

Innovative research is the key to progress, says President

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The President of India, Mr Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated a week long 'Festival of Innovations' on March 7, 2015 at Rashtrapati Bhavan and gave away National Biennial Awards for Grassroots Innovations. The President also interacted with a new batch of Innovation Scholars In-Residence and Writers In-Residence. The festival will go on till March 13th.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said Innovation is key to progress and prosperity. The process of innovation converts knowledge into social good and economic wealth. It encourages the engagement of talent with society to improve the quality of life. India has always had a strong tradition of knowledge. Our knowledge systems offer tremendous scope for research involving land-to-lab investigation and lab-to-land transfer of technology. It is important that the vast repository of indigenous knowledge is protected, documented, and preserved in active collaboration with prominent practitioners of traditional knowledge.

Mr Mukherjee said India has the potential to be at the forefront of innovation. Encouraging steps in this direction notwithstanding, our country lags behind many others. India is ranked 76th in the Global Innovation Index 2014, much below China which is at the 29th position. Even Russia, at the 49th place and Brazil at 61, performed better than us.

On the occasion, a total of 41 awards were given to 40 innovators and 6 communities. The President gave away 16 National, one lifetime achievement and one posthumous award.

The President said, "Building viable linkages between formal and informal sectors also call for deepening the involvement of the leaders of technological, financial and educational sectors with the creativity of common people and young students. A Festival of Innovation has been started at the Rashtrapati Bhavan this year. It will help to provide a platform to bring different

stakeholders together and make these entities active partners in inclusive innovation. The innovators participating in this program have come from various parts of our country. I hope that an empathetic value chain for disseminating good ideas can be built upon this initiative."

After the award ceremony, the President also inaugurated the Innovation Exhibition at Rashtrapati Bhavan. This will remain open for the public till 13th March, 2015.