Amitabh Kant: Rural Communities as Producers, Innovators

By **Rediff Money Desk**, **New Delhi**

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Former NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant advocates for a new rural development model, emphasizing fair prices, innovation, and economic transformation. Prashant Chaudhary wins Rohini Nayyar Prize.



Key Points

- Amitabh Kant advocates for a development model where rural communities are seen as producers and innovators, needing fair prices, not pity.
- He stressed transforming rural India into economic hubs through improved agriculture, rural industries, women's SHGs, and skill development.
- Technology, market access, food processing, and farmer-producer organizations are crucial for improving rural livelih
- Prashant Chaudhary was awarded the fifth Rohini Nayyar Prize for his work in equipping rural youth with AI and technology skills.
- The Rohini Nayyar Prize honors individuals contributing to ru elopment, instituted in memory of economist Dr. Rohini Nayyar.

New Delhi, Oct 31 (PTI) Former NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant on Saturday pitched for a development model where rural communities are seen as producers and innovators, asserting that they need fair prices, not pity.

Speaking at the fifth Rohini Nayyar Prize ceremony here, the former G20 sherpa said, "We can build a development model in which rural communities are seen as producers, innovators, and citizens.

"They do not need pity. They need fair prices, functioning services, secure rights, access to finance, connectivity, and respect."

Kant also stressed the need to transform rural India into centres of economic activity, innovation and entrepreneurship rather than limiting it to welfare delivery.

He said improving agricultural productivity, promoting rural industries, strengthening women's self-help groups and expanding skill development opportunities for young people were essential for inclusive growth.

Kant also emphasised the importance of technology, better market access, food processing and farmer-producer organisations in improving rural livelihoods.

Calling for stronger grassroots institutions, Kant said development policies must address district-level disparities and involve local communities in decision-making.

He noted that women played a crucial role in rural economic transformation and that women-led enterprises and collective initiatives could drive sustainable change.

Rohini Nayyar was not simply an economist or administrator, but a person who believed that the measure of India's progress could be found in the lives of its rural citizens, Kant said.

Prashant Chaudhary, a technology educator from Dehradun, was on Saturday awarded the fifth Rohini Nayyar Prize for his outstanding contribution to rural development.

Chaudhary, who became the first person from his village near Meerut to join an IIT in 2010, is the founder of the CodeYogi Foundation, which is working on equipping India's unreached youth with practical AI and technology skills.

The prize, instituted in 2022 in memory of former economist and administrator Dr Rohini Nayyar, comes with a cash prize of Rs 10 lakh, a citation and a trophy.

It was instituted by the family of Rohini Nayyar, who spent much of her professional life working on issues related to rural development in India.

The prize is given out annually by the Nayyar Foundation for Social and Economic Purpose, set up by her family, to contribute to social and economic development in India.

The previous winners of the prize included Sethrichem Sangtam from Nagaland (2022), Dinanath Rajput from Chhattisgarh (2023), Anil Pradhan from Odisha (2024) and Vidhya Parshuramkar from Pune in 2025

The directors of the Foundation include Deepak Nayyar, Emeritus Professor of Economics, JNU, and former vice-chancellor, Delhi University; Dhiraj Nayyar, Director, Economics and Policy, and Senior Vice-President, Vedanta Limited; and Gaurav Nayyar, Lead Economist, World Bank.

Source: **PTI** By **Rediff Money Desk**, **New Delhi**

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