

Press Release

Yes, we can! - Dr Mashelkar tells underprivileged children

70 minutes of inspiration for 70 children from Door Step School, Pune on Dr Mashelkar's 70th birthday

1 Jan 2013 (Pune, India)

Leading scientist, science manager and innovation evangelist, Dr RA Mashelkar, held a classroom of 70 children from Door Step School, Pune spell bound for 70 minutes talking to them about his own inspiring life and personal journey, encouraging the children to look beyond poverty and steadfastly pursue their dreams with persistent efforts and determination.

Dr RA Mashelkar was speaking at an event organized by the Exciting Science Group (Science popularization effort of NCL and IISER scientists) and Venture Center (a technology business incubator) on 1 Jan 2013 at the NCL Innovation Park. The talk cum interaction titled "Yes, we can!" with 70 children from Door Step School, Pune was intended as an inspirational talk to inject hope, optimism and ambition in underprivileged children from Pune.

	
<p>Dr Mashelkar drawing upon his own life story to inspire children</p>	<p>Dr Mashelkar interacting with children on their aspirations and ambitions</p>
	
<p>A question for Dr Mashelkar from the students</p>	<p>Dr Mashelkar talks about "India's Best Students" and their journey from poverty to achievements</p>

In his talk, Dr RA Mashelkar drew upon his own personal hardships and struggles as a child born into poverty, the few people in his life who inspired him to pursue education and science, and a journey of grit, courage and achievements throughout his life. He pointed out to the children that several of the Nation's leading "students" and achievers have emerged from great poverty including Dr Manmohan Singh, Dr Abdul Kalam, himself and others. He encouraged the children to pursue their education with determination and to chase their dreams with passion. Dr Mashelkar also used this opportunity to interact with the children – often asking them to talk of their own ambitions and aspirations.

The talk (in marathi) shall be available for viewing on the following website:

<http://venturecenter.co.in/yeswecan.php>

Notes to the Editor:

About Dr RA Mashelkar: Dr. Mashelkar is a leading scientist and a visionary science leader of India and is Chancellor AcSIR, India and a National Research Professor at CSIR-NCL. A chemical engineer by training, his research interest are in the field of polymeric material science and engineering with specific interest in non-Newtonian fluids, smart hydrogels and recently in polymeric nanomaterials for smart delivery applications. Dr. Mashelkar served as the Director of CSIR-NCL and then as the Director General of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). Chairman of India's National Innovation Foundation for over a decade, Dr. Mashelkar has been championing a culture of innovation and balanced intellectual property rights regime in India. He is a Fellow of Royal Society (FRS), Foreign Fellow of the US National Academy of Science, US National Academy of Engineering and American Academy of Arts and Science. Thirty Universities have honored him with honorary Doctorate. The Government of India has honored him with the award of Padma Shree and Padma Bhushan. More information is available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raghunath_Anant_Mashelkar

About the Exciting Science Group: Exciting Science Group (ESG) is an initiative of scientists from the National Chemical Laboratory (CSIR-NCL), Pune and Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune that aims to share the excitement of science and engineering with school children. The goal of ESG is not to "teach" science but to "excite" children about science, and to inspire some children to take up careers in science and technology while motivating others to cheer and support the progress of science during their lifetimes. The ESG runs talk-demos, workshops and mentoring sessions at the NCL Innovation Park campus and at selected under-privileged schools in Pune. The ESG activities are supported by NCL, IISER, Venture Center and corporates including Forbes Marshall, Praj Foundation, Battelle India and others. More information is available at: www.excitingscience.org

About Venture Center: Entrepreneurship Development Center (Venture Center) – a CSIR initiative – is a Section 25 company hosted by the National Chemical Laboratory, Pune. Venture Center strives to nucleate and nurture technology and knowledge-based enterprises by leveraging the scientific and engineering competencies of the institutions in the Pune region in India. The Venture Center is a technology business incubator supported by the Department of Science & Technology's National Science & Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board (DST-NSTEDB). Venture Center's focuses on technology enterprises offering products and services exploiting scientific expertise in the areas of materials, chemicals and biological sciences & engineering. For more information, visit <http://www.venturecenter.co.in>

About Door Step Schools: Door Step School provides education and support to the often-forgotten children of pavement dwellers, slum dwellers, construction site families and many other underprivileged families. Many of these children are not enrolled in school and have limited access to books and a place to study. Annually, the Door Step School serves more than 50,000 children with literacy programs at over 125 locations in both Mumbai and Pune. Each year more than 1,500 children who would have otherwise gone without a formal education are enrolled in municipal schools. The Door Step School was established in Mumbai, India in 1988 and later expanded to Pune in 1992. For more information, visit <http://www.doorstepschool.org>