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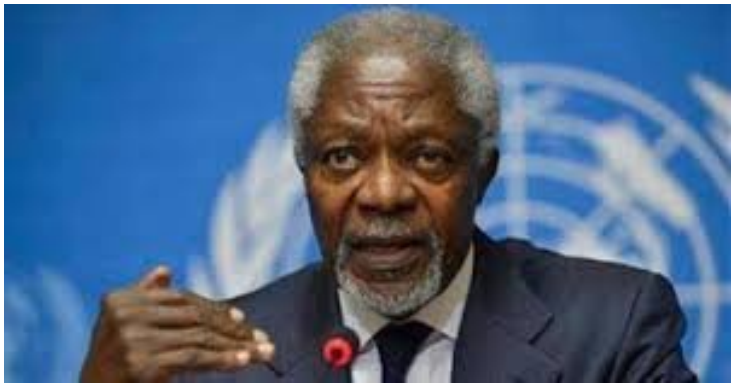

In his speech, Mr Kofi Annan expressed, "It is a privilege to celebrate the achievements of these extraordinary men and women. India is becoming a global leader in scientific research and innovation. This leadership does bring with it an increased

responsibility. It is a responsibility to help identify and develop innovative scientific solutions to our world's complex problems."

In the life sciences discipline, the Infosys Prize 2013 was awarded to Dr Rajesh S Gokhale, director, CSIR - Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, New Delhi, for his work in the field of lipid metabolism in M. tuberculosis.

After receiving the award from Mr Annan, Dr Gokhale added, "This award is truly special. I want to thank my wife and two sons, without whom this would not have been possible. Bioscience is becoming a truly collaborative enterprise. This is for all of you who believe in doing innovative things in this country."

The prize consists of a gold medal, a citation and a purse. The prize money is valued at Rs 55 lakh for each winner.

Talking about the threat and devastation caused by global climate change, Mr Annan explained, "Whether we talk about the health of our planet or division of our society, there is no doubt that we face serious challenges. Climate change is perhaps the most pressing and complex issue and it is not just an environmental issue. It also poses threat to our water supply, health and security."

Dr Gokhale holds his Master's degree in Chemistry from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay and a Ph.D in Molecular Biophysics from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore. He then carried out his post-doctoral work at Stanford University.

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Addressing the global challenges and solutions, Mr Kofi Annan opined, "It would require us a long term vision by global countries on common values and goals. It would require political will and ethical leadership to realize it at national and international level. It would require us to harness the power of science and innovation, and clean energy source must be identified and put in place thereby reducing waste and our carbon footprint."

He further said, "New treatment must be found to tackle illnesses and chronic diseases. By finding research solutions, you will give India a big competitive advantage. Scientific innovation can strengthen the industry by facilitating the transformation to a high value, knowledge-based economy."

Mr Annan feels that India has lost many of its brightest and talented minds to other countries. He expressed, "The answer for this is to provide incentives where they can realize their dreams in their home. Now we are seeing this happen in India. Indian scientists increasingly no longer feel to travel abroad to realize their potential. India is becoming a global education super power."

In a country which is said to have the world's youngest population by 2020, investments are seen to be crucial, and lifelong dedication and especially training girls will elevate India out of poverty said Mr Annan.

According to Mr Annan, China, Korea and Hongkong have doubled their investments in research over the past decade. "Today about 40% of all researchers are located in the Asia-Pacific region. This is a huge opportunity to overcome science dominance. Research can be pooled and knowledge can be shared to address common problems," he said.

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Our countries are struggling with the aftermath of financial crisis. Mr Annan believes in the involvement of corporate sector which can help unlock resources. "It can unleash energy and create transformational research in to practical solutions," he said.

Mr Annan also commented on academic research which can make valuable contribution by aligning research with the real world concerns, particularly among the poor and vulnerable.

Culminating his speech, Mr Kofi Annan said, "We must ensure scientific research is not exploited and that it is guided by ethics and values. We must develop IP regimes which will enable and encourage, rather than stifle innovation. We have to focus our scientific power on issues which can achieve fair, prosperous and sustainable future for all of us, and let me end by congratulating once again all the laureates, and remember the world will follow in your footsteps."

It is noteworthy that Mr Kofi Annan along with the United Nations (UN) was awarded The Nobel Peace Prize in 2001 *for their work for a better organized and more peaceful world*.

The Infosys Prize was instituted in 2009, primarily as an exclusive prize for mathematics.

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