SRiSHTI

SSSIHL Research

in

Scientific, Humanitarian, & Technological Innovations

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VISION OF THE REVERED FOUNDER CHANCELLOR

TODAY, in the name of promoting education, all kinds of bizarre developments devoid of morality are taking place in the country. There is no trace of humility and discipline which are the hallmarks of true education. In the place of character and good conduct, which should be prevalent among students, we notice today the spread of materialism, ostentation and arrogance amongst them.
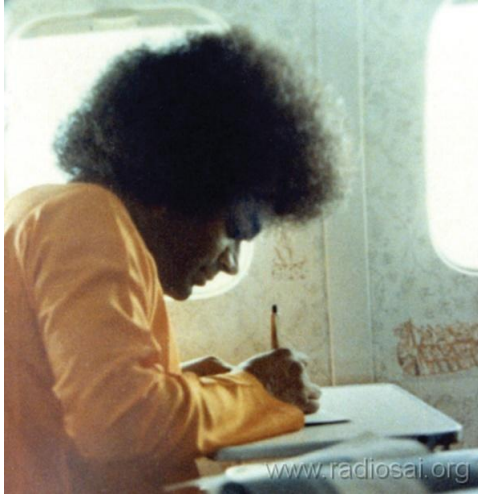
With the rapid advance of science and technology in the world, there is a corresponding decline in peace and security. Developing insatiable desires, the modern student is vitiating his mind. He lacks the capacity for introspection. But his external vision is turned in all directions. The primary thing students should seek to know is: Who is a man and what are the qualities that distinguish a good human being? "Man" means an individual with faith. One's faith gets developed when one lives up to one's beliefs. The sacredness of the human being should be recognised.

There is no use in attempting to establish a new system of education or a new social system. By these means the current problems cannot be solved. We have to bring up a generation of pure-hearted boys and girls. To rear such a generation, there should be a climate of purity and sincerity. This calls for the development of morality and devotion to truth. Character and truth lead to the emergence of spirituality in the divine human personality. Hence, spirituality is the basic foundation for producing a generation of pure-hearted boys and girls. Only when we have such pure young persons, will the nation experience peace and prosperity. To lead a good life, students will have to give up their selfishness. Unfortunately, the spirit of sacrifice is not to be seen among students today.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba
22 July 1991
Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 24

IDEAS TO OUTCOMES

Saagithya J

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Ideas to Outcomes

Innovation is a process which brings about new ideas, methods, products and services that have a positive impact on society. Innovation is driven by a combination of factors like creativity, curiosity and interest of an individual for the betterment of the society, which in turn leads to its economic growth.

Thomas Edison's statement "I never did anything by accident, nor did any of my inventions come by accident, but by working hard" informs us that innovations just don't occur by accident. Innovation is a process that requires a lot of patience and creativity. An innovative process starts with a need of an opportunity or a different solution for any given problem. Governments across the world have been encouraging their youth and their citizens to be innovative.

As stated by the great economists, Marshall and Schumpeter, innovation and entrepreneurship are the key forces for the economic development of nations. Schumpeter's "Theory of Development" gives a prominent role to the entrepreneur and the innovations introduced by him in the economic development process. Schumpeter's work inspired an entire school of economics, which focussed on the present-day flourishing innovation-related phenomena. Based on the "Theory of Development", profit can arise if innovations of new products are introduced into the market. In simple words, we can say that the growth of output is directly proportional to the growth rate of innovations.

According to Schumpeter, an entrepreneur is the one who brings about new innovations. Entrepreneurs undertake innovations, and launch enterprises, because they are not only lured by profit, but are also driven by the motivation (to establish their dynasty in the business world or to conquer in the competitive world), and to savour the joy of serving and creating new products.

In a nutshell, it is INNOVATION that propels INNOVATION. I think our future is like a big, exciting mystery waiting to be solved, and I guess innovation is the key to unlock it. Every new idea has the potential to change the world. The best part is that anyone can be an innovator, and all it requires is curiosity, creativity and the courage to try something new. Innovation is all about dreaming new ideas, and working hard to turn them real. Novelty helps us to move forward, and makes the world an interesting and better place to live in. Every big change starts with a simple idea, and that idea could come from anyone.

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE:

CLOGGED ARTERIES COULD BE DEBILITATING AND FATAL

Uday Saxena, PhD

Introduction

Cardiovascular disease, which is manifested as a collection of outcomes such as heart attack, stroke and hypertension, is still the world's largest killer of humans – twice as many people die of this disease relative to cancer. Several effective drugs in the late 1980s and early 1990 called statins were introduced. The statins did dramatically reduce death due to this disease by lowering blood cholesterol levels. But we still need newer therapies.

What causes cardiovascular disease? Simply put, it is the clogging of critical arteries which stops blood supply to the organs such as heart, brain or kidneys which results in devastating outcomes. Let us understand how the arteries get clogged.

The artery can get blocked due to build-up of fat and cholesterol in the form of a plaque, a physical lump, which then can block blood supply (see picture below of an artery which is clogged). Imagine a waterpipe supplying water in your home, and the pipe gets choked, then water supply is stopped. This is pretty much what happens when the artery clogs. If the artery supplying blood to the heart is blocked, it can cause a heart attack, if it is in the brain, it results in stroke, or if in the kidney artery, then it may cause high blood pressure or hypertension.

Causes

There are several risk factors for the build-up of plaque in your arteries. Let us split them into two buckets

a)   Non-Modifiable

- Age – The clogging increases dramatically in later ages after about 40 years.
- Male gender is more prone than female although after menopause the risk is similar for females.
- Family history, meaning if your grandparents, parents, siblings or uncle or aunts had premature cardiovascular disease before 50 years, the risk is more.

b)   Modifiable

- Smoking
- Sedentary life style
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- High fat and cholesterol diet

Obviously, nothing can be done about non-modifiable risk factors but the focus of treatment is on modifiable factors.

Treatment

Low cholesterol, low-fat diet, and physical exercise are the first set of interventions for people at risk. The main preventive focus is on lowering your blood cholesterol levels. This is done using statins which are quite powerful at lowering your cholesterol. This alone can cut your risk of cardiovascular disease by 50%. Besides cholesterol, blood triglyceride (fat) levels and blood pressure are also lowered which cuts the risk even more. Similarly, diabetes is also controlled. To treat existing clogged arteries, interventional cardiology is used in the form of balloon angioplasty. In this, a fine tubing attached to an inflatable balloon, is inserted into the artery and then the balloon is inflated which literally blows the block away.

What's coming?

Statins predispose patients to type 2 diabetes; so a new set of non-statin drugs are being introduced called PCSK9 inhibitors. These are injectable drugs that lower cholesterol through a new mechanism of action and may not promote diabetes. From interventional cardiology perspective, robotic angioplasty is being used for precision; biodegradable and drug coated inert stents (tiny pieces of thimble like structures) that keep arteries open and free of plaque build-up are also being used. 3D bioprinted lab grown patches of heart muscles are being tested to replace dead heart tissue and improve blood flow. An individual above 50 should get their blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels tested annually and take a tread mill test (TMT) to stay on top of cardiovascular disease, especially if there is family history.

(The author, has spent the last 25 years researching cardiovascular and metabolic disease therapies. He was associated with the Team at Pfizer which discovered "Lipitor/Atorvastatin" the largest selling statin with peak sales of over seventeen billion dollars annually)

FEEDING ASTRONAUTS BEYOND THE EARTH: THE ROLE OF FOOD TECHNOLOGISTS IN SPACE

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Imagine thousands of miles away from home, floating in space amidst the astonishing view of stars and planets, and enjoying a perfectly designed meal while sheltered within a spaceship. For astronauts, food is not that which satiates their hunger, but a critical factor for their survival. Every bite an astronaut consumes in the zero-gravity zone is hard-earned after their tireless training, and performance of their crew tasks. For such space heroes, who dedicate their entire lifestyles, to those uncountable, and sometimes, uncontrollable missions, how do we ensure that they receive the right nutrition for them to stay healthy and strong? How can we store or even grow foods in the cold cosmos? Obviously, the challenges are immense, yet what we feed an astronaut plays a crucial role in the infinite success of space exploration!

In microgravity, everything changes -- including the way our body processes food. Research shows that astronauts lose up to 1% of bone density during the mission. To counteract this, food technologists design meals that are rich in calcium and vitamin-D to ensure that each bite is packed with essential nutrients which increase their bone strength. Ultimately, food technologists face the challenge of providing astronauts with three thousand tailored calories per day through a balanced proportion of protein, and vitamins as per their individual energy requirement. So, remember that astronauts are not just floating around in space, but that they are also on a high-stakes diet. After all, space might be the boundary, but a balanced diet is universal!

Once, the crew gathers in the spacecraft galley, they eagerly open the freeze-dried pasta and vacuum-sealed fruits. These foods are meticulously engineered by using advanced food technology that ensures the flavour retentional and nutrient preservational aspects. One astronaut exclaimed, "It's incredible how delicious these meals are, given the conditions up here." Additionally, irradiation extends the shelf life of the food as it ensures the taste and safety of the food for months as this processing ensures microbial stability, nutritional preservation, and space efficiency. Some people

still feel sceptical and claim that irradiated food has "too many rays" while others are excited as their snacks have a scientific side.

As the mission of the International Space Station (ISS) progressed, the sustainability of their food emerged as a focal point for the crew. The question arose: "What if they could cultivate their food in space?" Well, the concept is not anymore theoretical as ongoing research focusses on the hydroponic gardens using hydroponic and aeroponic technologies in space. The technologies allow efficient growth of plants without soil, utilizing a controlled environment. "Imagine biting into a fresh lettuce leaf grown right here in space," one astronaut remarked out of his enthusiasm. Research has also indicated that apart from providing essential nutrients, growing a garden in space contributes to the astronaut's psychological well-being. Getting exposure to greenery can potentially reduce stress during long and tiring missions. It also gives astronauts a sense of connection to Earth in an isolated environment!

Feeding astronauts beyond the earth is a wild ride through molecular gastronomy, scientific innovation, and a culinary flair. As we connect hydroponics and food preservation through irradiation, we are not just sending them a packet of freeze-dried pasta, we are ensuring that they stay healthy and do not get space scurvy while dreaming of home-cooked food. With every bite of fresh green grown in the microgravity, we are proving that astronauts can also have their own salad while floating in zero gravity zone. The challenge of food technologists is not only to ensure their daily meal is packed with nutrition but also to bring a slice of earth into their orbit!

DELIVERING SUCCESS: THE EVOLUTION OF *DELHIVERY* FROM STARTUP TO INDUSTRY LEADER

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The cornerstone of a start up is vision, a driving force that propels a budding company from its inception to an industry stalwart. Identification of the problem, and a strong and clear vision towards the solution provides direction, motivates the team and sets the foundation for strategic decision-making. For many successful entrepreneurs, their vision is the catalyst that transforms an idea into a thriving business, turning obstacles into opportunities, and dreams into reality. Along with the vision, research about that particular business-sphere, knowledge of product's value for a customer, and exploration of different fields to understand the industry better, help in the growth of a start up.

<u>From Start-up to Unicorn</u>

In business, a unicorn is a start-up company valued at over US$1 billion which is privately owned and not listed on a share market. A start-up can become a unicorn by–

1. Identifying the problem
2. Finding a sustainable solution
3. Ideation and proper planning
4. Employment of technology

Once when Travis Kalanick and Garrett Camp were stuck in Paris on a snowy evening, they were unable to find a taxi. They asked themselves, "What if you could request a ride simply by tapping your phone?" As a result of this incident, Uber emerged. The problem was identified and a sustainable solution was found. It was strongly backed by clear planning and use of technology, turning it from a small start-up to a business unicorn, with a net worth of $155.17 Billion (August, 2024).

Delhivery- Small World

One such success story that exemplifies the power of vision, ideation and planning is *Delhivery*. It was founded by Sahil Barua, Mohit Tandon, Bhavesh Manglani, Suraj Saharan, and Kapil Bharati. Sahil Barua, after pursuing his MBA from IIM, worked for Bain & Company as a consultant, where he met the others. A late delivery from a restaurant made them realize the need for an efficient logistics company in India. They envisioned an ideal logistics company to fulfill the delivery needs of consumers. As a result, they started *Delhivery* which began as a small logistics start-up, in Gurugram, a corporate office in a 250 square feet area, with a bold vision to revolutionize the e-commerce supply chain in India. What started as a modest venture quickly evolved into one of the country's leading logistics providers because of their strategic focus on innovation, technology, and customer-centric solutions. The USP (Unique Selling Propagation) of the model is that *Delhivery* is completely designed for catering to the needs of Indian consumers. Unlike other logistics, *Delhivery* provides door-to-door courier services. Ajith Pai, the Chief Operating Officer of *Delhivery*, said in an interview with *YourStory* team that *Delhivery* works on the principles of "Reliability, Efficiency and Visibility". The scale of operations of this start up is vast, covering the whole country. It delivers across 20,000 pin codes, employing 100K people directly, with 3,500 delivery points and about 100 hubs. About 17 tons of different material flow end to end, across these 2,000 pin codes. One out of every four parcels delivered happens through *Delhivery*. It has become the second largest player in freight space in India. In the financial year 2023, *Delhivery* had a whooping revenue of Rs 75,302 Million. Additionally, it is the Indian partner for FedEx, connecting Indian logistics to the rest of the world. *Delhivery* became a unicorn in 2019 when it raised $413 million in a Series F round led by SoftBank Vision Fund, Carlyle Group, and Fosun International.

Mission: *Delhivery's* mission is to enable customers to operate flexible, reliable, and resilient supply chains at the lowest costs.

Vision: They aim to build the operating system for commerce, through a combination of world-class infrastructure, logistics operations of the highest quality, and cutting-edge engineering and technology capabilities.

<u>Business Model</u>

Delhivery is one of the largest Indian B2B, B2C and C2C logistics courier companies with a vast supply chain infrastructure. It makes money from five business segments:

i. parcel delivery for businesses

ii. consumer to consumer parcel delivery

iii. freight services (truckload & partial truckload)

iv. warehousing

v. cross-border logistics.

<u>SWOT Analysis</u>

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis is a framework used to evaluate a company's position and to develop strategic planning. SWOT analysis assesses internal and external factors, along with the current and future potential of the company.

According to *Trendlyne*, a stock market platform which evaluates SWOT of companies, *Delhivery* has sixteen strengths such as increased funding compared to previous annual years, effective use of capital, etc.; two weaknesses, i.e., declining net funds and underperforming stocks; ten opportunities with zero threats.

To sum up, along with the vision, an idea that is worth turning into a business makes a successful start up. The importance of strategy for start-ups cannot be overstated. *Delhivery* exemplifies how a strategic approach and knowledge of the consumer pulse can lead to significant success and industry impact. There is a need for aspiring entrepreneurs to think big, plan thoughtfully, understand the problem and take a leap. Innovative ideas and strategic thinking can make a lasting impact just as countless successful start-ups have shown. The future is full of possibilities, and with the right approach, one can shape it in extraordinary ways.

THE SEED TO SUSTAIN THE SEED CAPITAL

(Emotional Intelligence Through Applied Scriptures: A Bridge to Education and Entrepreneurial Skills)

Keerthi Peratla, Entrepreneurial Skills Trainer and Founder of thesecreti.in

Alumnus, SSSIHL

"India's IT and IT-BPM services sector is investing big in employee training and skilling, with an annual average investment of about Rs 1.97 crore a company, across sizes. Around 68 percent of the companies also said they were closely involved in the development of employees across levels," India's Best Workplaces in IT & IT-BPM 2023 report released on November 30, 2023 said.

The Union Budget 2024-2025 has several initiatives for start-ups and MSMEs. Empowering India's future generation in the Union Budget 2024–25's allocation of Rs 1.48 lakh crore for education, employment, and skills, is a thoughtful approach and a way to achieve the vision of Viksit Bharat. The MSME ministry was allocated Rs 22,138 crore in the 2024 budget. To enable MSMEs and traditional artisans to sell their products in international markets, E-Commerce Export Hubs will be set up in public-private-partnership (PPP) mode.

Wow!! Gone are those days, when the small fish had to sell their idea to a big fish due to lack of funds and cooperation during collaboration. The Government of India, in the name of various empowerment schemes for VIKSIT BHARAT, is standing upright like a father to safeguard worthy ideas and start-ups, through financial aids.

There are 99,000 start-ups in India and the number is still growing. However, there are only 100 unicorns out of these, who are growing sustainably, by crossing all the phases and stages. The very first reason why a start-up is not able to survive after the initial stage, in spite of the financial support, varied talented and educated youth, seems to be, failure in adaptability and resilience.

How do we attain the mindset of Adaptability and Resilience?

Well, Sri Sathya Sai Baba says, "You cannot teach about God to a hungry man." The Hunger, named 'financial help', is addressed by various schemes of the Government. **Aspiring entrepreneurs need to step up to think about understanding the basic need to attain resilience and become a constantly adaptable individual.**

Sri Sathya Sai Baba says, "My Life is My Message". Let us look at His divine lesson. He provides not just Education, but Educare to all the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, to make them remarkable with great character. So, if the start-up founder has to survive through all the phases, the founder has to have a strong character built on the concept of Educare. Swami inculcated many values in the students through HIS discourses based on the Vedas, culture and humanity.

The Universal Question: Are our scriptures, Vedas and Upanishads, still relevant in today's world?

Yes!! Baba says, just knowing the scripture is not enough, but applying the scriptural injunctions is necessary. Every person whom we call successful in today's world, has adopted a lifestyle and mindset prescribed in the scriptures. For example, Zerodha's founder, Nikhil Kamath, who is a highly evolved individual and then an entrepreneur, talks about the philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita, while he grows in today's start-up world. Kamath's motto, "Hum sab marne wale hain" (We all are going to die), reminds him not to dwell on small setbacks or worries. Nikhil Kamath's mother being a Sai devotee herself, had incorporated the educare concept in their lives from childhood, which turned out as a base for them to become a unicorn start-up founder, at a very young age. All that both brothers, Nikhil and Nithin Kamat, do to grow in their work, is apply the scriptural knowledge they attained.

Can anyone aim to become a Unicorn through such skills?

Yes!! All that we need to do is attain Emotional Intelligence through Applied Scripture and gain the skills of not just adaptability and resilience, but also fear-less decision making and a guilt-free approach towards life.

Know that leadership roles are suitable for those who understand the interdependence of time, work and location as said in Sanskrit - Desha, Kaala, Paristhiti.

Lord Sri Krishna mentions in the Bhagavad Gita,

"Arjuna! There are 4 types of good people who follow the rules to live life. They are (Aartha, Jignasu, arthaa-arthi, jnaani) people who are always worried, people who are eager to know, people who want to earn more, people who are knowledgeable." 7.16

"With the sword of Knowledge, slash the doubts that arise in the heart of ignorance. Bharata, stand and fight." 4.42

Let us all use this divine opportunity provided by Bhagawan Himself to become knowledgeable, while becoming educated, to stand and fight in the real entrepreneurial world.

(Keerthi Peratla (Keerthi Kapuganti as in Anantapur Campus records, 2007 BA) is an Entrepreneurial Skills Trainer and Founder of thesecreti.in.

Different Strategies to deal with Emotional Intelligence, with the help of Neuro Science and the Bhagavad Gita, to be continued in the next article.)

Dr Anand Govindaluri
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Democratising healthcare with innovative solutions in India

The healthcare market globally is a massive and rapidly growing sector of the economy. The global healthcare market size was valued at USD 8.45 trillion in 2020 and is expected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 5.5 per cent from 2021 to 2028 (Grand View Research, 2020). The healthcare industry in India is projected to reach $372 Bn by 2022, at a compound annual growth rate of 39 per cent. The healthcare industry in India comprises hospitals, medical devices, clinical trials, telemedicine, medical tourism, health insurance, and medical equipment (Investindia, 2022). One of the key challenges in

the Indian healthcare market is that the doctor-to-patient ratio in India is relatively low compared to many other countries. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), as of 2021, the doctor-to-patient ratio in India was approximately 1:1456, which is below the global average of 1:1000. This problem can be addressed through public-private partnerships and the adoption of various digital technologies to deliver proper medical services to the patients in a distributed care model.

Rise of Artificial Intelligence and IOT: According to a report by Accenture, the AI healthcare market is projected to reach USD 6.6 billion by 2021 and grow at a CAGR of 40 per cent. AI helps to expedite medical imaging analysis, drug discovery, clinical decision support, patient monitoring, and virtual care. Since the pandemic, it has become abundantly clear how technology has the potential to significantly influence how healthcare facilities are designed, improved, and brought into the new digital era. This foretells us on how people manage their health will change as a result of telemedicine, predictive diagnostics, wearable sensors, and a plethora of new applications. It is heartening to hear that Amazon's Echo, a voice-activated computer can respond to the name "Alexa" which is trained by the American Heart Association to recite life-saving instructions about cardiopulmonary resuscitation. In addition, Alexa is learning other healthcare abilities, such as being a senior citizen's companion and responding to queries about pediatric illnesses. It will soon assist doctors in taking notes, requesting scans, and reminding patients to take their

medications. It is clearly evident that telemedicine, predictive diagnostics, wearable sensors, and a host of new apps will transform how people manage their health from here after.

Genomic Testing: The implementation of numerous preventative healthcare strategies is in high demand on a global scale. Advances in genomic biology are enabling doctors to provide personalised medicine tailored to a patient's unique genetic makeup, especially in cancer and other chronic diseases. There is a growing demand for personalised, and precision medicine. Genetic tests would eventually become as cheap as standard blood tests with the reliance on technology and digital tools. This area can act

The global healthcare market size was valued at USD 8.45 trillion in 2020 and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 5.5 per cent from 2021 to 2028

as a viable tool in understanding drug sensitivity, multifactorial or any kind of medical conditions, and pharmacogenomics. Such a discovery will only further provide support to genome sequencing and allow specialists to get more insights into nutrition, genomics, and dietetics.

Skilling: While there is a paradigm shift in the curricula all across the globe, with the fast transforming

world of technology, Universities, and Colleges are offering many courses like EHealth Management, for students to enhance their skills and competencies to learn, manage, understand, and apply advanced techniques in the healthcare industry. These futuristic programs combine electronic processes and communication strategies, bridging the gap between computers, health, and communications and enabling one to become specialist in the health and management sector.

Mental Health: The healthcare industry is constantly evolving, creating new opportunities and trends. The most fascinating trend is that there is a sizeable cost reduction while providing improved healthcare facilities. Post Covid health scenario has observed a massive rise in mental health issues. Therefore, organisations are gearing up to spread awareness and provide necessary support to the growing demand for mental health services. Healthcare providers offer services for mental health, such as telepsychiatry, counselling, and therapy. There is a dearth shortage and hence demands more mental health professionals, caregivers, and nursing resources to tackle the mental health challenges. The pandemic has disrupted daily life, led to social isolation, increased stress, & anxiety, and caused significant economic hardship, all of which have contributed to mental health issues. Governments, healthcare organisations, and mental health professionals around the world have recognised the need to prioritise mental health in the wake of the pandemic. Many countries have launched mental health campaigns and initiatives to

raise awareness of the importance of mental health and reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.

Metaverse in Healthcare:
Metaverse has the potential to transform healthcare by enabling virtual healthcare services, improving medical training and education, and providing new opportunities for remote patients or seekers of medical facilities. It is so heartening to see remote monitoring, providing health support, and clinical research becoming a reality. Though in its early stages, metaverse has the potential to revolutionise healthcare in several ways making life easier and affordable to all.

Robotics in Healthcare: Robots are used for surgical procedures, and also assist nurses in moving elderly patients and those with spinal cord diseases, among many other applications. Robotic companions benefit elderly people, lonely people, and even children with chronic ailments in the coming years. As technology advances, robotics in medicine

> **The healthcare industry is constantly evolving, creating new opportunities and trends. The most fascinating trend is that there is a sizeable cost reduction while providing improved healthcare facilities**

will be used in more practical ways. Robotic systems are being developed using AI and Machine Learning in the performance of routine tasks which are now being done by skilled healthcare practitioners. This will free doctors to treat more patients with less time pressure, promoting a favorable outcome. Another medical model is the ability to pair objects in a computer-generated virtual world which can help to

manipulate both objects at the same time – digital twins, the medical gadgets currently on the market, which are basically developed with the expectation that the final product is reliable for testing, and the results are generally trustworthy. .

Conclusion
While there may be a whole lot of issues to tackle, one can easily know that the future of healthcare and wellness industry is progressing in the right direction where remote care is being delivered efficiently. In parts of North-East India, drones have made a way to deliver life-saving medicines to the poorest of the poor in a timely manner. This transformation in rural healthcare serves as a powerful example of using technology for making healthcare accessible and affordable to the bottom of the population pyramid.

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Views expressed by **Dr Anand Govindaluri**, Founding Director & CEO, Govin Capital, Singapore

Mr. Vijay Sai Pratap, Co-Founder and CEO-Gramvani and Mr. P.S. Gunaranjan, Founder-UC

Interviewed by Bharadwaj and A. Prem Sai, Students of SSSIHL, Brindavan Campus

(The following is an excerpt of an interview conducted at Brindavan Campus to mark *Azadi ka Amritkaal* on Independence Day 2024.)

Interviewer: Sairam, Sirs. It's great to have you both. Our first question for both of you today would be, instead of us describing your startups, could you each pitch to the audience and explain what your startups do?

VSP: Sairam, everybody. Offering my humble pranams at Bhagwan's Lotus feet. Thank you very much Sai Manohar sir (HoD-DMC,SSSIHL) and the faculty and members of IIC and also the Institute for giving us this opportunity.

I'm Vijay Sai Pratap, co-founder and CEO of Gramvani.

If we believe information is power, then close to 3 billion people globally lack access to informed-decision making spaces, sources that give them reliable information that can help people take information from decisions around areas of health, education, agriculture and other forms of livelihood.

If we believe information is power, then a large part of the population is still deprived of this power. What Gramvani does is create hyperlocal, community-based information platforms, leveraging the power of technology where people can access these platforms using simple feature phones.

Gramvani's platforms have touched close to 5 million people so far, operating through close to 120 community-based platforms. The objective is that technology should not lead to more exclusion. There are enough factors in the society, whether social, cultural or economic, in the current structural processes that lead to exclusion. Technology can be a great enabler, but it should not lead to more disempowerment.

Gramvani's focus has been to build appropriate technologies combined with human intent and capacity, so that communities are empowered to get access to credible

information platforms and also have spaces, safe spaces, where they can have conversations around important topics that matter to them. Most of these voices are not heard. Our objective is that these voices need to be amplified. These voices need to be represented fairly and in a representative manner in the form where policies can be made by listening to people from the ground.

Gramvani's mission is to reverse the flow of information.

Thank you.

PSG: Sairam, to everyone. It's been a journey that began15 years ago. UC as a volunteer platform continues to play its role in various initiatives. The goal at UC was essentially to bring together collective action in the form of volunteer engagement in a lot of social initiatives. I think the key thing is not just one off, but if somebody can be consistent, you pick up familiarity with that particular cause, you pick up knowledge and skills. So, whether you're working as an employee or even as a volunteer, you can add in a big way to that particular cause.

So, that was one very important element of UC. It's been involved in several initiatives, especially in the healthcare, working to support government hospitals, several other charity institutions, and most recently, at a personal level, I have been involved in the alumni-setup institution called Swasthiam Palliative Care and Cancer foundation. I am not formally part of it, but as a volunteer for it, I had an opportunity to set up another formal institution that will take forward palliative care and cancer services, mainly in the Sri Sathya Sai district.

The key thing in all of this is that, I think, collective work has tremendous power.

I, with my knowledge and skill can certainly push quite a few things on the table here. I can, I think, lift something like this with this one finger. But I think if I use all my five, I can accomplish a lot more things. Maybe I can lift this table. I'm just trying to make it a little more graphic, not just in physical objects, but truly, I've gone through this experience, this journey over many years.

Individually, we are all very competent; we can do a lot of things, and I have had that experience in being able to contribute; but collectively, not only as individuals, but also

as institutions. When we talk of teamwork, it is not only a team of people in one institution; you can actually make three, four institutions work together.

That's been an important role in UC, that is, to be silent, but orchestrate getting a few organizations to work together. And you won't believe the power and momentum that you can generate with multiple organizations working together. It takes a little bit of effort to bring them together.

The human body is wired automatically by default, to get these five fingers to work together. But in the larger society, to make everybody get wired together takes a little bit of effort. And I think, if I have to just sum up UC as a metaphor: UC is like a wire or a thread that's trying to connect and bring together elements, and a lot of work can be done.

And when we do that, one important thing to keep in mind is not to worry about attribution, because one of the reasons we hold back from working together is, "Oh, if I do this, will I get the credit for it? Will somebody else steal the limelight?"

I call it a zero-sum game. I have gone through that by experience. There are many things I am attributed towards which I have not made any significant contributions. People come and pat on my back and say, "Oh, you've done wonderful work here". I just happen to be a very insignificant part of a team, but I get credit for just standing there with somebody.

But at the same time, I've been deeply involved, doing a lot of work, but I'm just somewhere in the background and not known, which is equally fine.

It's a zero-sum game.

At the end of it, I think the joy of ultimately seeing the outcome manifest is the biggest reward. Whether the attribution is given or not given, how much you contribute to it, whether it's less or more, it really doesn't matter. I think if the outcome is there, we can all, like success, rightfully share a contribution.

VSP: I'll probably want to add on behalf of Guna. He is somebody who has inspired a lot of us actually within our own groups in terms of the amount and passion that he has for the sector.

He calls himself a volunteer, having been part of many things, many of these initiatives, but he's been the founder volunteer for many of these initiatives. He's actually seeded the very thought process and effort around many of these initiatives. And I would also like to add that what he's rightly said in terms of bringing people, institutions together and not really worrying about attribution is the very sign of humility, the very sign of detachment, values that Swami so strongly emphasizes on, has always emphasized on.

So, something that I can also vouch for, considering Gramvani's platforms are anchored by communities today with 1400 community volunteers who anchor these platforms at a community level and what we call as community conversation spaces. We are all just, just instruments. And what we are doing is enabling communities to take up the course of action and development into their own hands, because we don't understand their contexts, and we don't understand their problems. We've not had the vivid experience of going through the challenges that they are going through.

So I think it is about empowering them and creating tools and building their capacity to solve their own problems. And I think, which is why the power of volunteers, the power of community ownership is extremely important. And that is where I think I completely relate to what Guna says in terms of having institutions, people, volunteers who follow and share the common cause come together and work together.

So kudos to Guna and the team for having achieved and done what they have over the years.

Interviewer: Thank you, Sirs, for that. And I think today's Independence Day addresses were mainly based on Atma Nirbharta. And I think to achieve that, we need communities to unite, so that we can achieve the self-reliance we aim for as a part of Viksit Bharat.

EVENT 1
A Holistic Approach to Education:
NEP 2020 Commemoration at SSSIHL

To mark the fourth anniversary of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL) hosted a special lecture at its Prasanthi Nilayam campus. The event, organized by the NEP 2020 Cell in collaboration with the Innovation Council and Department of Physics, aimed to highlight the policy's alignment with the institute's educational philosophy.

Prof. R. Gowrishankar, Dean of Academic Affairs and Nodal Officer of the NEP 2020 Cell, inaugurated the programme. He emphasized the policy's focus on holistic education and drew parallels between its principles and the vision of the institute's founder, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

The guest speaker, Dr. S. Sathyeshwar, an esteemed alumnus of SSSIHL and a prominent educationist, provided a comprehensive overview of NEP 2020. He elaborated on the policy's key features, including the new four-year undergraduate programme with its innovative curriculum and flexible entry-exit points. Dr. Sathyeshwar underscored the policy's emphasis on holistic education, which resonates with SSSIHL's long standing commitment to this approach.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Sathyeshwar reminisced about his time at SSSIHL, praising the institute's curriculum for fostering holistic personal growth through awareness classes, moral education, service activities, and self-reliance programmes. The event

concluded with a renewed appreciation for NEP 2020's vision and SSSIHL's ongoing commitment to advancing holistic education.

EVENT 2

A Panel Discussion on Social Entrepreneurship:
Navigating the Challenges

On August 15, 2024, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL) hosted a panel discussion as part of its "Aazadi ka Amrit Kaal" celebrations. The event featured Gunaranjan and Vijay Sai Pratap, experienced social entrepreneurs, who shared their insights about the dynamic startup ecosystem.

The panellists discussed the essential balance between passion and practicality in entrepreneurship, emphasizing the importance of experiential learning, team-building, and staying true to one's purpose. They highlighted the value of both, fresh ideas and industry experience, underscoring the need for clarity of intent and effective problem-solving. The discussion addressed the challenges faced by budding entrepreneurs, and provided valuable guidance on navigating the startup ecosystem. The panellists emphasized the necessity of social

entrepreneurship and offered practical advice to students pursuing B.B.A., B.Com, and M.B.A. programmes.

Through their shared experiences, the panellists provided a well-rounded view of the startup landscape, inspired students to explore entrepreneurial opportunities and make informed decisions about their future careers.

When the course of studies is over and the pupil has come out of the drill and grill, he is awarded a Degree, at the Convocation! This Degree is, in effect, only a begging bowl! With that in hand, the Graduate can go to every office, and clamour before every door, "Give me a job! Give me a job!" Present day education converts youth into beggars, seeking food from door to door. They cannot stand on their own legs, and earn food, independently. This is not a sign or characteristic of Bharatheeya culture. No. The mistake lies in the teachers and leaders, the leaders and their advisers."

- Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol 10 (1970)