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Access to knowledge will drive innovation, says S&T Minister

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Access to knowledge is next driver of change says Jaipal Reddy



Speaking at the National Technological Awards held at New Delhi to mark the National Technology Day on May 11, 2013, the Union Science and Technology Minister, Mr S Jaipal Reddy mentioned that in modern economy, where innovation is likely to emerge as the next driver of change, access to knowledge more than labor might become a key. He said that the Department of Science and Technology (DST) in all three departments and Ministry of Earth Sciences are actively engaged in development of an ecosystem for innovation. "We have described in our Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STI Policy) of 2013, innovation as a tool for conversion of knowledge into societal value or wealth. Open Source Drug Discovery and CSIR-800 of CSIR, Millennium Alliance and Grass Root Innovation System of DST, vaccine programs of DBT and Ocean Information System of MoES are all indicators of the commitment of my two ministries to the cause of innovation making a difference to all," the Minister added.

Talking further about innovation and technology, Mr Reddy added, "The technological developments in the global history have also led to economic asymmetries within the society. Technology has made a difference to global societies; but somewhat inequitably on account of differentiated access. The nations have come to be categorized as developed, developing and emerging. The question is whether these classifications relate to the differential access of people to technologies. In modern times, innovation is expected to make even greater difference to people than technology."

The minister said that the true celebration of development rests in providing equitable living choices to all people in the country. "The question ahead of the government is "How to make technology render equitable access to developmental choices to people?" he asked.

Mr Reddy revealed that the work on development of a system that will enable online submission and tracking of all competitive grant proposals in our science ministries has been started. "This will ensure that all such proposals are scrutinized in time bound manner and will bring greater transparency in the system. This online system will be in place in the next few months and will be adopted by all the departments under the S&T and Earth Science ministries. He further said our science, research and innovation must evolve into a system which paves a high technology-led path for India as evinced in the New STI Policy 2013," he added further.

Among the dignitaries present on the occasion were Dr T Ramasami, secretary, Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Prof. Samir K Brahmachari, secretary, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) and director-general, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).