

All-round development of villages possible: Srinivasan

BENGALURU: TVS Motor Company Chairman Venu Srinivasan on Monday said that all-round development of Indian villages can be achieved within five years if social integration and harmony is brought in along with the right structured engagement from corporates, especially from the manufacturing sector.

He was speaking at the valedictory function of the Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) Module II of Village Buddha initiative, a unique new model developed by management specialist Shoji Shiba to bring about a transformation in CSR activities of Indian industry with the aim of rendering sustainable and holistic development in the villages.

"We can bring in changes in villages by using the tools of manufacturing. But in manufacturing, standard deviation is minimal and this is more in villages because of the preva-



TVS Motor Company Chairman Venu Srinivasan and Village Buddha initiative founder Shoji Shiba distribute certificates at the Module II programme organised by CII in Attibele near Bengaluru on Monday.

lence of caste-based, ethnic, geographic, social and political reasons. We should approach problems in the villages and address them in a neutral way," he said.

He said that while approaching the given issues, corporates should understand the uniqueness of villages. "Here matrices are not enough, but the intent should be clear. In social situations, we cannot measure causes and its impact properly. So

our focus should be on achieving inclusive growth," he said.

Srinivasan also cautioned that it is important to not approach issues politically, but tackle them at a practical level so that corporates can make a difference. "It is better to tackle societal problems with practical ideas," he said.

Shiba exhorted corporates to actively participate in providing opportunities to fulfil the aspirations of rural

people or face the consequences of social unrest.

Shiba said Indian villages are currently experiencing a transformation and are nearing a tipping point.

"Villages are no longer isolated as in the past and aspirations of villagers are on the rise. But there is a distinct lack of opportunities in villages. If corporates address these issues, it will lead to social unrest."

Village Buddha aims to create a learning environment for corporates to better understand villages and bring about a transformational approach to their CSR activities.

"The programme helps companies to use structured tools that have contributed to the success of the manufacturing industry to engage with villages. Village Buddha will also help corporates appreciate the needs of rural markets and develop business models to tap opportunities at the bottom of the pyramid," he said.

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