Welcome to Freshies, 2006

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India lives in its villages.

The IITs will be the sentinels of India.
Ms. Ela Bhat
**SEWA** Self Employed Womens Association.

- SEWA concentrated on the resources and livelihood issues of rural women.
- Brought self-employment and dignity to lakhs of women and their family members.

- A unique response to a great social need.
- Led to womens’ empowerment and a new direction in social development.
Dr. Varghese Kurien

- Founded the cooperative milk movement which now has over a million farmers in 60,000 cooperatives.
- Launched the Amul brand and then the Dhara brand from NDDB.
- Made India the largest milk producer.
- Pioneer of the cooperative movement.
- New ideas of market-interventions and mixed economy.
Medha Patkar

▶ Established the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA), a grassroots movement of the displaced.
▶ Fought for the rights and rehabilitation of hundreds of villages.
▶ Made NBA a source for alternative analysis of development projects.
▶ Brought rehabilitation into the national development debate.
▶ This led to a national discussion on meaning of development.
Mr. Ganpat Kalekar

► Finished his 3rd drinking-water community check dam for tribal villages.
► Direct benefit to over 1000 people and 1200 livestock across 10 villages.
► Helped implement various Health/Nutrition/Livelihood programs.

► The importance of community participation and decision-making in development.
► Adaption of technology to local needs.
Mr. Sam Pitroda

- Started CDOT, the company which built the first Rural Automatic Exchange for 100 lines, India’s first indigenous exchange.
- Led to a world-wide crash in telecom prices.
- Led to the communication revolution in India.

- Recognized and respected local needs and innovated for it.
- A vision of the benefits and opportunities of communications in the indian scenario.
What's common...

- The common society served as their source of inspiration.
- They all saw a great opportunity for innovation and creativity. Right.
- They have great faith in local talent catering to local situations.
- They delivered a unique *technological solution* which was just
- They have enriched all of us intellectually and materially.

Eventually, such people will go on to define the new society.
But what about us?

Questions:
- Are we doing anything exciting and relevant?
- Do we really attract the creative and innovative people?

Solutions:
- We must understand this connection between technology and our own social condition.
- We must see the creative opportunities that this generates.
- **We should step forward and assume our role.**
For otherwise ...

We will all be just mute spectators to the celebration that is India.