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'More opportunities ahead for youth'

Staff Reporter

Need to give up fragmented approach in science, says expert

– Photo: S. Siva Saravanan



MAKING A POINT: Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India R. Chidambaram speaking at the inauguration of TIFAC-CORE Meet 2009 at PSG College of Technology in the city on Tuesday.

Coimbatore: Youngsters in India could look forward to increased opportunities in the future, said R. Chidambaram, Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India and Chairman of Technical Information Forecast and Assessment Council, on Tuesday.

He was speaking at the inauguration of the Technical Information Forecast and Assessment Council (TIFAC) – CORE Meet 2009, a three-day event being held at PSG College of Technology.

Amrita School of Engineering and Kumaraguru College of Technology are also participating in the event.

A memorandum of understanding was also signed between TIFAC – CORE and five institutions on the sidelines of the meet.

Dr. Chidambaram said that there was a need to give up fragmented approach in science and develop synergy in projects.

The progress of the country could be gauged by comparing life in rural India with life in non-urban cities of developed countries, he said and added that indices such as female literacy rate and per capita electricity consumption were important indicators.

The scientist backed projects such as hybrid electric transportation systems to control carbon-di-oxide emission and added that nuclear energy was required to meet the energy needs of the country.

He also stressed the need for TIFAC-CORE to conduct studies in energy-intensive fields like manufacturing to ensure energy efficiency.

On climate change, he said that India was pursuing a low-carbon path

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based on nuclear energy. Dr. Chidambaram also talked about the need for sustained focus on food-processing industry, especially in rural areas, to increase the shelf-life of perishable goods.

He said that optimal utilisation of visible capability, identifying and harnessing latent capability and international co-operation was key to growth.

India should sign up for mega projects, however, the investment should be based on a forecast of technology required for the industry and society.

Factors such as benefit to society, education, environment, and ethics should be considered, he added.

Recalling the success story of TIFAC-CORE, Dr. Chidambaram said that of the projects undertaken in the last five years, 47 per cent of the stakes had come from the industry, which was more than those of TIFAC-CORE.

Former IIT Director P.V. Indiresan said that economists had calculated that 55 per cent growth was technology driven, 25 per cent education-driven and only 10 per cent owing to money.

Key requirements for growth were men, material, money and management. "We export manpower, poorest state in India has the best natural resources, money is also not a problem, but we lack management".

He suggested that TIFAC – CORE could select students at a younger for quality higher education and use them for nation-building in the fields of their own choice, this could end the search for skilled manpower.

Vice-Chancellor of Amrita University P. Venkat Rangan termed TIFAC – CORE as a short-cut to winning propositions. He said that the technology was evolving so fast that investments needed to be done carefully. Information Technology had taken away teachers, but today it was giving them multiple avenues.

Chief Executive of PSG Institutions C.R. Swaminathan; Co-Chairman of Kumaraguru College of Technology B.K. Krishnaraj Vanavarayar; and PSG College Principal R. Rudramurthy spoke.

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