nobel Peace Prize winners, never got a Nobel Prize!

19. THE honorific Mahatma applied to him first in 1914. It was thought up not by Tagore as is popularly thought. It was an associate of his in South Africa.

20. AS for the epithet, Father of the Nation, it was Subhas Chandra Bose who used the term for Gandhi, in a radio address from Singapore in 1944. Bose used to call him Desapitha (Hindi word meaning Father of the Nation). Later, when Gandhi was assassinated, Jawaharlal Nehru, in a radio address to the nation, started his address saying, "The Father of the Nation is no more." That made the epithet stick and it gained household currency after.

21. THE Sabarmati Ashram is the largest repository of Gandhiji's original writings and has a photo archive of over 6,000 images of Gandhiji and his associates. It also has a substantial library of over 45,000 books on and about Gandhiji and the Indian National Movement.

22. GANDHI never actually said "be the change you want to see", it is the sort of resonant T-shirt slogan he ought to have uttered. Gandhi's words have been tweaked a little too much in recent years. Perhaps you've noticed a bumper sticker that purports to quote

him: "Be the change you wish to see in the world." When you first come across it, this does sound like something Gandhi would have said. But when you think about it a little, it starts to sound more like... a bumper sticker. Displayed brightly on the back of a Prius, it suggests that your responsibilities begin and end with your own behavior. It's apolitical, and a little smug. Sure enough, it turns out there is no reliable documentary evidence for the quotation. The closest verifiable remark we have from Gandhi is this: "If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him. ... We need not wait to see what others do."

23. GANDHI may have looked like a saint, in an outfit designed to represent the poor of rural India. But, he was above all a wily operator and tactician. Having lived in Britain and South Africa, he was familiar with the system that he was attempting to subvert. He knew how to undermine the British, when to press an advantage and when to withdraw. Little wonder that one British provincial governor described Gandhi as being as "cunning as a cartload of monkeys".

SPONSORS' EXPERIENCE



Google

Google for Entrepreneurs is an umbrella for several dozen programs and partnerships around the world that support startups and entrepreneurs. The focus is to partner with strong organizations that serve entrepreneurs in local communities, to bring Google teams and tools directly to entrepreneurs through Google-led-programs and to place relevant Google tools in hands of startups as they are getting off the ground and ready to scale.

About partnership with Jagriti Yatra

Mary Grove, Director of Global Entrepreneurship Outreach

"The spirit of entrepreneurship is a core part of Google. Google is committed to empowering entrepreneurs and supporting innovative programs that promote entrepreneurship throughout the world. Google believes in Jagriti Yatra's mission of transforming India through entrepreneurship and is excited to partner with Jagriti in this mission."

Coca Cola

About 5by20

In September 2010, The Coca-Cola Company announced a 10-year global initiative to empower 5 million women through the Coca-Cola system. This initiative aims to help women in our global business system break down the barriers that can prevent them from growing their businesses. By providing access to business skills, financial services, assets and support networks of peers and mentors, the 5by20 initiative globally is helping women achieve their entrepreneurial dreams, while also creating thriving, sustainable communities.

Following the announcement of the 5by20 initiative in September 2010, the program began in four pilot countries - Brazil, India, South Africa and the Philippines. In 2012, the program has expanded its outreach to 12 countries. In India, the 5by20 program is focused on driving women's empowerment through entrepreneurship for inclusive growth. The program's key focus is to build capability and provide women with access to resources, these being some of the key barriers that women face towards economic empowerment. The program enabled and enhanced the livelihood of around 20000 women as of end 2013 through 4 key initiatives of eKOCool – Solar Cooler Placement drive, Parivartan – A Retailer Training Program, Pragati – A Business Skills Program and Project Unnati – A Sustainable Agriculture initiative

Echoing the vision of this initiative, Neeraj Garg - VP Coca-Cola India and South West Asia said, "India has tremendous entrepreneurial spirit and we have seen this echo across the board from a small woman retailer in a village outside Agra to a modern retailer in a metro city. We at Coca-Cola India believe in supporting the entrepreneurial spirit through imparting the right mix of skill & expertise and deploying resources to help them carve a niche for their businesses. Our 5by20 initiative is one such step forward where we are engaging with women entrepreneurs and providing them business tools to help spur their growth and foster sustainable development. Our partnership with the Jagriti yatra takes the same spirit forward. This country has always been a nation of entrepreneurs and self-driven professionals. As the country moves towards taking its rightful place in the world economy, a strong dose of entrepreneurial spirit and innovation will catapult us into the league of large, self-sustaining nations. We are hoping that through our partnership with the Jagriti Yatra, we further rekindle and reinvigorate the entrepreneurial spirit and share best practices and inspirational stories among the right set of people."

Rolls-Royce

Rolls-Royce is also a world-leading provider of power systems and services for use on land, at sea and in the air. They have established a strong position in global markets – civil aerospace, defense aerospace, marine and energy. In India, rolls-Royce employs over 500 people in India, with a further 1,000 employed through joint ventures.

Three facts about Rolls-Royce

- Around the world, a Rolls-Royce powered aircraft takes off or lands every 2.5 seconds.
- The engine must start and operate at temperatures ranging from minus 60 to plus 45 degrees centigrade.
- A Rolls-Royce engine draws in up to 1.25 tonnes of air per second - that's the equivalent of emptying a squash court full of air in less than a second.

It is this kind of 'magic' that science and engineering makes possible today. What we do is exciting; it is inspiring and in some ways, changes our world.

Rolls-Royce is committed to being actively involved in a range of activities with partners in the education sector. One example of their education outreach activities in India is the Chevening Rolls-Royce Science and Leadership Programme which was launched in 2011

The other example is Jagriti Yatra! "Rolls-Royce is delighted to be part of Jagriti Yatra: supporting youth who will be the future leaders of India. As a global employer of scientists and engineers, we recognise that inspiring young people to be entrepreneurial and pursue their ambitions is important to the future of a nation; and for an ever-changing world. Kishore Jayaraman, President, India & South Asia at Rolls-Royce

National Insurance Company Limited

Jagriti Yatra is a pioneering movement of Enterprise-led-development. NICL was established at the peak of nationalist Swadeshi movement and we have carried its essence of building India by making insurance more accessible in the underserved and unpenetrated areas by skilfully leveraging technology, thus ensuring inclusive growth. Jagriti Yatra reflects our spirit of 'bottom-up' development and we are extremely glad to associate with this movement." — NSR Chandraprasad, CMD, NICL

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Mumbai Office:
+91-22-64535354



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