

## **2-DAY GLOBAL R&D SUMMIT GETS UNDER WAY**

### **Focus on agri sector, convert knowledge to wealth through intensive R&D and innovation: Nitin Gadkari**

**NEW DELHI, December 7, 2015:** Shri Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and Shipping, has exhorted industry to make all-out efforts to convert knowledge to wealth through intensive R&D and innovation efforts even as he urged FICCI to focus its innovation promotion efforts to boost agricultural productivity and rural development.

Giving the keynote address at the ‘Global R&D Summit 2015’ on the theme, ‘*Leveraging international cooperation to boost Indian innovation ecosystem*’ here today **organized by FICCI with the support of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India**, Mr. Gadkari said that to increase the employment potential of the country and eradicate poverty, it was imperative to apply innovative solutions to the problems faced by the agricultural sector. This required political will and leadership for progress and development, both of which were present in adequate measure in the present government. **Mr. Gadkari said** his Ministry was working on five inland waterways projects and hoped that a Bill to convert 101 rivers into waterways would be introduced and passed by Parliament in its next session.

He said the transportation of goods and passengers through waterways would bring down the cost by up to 25%. Yet, this alternative mode of transportation was still at its infancy. This was evident from the fact that while in China, Korea and Japan 40%, 43% and 44% of the good and passengers moved through waterways, India fared poorly as waterways carried a mere 3.5% through this mode.

He revealed that Cochin Shipyard, Dredging Corporation of India and Shipping Corporation of India has cumulatively posted a profit of over Rs 6000 crore and this would be deployed to give waterways transportation a boost.

**Mr. Y S Chowdary, Minister of State for Science & Technology & Earth Sciences**, in his inaugural address, emphasized the need to make a paradigm shift from scientist-centric research to people-centric research so that the fruits of R&D and innovation were reaped by the people, especially by those at the bottom of the pyramid. In this context, he urged state governments to come on board and become actively involved in developing an innovation ecosystem, own projects and support them to the hilt.

He said his Ministry was actively considering the grant of incentive to kick-start, the ‘Start-up India, Stand-up India’ call by the Prime Minister. These would be in the shape of tax credits, setting up of incubation centres and mentor development.

Mr. Chowdary said that for ‘Make in India’ initiative to become employment-intensive and inclusive, it was essential to undertake innovative projects in rural India.

The event witnessed presentation of FICCI R&D Award to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited for building indigenous capabilities in the ‘Design & Development of Light Utility Helicopter & Light Combat Helicopter’ and the FICCI R&D Catapult (Start-Up) Award to Cellzyme Biotech Private Limited for their exemplary work on ‘Green Manufacturing of Pharmaceuticals Using Smart Enzymes’.

The inaugural session of the summit was also addressed by Dr. A Didar Singh, Secretary General, FICCI; Dr. Ray O Johnson, former Chief Technology Officer, Lockheed Martin Corporation; Mr. Sid Burbach, Director, Global Commercialization Group, IC<sup>2</sup> Institute, University of Texas at Austin, USA; Mr. George Sibley, Counsellor for Economic Affairs and Environment, Science & Technology, US Embassy in India; and Dr. Makarand Phadke, Chairman, FICCI National Committee on S&T/Innovation & Senior Vice President-Innovations, Reliance Industries Ltd.

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