

IFQM SYMPOSIUM 2025

Driving Momentum

September 18-19, 2025, Taj Palace, New Delhi

A REPORT

INDIAN FOUNDATION FOR QUALITY MANAGEMENT
is a Section 8, Not-for-Profit, **Industry led** movement with a
Nation FIRST approach to Catalyze
Indian Industries to be
Globally Competitive and **Export capable** through
Quality, Innovation & Excellence



Executive Overview

The IFQM Symposium 2025 brought together nearly 400 participants — including Captains of the Indian industry, Business leaders including MSME, Policy makers, leaders from the Academia and students, to deliberate on India's ambition to become a developed nation by 2047. The symposium underscored that sustained national progress requires leadership commitment led transformation, deployed through Big Q, by embedding quality, innovation, and competitiveness at the heart of products, services, and institutions.

India's demographic dividend, policy momentum, and sectoral strengths give it a rare, life-time opportunity to re-discover itself as a global player of eminence. This potential can be realized when the Indian industry elevates quality from mere compliance to strategy, expand capacities organically and thru' innovative departures, and partner with MSMEs and Academia to assist them in becoming significant growth engines. There is an opportunity like never-before for the Indian industry to partner with the government, in relentlessly discovering newer opportunities for value addition, supported by a progressive policy that is creating a conducive environment for entrepreneurship.

The sessions emphasized leadership as the master hinge. There was a call for the leaders to move beyond authority-driven styles to enabling cultures of empowerment, agility, and shared purpose. Cross-cutting themes included the urgency of skilling, digital adoption, AI, and ecosystem collaboration, all critical to India's transformation into global business hubs and value chains.

Key Takeaways & Themes

1. **Quality as a Strategy:** World-class quality goes beyond defect control — it includes design, perception, and trust. Leadership must champion this at the board level.
2. **Leadership Shift:** Leaders must facilitate collective intelligence, build agility, and inspire shared purpose, not just manage performance.
3. **MSME Transformation:** MSMEs need technology, capital, and leadership coaching to integrate into global supply chains. Venture capital and peer evangelists can accelerate their growth.
4. **Digital & AI Adoption:** AI can unlock breakthroughs if applied responsibly to the right problems, supported by data governance and upskilling.
5. **Industry-Academia Links:** Co-created curricula, applied projects, and longer internships can bridge the readiness gap.
6. **Resilience:** India can prevail over short- and longer-term crises, whether visible or not, by bridging quality gaps and enhancing value creation to support superior livelihoods. customised excellence frameworks, that have Indianness at its core, and board-level commitment are essential to make the needle move.
7. **Sectoral Pathways:**
 - **Manufacturing & Auto:** Cultural transformation, sustainability, and digitalization are key.
 - **Aero & Defence:** Indigenization with Digital and AI integration will re-define competitiveness.
 - **Pharma:** Climbing the value curve by transcending from generics to innovative therapeutics is vital.
 - **Healthcare:** Patient-centric, affordable care and trust-building across stakeholders is urgent.
 - **Semiconductors:** Talent strength must be matched by technology led robust ecosystems.
 - **IT & AI:** Deployment should focus on impact, ethics, and scaling success.
8. **Culture & People:** From shop floor to Top-floor, culture determines excellence. Lessons from all forms of social life including fine arts, such as empathy, discipline, and storytelling will enrich values and creativity.

Session Highlights

Viksit Bharat & Borderless Perspectives

India's growth trajectory demands partnerships for innovation, and leadership that inspires through purpose. Integration into global supply chains requires manufacturing excellence, ESG focus, and digital adoption. MSMEs must be enabled to scale and innovate. Crises, if approached proactively, will become catalysts for renewal. Alongside, continuous working with the Govt to discover and execute value creation opportunities, in alignment with an increasingly conducive reform regime will be a massive multiplier of impact.

Sectoral Spotlights

- **Auto & Engineering:** Digitization, R&D, and MSME clusters can lift India into global league.
- **Aero & Defence:** Self-reliance, digitization, and AI are reshaping opportunities; strong public-private partnerships are pivotal.
- **Pharma:** Harmonized regulations, funding for innovation, and richer talent pools are required to move up the value chain.
- **Healthcare:** Equity of access, insurance models, and prevention-driven care can address disparities.
- **Semiconductors:** With 20% of global chip designers in India, the focus must shift to ecosystems, manufacturing, and quality.
- **IT & AI:** AI must be harnessed responsibly for high-value outcomes, not just automation.

Lateral Nuggets

- **Manufacturing Excellence:** Rigorous improvement enables innovation; customer voice must guide design.
- **People & Culture:** Leaders set the tone; upskilling and empowerment are critical.
- **Academia:** Collaboration must move from intent to action.
- **Fine Arts:** Empathy, discipline, and creativity offer lessons in leadership and innovation.

Launches

The **IFQM Quality Excellence Prize (QEP)** and **Digital Toolkit** were unveiled, offering a rigorous framework for execution, benchmarking and guiding organizations in their quality journeys, supported by counselling and inclusive recognition.

Conclusion & Forward Look

India's transformation to a developed nation hinges on embedding quality as a national movement. The symposium made clear that leadership commitment, digital and AI integration, MSME empowerment, and academia-industry partnerships are essential.

For the senior leadership, the agenda is to:

- Champion quality as a boardroom priority.
- Invest in digital and AI responsibly.
- Strengthen ecosystems through collaboration.
- Institutionalize culture change across enterprises.
- Learn globally but innovate for India's context.

As we pursue this progressive agenda with urgency, India can evolve from being seen as a low-cost supplier to a trusted global leader in quality and innovation. The vision of Viksit Bharat is within reach. All it needs is an orchestrated acceleration and harmonisation of multi-lateral efforts.

IFQM Invites: As an Industry led movement with a Nation FIRST approach to catalyze Indian Industries to be Globally Competitive through Quality, Innovation & Excellence, **IFQM invites the entire ecosystem to join hands in a collaborative manner** in this journey. We need to collectively plan, execute and demonstrate milestone accomplishments through Needle Movements that assure progress towards a Developed India. When all entities that comprise the industry, large & small organizations, the MSMEs, the Academia, Quality institutions, Trade bodies, Individual Experts, Opinion makers & influencers come together, **a Viksit Bharat shall fructify.**

The **C**ONTEXT

India is aggressively pursuing the coveted status of becoming a developed country by 2047, the centenary year of its independence. Referred to as *Amrit kaal (Elixir or Nectar)*, this journey requires the industry at large to orchestrate a surge towards high Quality in its Products, Services and Businesses. Such a movement, supported by a technologically advanced infrastructure, and a prosperity spawning economy, can enhance the social and human indices of the nation.



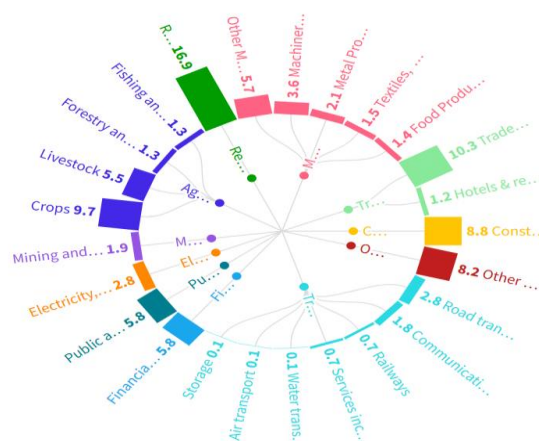
The Ask: As per NITI Aayog, India's apex public policy think tank, the country's GDP needs to move from the current level of \$3.6 trillion to about \$30 trillion by 2047, in a journey that will be both challenging and fulfilling. Some of the key imperatives to accomplish the goals include a dramatic increase in the proportion of Indian value-added exports to global trade, and per capita income, on the back of an ever-increasing push for superior infrastructure in the country.



The Challenge: The goals of Viksit Bharat need the economy to grow at an unprecedented rate, powered by **Global competitiveness**. This calls for the Quality of India's products and services to rise to global standards, enhancing their desirability to customers and markets world over. Only then can **Brand India** and **Made in India** emerge as attractive propositions for trans-national businesses, and be perceived as a

preferred source for innovative, value adding and reliable products and services.

The Current State: Exceptions apart, the journey to Quality excellence is yet to be wholeheartedly embraced by the Indian industry at large. Quality has remained a subject for mid-level and shop floor executives for a long time. Therefore, there are sporadic islands of excellence, which together are unable to elevate the nation's Quality credentials to the desirable levels in international forums. The perception about 'Made in India', across sectors, is yet to reach the levels other illustrious countries like Japan, Germany and Korea have achieved.



The Role of Big Q – Total Quality: It is a well-established fact that sustained Quality stems from a **culture that is nourished** than something from a confined application of short-term attention. The Big Q approach advocates moving from merely meeting contractual quality requirements to positioning Quality at the centre-stage of everything we do. It is about building long-term relationships with all stakeholders on a win-win basis.



This demands focused efforts by **Quality Institutions** in the public & private space, supported by networks of subject matter experts and Academia; and institutionalized through forums such as cross-industry learning platforms and MSME clusters. Setting, tracking and systematically accomplishing milestones, using meaningful metrics, are critical to multiply impact.

The **DESIGN** OF THE SYMPOSIUM

The Gameplan: This year's Symposium, while building on the past, was designed to be **bigger, wider and deeper**. To reinforce the crucial role of global quality and innovation in all aspects of a business enterprise, the design focused on eliciting deeper insights from global leaders with an emphasis on granular and practical ideas to speed up deployment. Besides, it included revisiting the promises made so far, and demonstrating the Needle Movements achieved in the following six identified areas of critical importance.

1. Industry Academia interface
2. Learning Solutions
3. Digital Tools
4. Assessment and Counselling
5. MSME Clusters
6. Quality Excellence Prize

The idea also was to calibrate it against rising expectations, changing circumstances, newer perspectives and ever-increasing challenges.



The Audience: The Symposium saw the participation of 380+ Delegates, including 200+CEOs/CXOs of the Indian Industry from diverse sectors spanning Manufacturing and Service, large companies as well as **MSME**. Besides, students and representations from educational institutions, who prepare the future talent pool for the industry, also participated. A few members from the diplomatic missions added to the richness of the Symposium.

The Format: The event featured Keynote Speeches, Fireside conversations and Panel discussions to explore various aspects of India's global competitiveness. Equally importantly, concurrent sessions enabled participants to absorb sector specific insights that will go on to shape the future steps. Flash polls elicited participant voices to enhance involvement and deepen our collective conviction. All in all, it was an event to elevate aspirations for a movement towards Big Q, on a **NATION FIRST** principle that is **Industry led and inclusive**.

The session plans hemmed together a diverse set of Speakers, including Policy Makers, Captains of the industry, Academicians, students, leaders from the MSME, thought leaders, Artists from all over the world.

65 Speakers
Ten International Speakers
380+ Delegates
200+ CEOs and CXOs
25 Sessions
70 Students

The Symposium invited leaders to enrich the Delegates in several key areas of critical significance to India.

The Agenda **T H E M E S**

- A. Viksit Bharat – Imperatives & Opportunities**
- B. Borderless Perspectives**
 1. Quality & Innovation led Mfg. excellence
 2. Navigating thru' global uncertainties
 3. Gaining Significance in Global Supply Play
 4. MSME participation in global supply chains
 5. Ramping up to Global Quality
 6. Resurgence during national crisis
- C. Sectoral Spotlights to enhance global competitiveness in**
 1. Auto & Engineering
 2. Aero & Defence
 3. Pharma & Health Sciences
 4. Health & Hospitals
 5. Electronics & Semiconductors
 6. IT – Digital AI
 7. MSMEs
- D. Lateral Nuggets**
 1. People
 2. Manufacturing Excellence
- E. Work with Academia that can solve problems, and enrich talent**
- F. Learn from everywhere to drive innovative departures.**
- G. Launches**
 1. Digital Tools
 2. IFQM Quality Prize
 3. IFQM Conclave 25 - Celebrating Young Talent
- H. Concluding Reflections**

An **Auspicious Start**

Mr. N Chandrasekaran, Chairman, Tata Sons, welcomed Union Finance Minister Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, Honourable Minister for Finance and Minister of Corporate Affairs, Govt of India, and the delegates, including IFQM members and highlighted the importance of Viksit Bharat and the need to walk with this vision of the Honourable Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi.



Session **SUMMARIES**

Viksit Bharat – Imperatives & Opportunities

In his welcome note, Mr. N Chandrasekaran said that India needs to be counted for producing products and services at the highest level. The idea of IFQM was born with a view to embrace this journey with all stakeholders, MSMEs, large industries, academia, & students. He said, **we need to have a hundred more progressive organizations formally joining the movement** and co-create an effective program that can snowball into a large-scale transformational journey. Our MSMEs should dream big and grow to be counted as providers of products and services of global quality. A deeper Industry-Academia connect that can solve each other's challenges and prepare a work force that is future ready should be on relentless focus, he said.



In her key-note speech that was both inspirational and positively elevating, the Finance Minister Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, highlighted the transformatory role AI can play in all areas, including Governance. She said more and more governments like Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra are showing keen intent to drive meaningful change by deploying AI.



Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted how the Government initiatives have taken deeper roots due to intent led implementation and invited the industry to collaborate in order to multiply the benefits.

1. Focus on Skilling: one ITI in each of the 750 districts to have AI driven training centres, based on a hub and spoke model.
2. R&D, with AI at the core, in six areas of national importance, from Agriculture to Space.
3. A pool of high-quality trainers who can support the institutions as key accelerators.
4. Given that MSMEs are key to India's progress, SIDBI is present in 150 clusters to enable adequacy in credit coverage.
5. All stakeholders need to take advantage of India's unparalleled demographic dividend.

Conversing with Mr. N Chandrasekaran, the Finance Minister called upon India Inc to **Invest More in India's future**, by implementing Capacities for value adding products and services. She pointed to the critical role the industry can play to accelerate the Viksit Bharat journey.

1. Leverage the platforms the Government has created and help in deriving the fullest benefit they collectively hold.
2. Get the youth ready for employment by skilling them with future ready capabilities, by partnering with the Government.
3. Engage with the Government on a continuous basis, beyond the budgetary consultations, to partner for an integrated thrust towards progress.



Synopsis: To realise the goals of Viksit Bharat, India needs an entirely new level of resolution and commitment to ensure continued alignment between policy reforms and growth trajectory of the Indian Industry. This can ring in a sustainable growth run that is unprecedented, which India richly deserves.

BORDERLESS PERSPECTIVES

The Symposium 2025 engaged national and international experts and Business leaders to decipher global trends, challenges and imperatives that India needs to take cognizance of at this hour and suggest approaches and strategies to successfully meet and exceed the requirements for India's Global play. The Speakers addressed themselves to the following topics:

1. *Quality & Innovation led Mfg. excellence*
2. *Navigating thru' global uncertainties*
3. *Gaining Significance in Global Supply Play*
4. *MSME participation in global supply chains*
5. *Ramping up to Global Quality*
6. *Resurgence during national crisis*

1. Quality & Innovation led Mfg. Excellence

Speaking about the Quality practices at Merck, which has a remarkable longevity of 350+ years, Dr. Hans-Joachim Neumann likened the order of attention needed for Quality and reliability to that of finding a Football in the entire land mass of Antarctica. He showcased three **Quality-boosting strategies** to accelerate progress.

1. **Data integration:** Unified platforms combining internal, customer, and supplier data reveal patterns, improve R&D speed, and reduce waste.
2. **Modular plants:** Replaceable modules shorten downtime, enable global transferability, and ensure consistent quality.
3. **Simulation:** Predicts optimal and sustainable synthesis routes digitally, reducing lab work and chemical waste.



Narrating the specific challenges of the Semiconductor industry, Dr. Neumann said that Producing chips involves ~1,500 intricate steps. With modern chips as small as 3 nanometres (just a handful of atoms), Quality issues rise as structures shrink.

Cultural foundation: Quality and safety depend on leadership and empowerment, that can inspire all employees to be responsible and accountable for quality. Continuous improvement is emphasized as a part of the organizational habit and culture.

Expressing happiness at Merck being an integral part of India's growth story through its participation in the India thrust for self-reliance, Electronics and Semiconductors.

Synopsis: *India has a strong foundation in talent and education. India can rise to be counted amongst the best by rapidly learning from committed partnerships that bring cutting edge technology and leading practices, for excelling in Quality and Innovation.*

2. Navigating thru' global uncertainties

Moderated by Mr. Jacques Esculier, the discussion explored global expansion, competitiveness, and leadership in a BANI world (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, and Incomprehensible). Panellists shared experiences on international growth, building resilient leadership cultures, empowering employees, and the importance of MSMEs. The conversation reinforced IFQM's role as a catalyst for quality, innovation, and excellence to make India globally competitive.

Mr. Dilip Shanghvi: Sun Pharma was a small company in the market dominated by big international organizations. We focused on product quality, and meeting unmet requirements of patients, like for example helping patients who have difficulty in swallowing. Our experience is that people respond to change well. Historically, we have acquired businesses that have not been run well, but our efforts to bring the change thru' leadership approaches have succeeded. Besides, we focus on R&D, as we invest \$450 million each year, and that keeps growing. The idea is to develop products that meet the patients' unique requirements and thereby offer differentiated value to the consumers.

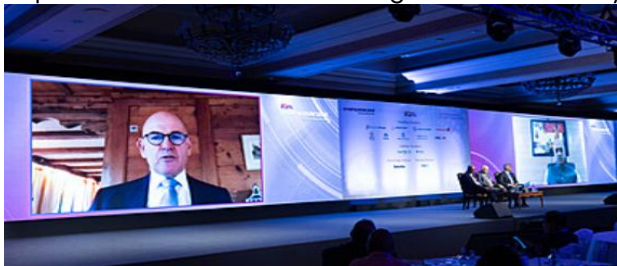
Mr. Vivek Chaand Sehgal: For Motherson, meeting customer needs are more important than securing recognitions. We steadfastly adhere to customer & industry requirements, that opens opportunities for Innovation. We need to be ready for life changing moments that come up from nowhere, for example, when a question brought a paradigm shift in my thinking – 'why expect customers to come to India? Why not go where they are?'. From the 80s when we were an MSME, today as we stand here after 44 acquisitions and presence in numerous countries, Motherson continues to grow on the strength of professionalism of its people.



Mr. Srikanth Padmanabhan: Setting a tall aim for future is critical, like JFK aimed at putting a man on the moon and getting back safely, within a decade. Such a vision is necessary for every company. We at Cummins said we will stay the course, irrespective of what comes. With 60 plus JVs, we believe we are tied at the hip and align our efforts with partners to meet the local needs, while being conscious of global trends. We nourish diversity and believe surfacing issues and deploying open communication to resolving conflicts are critical for successful leadership.



Mr. Soumitra Bhattacharya: IFQM is part of the journey of every stakeholder, and we made promises last year and shared the status. We will make this year too and we will share it next year. The spark about global has customer at the centre of it. We also bring a social impact and with IFQM, we want to give back in a tangible way. **Jugal Bandi**, an Indian term that means much more than partnership where the participants share a common purpose, is the key to accomplish our goals. They connect at multiple levels including the intellectual and the emotional layers, where the explicit and the implicit make an unparalleled combination for alignment & harmony.



Mr. Jacques Esculier: In a brittle, anxious, nonlinear, and incomprehensible, simply meeting global standards is no longer enough. True competitive

advantage comes from **agility, adaptability, speed, and bold innovation**. Organizations must let go of rigid hierarchies and static strategies. Companies must empower expertise at every level, **foster collaboration across boundaries, and build networks that can sense and respond to change in real time**. It demands a new kind of leadership; one where emotional intelligence becomes essential.

***Synopsis:** Leaders must move from being heroes to facilitators of collective intelligence, setting high standards and inspiring people not only to complete tasks, but to pursue a shared mission and purpose. The leaders need to influence through dialogue, active listening, and credibility, going far beyond mere formal authority.*

3. Gaining Significance in Global Supply Chains

Steered by Mr. R Mukundan, this discussion focused on **India's transition from an alternate supply source to a strategic global partner** in global commerce. Leaders from several sectors spoke about building manufacturing excellence, sustainability in hard-to-abate sectors, scaling high-precision industries, and overcoming regulatory hurdles. The conversation also highlighted the role of **digital transformation, AI, and employee engagement** in strengthening the presence of India in global supply chains.



Dr. Randhir Thakur: Tata Electronics is pursuing scale by embedding stringent customer-driven standards, safety, and discipline. We know our success depends on **Trust, Protecting IP, and rejecting reliance on jugaad** for global competitiveness. We can be **frugal at cost but need to be fantastic at quality**. The manufacturing storyline in India is bright, which we can further enrich by a) crowd sourcing the quality resurgence where IFQM can play an important role, and b) collaborating with the academia, industry and government to uplift infrastructure, skill development and AI proliferation. These are not the areas that any one company can do on its own, and needs the industry to step forward.

Mr. KN Radhakrishnan: The focus for TVS has been practices that are inspired by customer centricity, which include recurrence prevention rather than first time right, daily work management, and continuous improvement. Each employee contributes at least one implemented improvement per week; even families participate in 'Home kaizen'. That Quality is the key to

success is something we have learnt from our Japanese mentors.

Mr. TV Narendran: The Steel industry accounts for ~8% of global carbon emissions, ESG is a corner stone for sustainable future for Tata Steel. This Transition requires industry commitment, government support, and customer willingness to pay for green products. Tata Steel is piloting low-carbon plants in Ludhiana pivoting on circularity, where emissions will 10% of the current levels. Urban mining for electronics recycling, which will be as big as mining in a couple of decades, is another focus area. When Tata Steel drove the digital transformation agenda, the intent was to make life easier for our shop floor employees, and that convinced our employees about the potential of AI.

Mr. Salil Gupte: Boeing is contributing to global demands of Aviation for more than century, amidst stringent standards of Regulation. The approach is to build on the core strengths and align with the newer opportunities that require technological upgrade. All said, people need to be at the core of all that is developed. India has moved from forgings and basic assemblies to advanced composites and joint ventures. The next big step is to move from Building to blueprints to Build to specification where suppliers own IP and meet stricter regulatory standards, with Quality remaining as the sole gatekeeper to scale.



Mr. R Mukundan: The time has come for India to build manufacturing capacities at scale, by steering away from expecting perfect conditions to co-creating what is needed by the Nation. We can do that by harmonising people, technology and precision, and elevate the standards at which we operate. We need to be counted amongst the top exporting countries, by joining large global supply chains by meeting and exceeding the terms set by those industries. Our journey will accelerate when we work with demanding customers. We already have numerous examples that are happening around us right here in India, and we need to multiply it diligently.

Synopsis: India has both the opportunity and capability to integrate more deeply into the Global Supply chains. This journey is possible by intensifying its efforts towards manufacturing excellence. Led by an uncompromising approach to customer centricity, committed leadership and skilled employees can propel organizations to global eminence by deploying Quality as a strategy. This trend is already visible in across sectors, resulting in examples to emulate. Along this journey, India needs to put in place innovative approaches including Digital and AI, to move towards accomplishing superior ESG goals including excellence in Regulatory compliance, which form the bedrock of sustainable growth.

4. MSME participation in global supply chains

MSME is a critical contributor to the vision of Viksit Bharat. It is therefore important to enable them to enhance exports and accelerate economic progress. The panel discussed the importance of critical competencies for MSMEs success and make them relevant and sustainable in their businesses.



Mr. Oezmeral Hueseyin: We are lacking in products developed by India for the global market. Only a small share of about 10% of suppliers meet global standards. Many suppliers lack basic quality penetration on the shop floor and invest more in machines than in people, limiting their ability to be seen as reliable global suppliers. We are missing on technology, skills and ability to take risks, quality mindset and purpose on developing quality, leadership at different levels. At Bosch India, we support MSMEs on various parameters to become trustful and reliable partners, for long term mutual gains.



Ms. Ashu Suyash: The MSME sector faces constraints such as access to capital, technology, digital transformation and challenges related to certification and compliance. Nearly 84% of MSME funding still comes from unorganized lenders (rates ~25% and in some cases >100%), while only about 16% use formal credit; 78% of formal loan applications are rejected due to collateral or compliance (including GST & TDS) or form-filling gaps. All these are interlinked but have a huge opportunity when we change our lenses with which we look at them. This is an essential area to work in order to transform and become integral to value adding global supply chains.

Mr. L Krishnan: The core strength of MSME is the spirit of entrepreneurship. They are enthusiastic and prefer being technology driven. While that is a strength, we need to move to the next level of making our intentions realise on the ground. Further, the level of technology in use at different levels in the company limits seamless integration and benefits thereof. Coupled with limited cash flow and a fear of growth stemming from the unknown, the environment for rapid growth is not optimal for rapid expansion. The entrepreneurs will benefit from leadership training that highlights the means to effectively execute growth plans, while keeping the operational streams running.

Mr. Sandeep Maini: It is important to look at critical competencies and to take the leap of growth, even if the challenge is big. Each MSME has to look at not what makes them relevant today but in the next five years; and also, to retain the talent for longer periods. We need newer perspectives to look at other MSMEs as collaborators rather than competitors, to make collective progress. Ex: Pursuing Certification standards together. MSMEs need to be investing in a state-of-the-art quality control lab, say 200 sq. ft, as an investment for the future, which will surely become a decisive factor for global customers.

Dr. Jairam Varadaraj: All MSMEs are bootstrapped startups. *It appears the default setting for MSMEs is to remain MSMEs.* There are several exceptions to this rule, including where some MSMEs are far more profitable than some startups who are seeking level 3 funding. The challenge is to figure out how to grow and upgrade, and look at MSME status more as transition than a default state. While we continue to support and

nurture the MSME sector, it is important to challenge them to seek a higher order playground, which they



are indeed capable of. There is scope for Venture capitalists to step in to support MSMEs in the brick-and-mortar space, not necessarily only in the digital space. Manufacturing is critical to the nation's march towards economic superiority and is connected to higher standards of living for our citizens, which they

deserve.

Synopsis: The challenges such as inadequate investments, resources, technology, skilling and visibility are limiting export performance. There is a need for leadership coaching for a clearer appreciation of the potential to be part of global supply chains. We need to find evangelists who have succeeded in the MSME journey and building on their experiences to transform Indian MSMEs. Venture Capitalist can be great accelerators, to spur growth in quality, size and credibility of MSMEs, thereby build their brand as a sustainable source for world class products and services.

5.Ramping up to Global Quality

This session brought together global leaders, moderated by Mr. Soumitra Bhattacharya to explore lessons from Europe, China, and the U.S. for India's journey toward world-class quality. The discussion highlighted India's potential to move beyond 'build to print' into innovation-led manufacturing, the importance of design and aesthetics in quality perception, and the need for open collaboration and cultural shifts. Panellists emphasized cooperation over confrontation, accelerated adoption of AI, scaling digital adoption, and mentorship across large, medium, and small enterprises.



Mr. Frank Sieren: It was a big mistake by Europe to underestimate China, in terms of its ability to innovate.

The China model of being factory of the world has changed with EV. The most significant learning is never underestimating a competitor; the second is cooperating with them. China and India have an opportunity to cooperate and integrate. To emulate the China model effectively, one needs to go granular and look at its features. BRICS is an important platform, and both can use it to focus on common goals and have a more stable and equitable global world order.

Mr. Harald Kroeger: India needs to excel in design and surpass the quality target set by others. Thinking out of the box is the culture that needs to be leveraged. India is the leading nation in software and needs to spread its wings. Indian companies need to have the ambition to develop new and innovative products. There is much to learn from how the industry is done in Europe, China and the US. The silver lining is that India has all that is required but needs to be harmonize and leverage. I will bet on India, without any hesitation.

Mr. Srikanth Padmanabhan: India has a unique opportunity to develop and make products for the world. The road to developing engines, design, and quality has to be planned, and China has done it, and India can do it. Quality and safety are fundamental to India, and the shift in leadership in companies has to assess the time they will invest in them.

Mr. Soumitra Bhattacharya: India has done it several sectors, be it in IT or Pharma, and needs to replicate in others. We need to look at Design capability that the world can consume, deploy our strengths in IT including AI, and collaborate across sectors and beyond business as in Academia and Health, and equip India with an environment that makes rapid growth possible.

Synopsis: World-class quality is not just about eliminating defects — it's about design, aesthetics, and perception. Geopolitics today favours India — this is the moment to collaborate, compete smartly, and build globally respected quality. China has shown that acknowledging strong competitors like Tesla accelerates domestic innovation, which is a lesson for India. True leadership means asking: 'How much time do we really spend on quality and safety compared to cost and productivity?' Scaling quality circles from hundreds to tens of thousands can transform MSMEs and industry.

6. Resurgence during national crisis

Steered by Mr. Soumitra Bhattacharya, experts from multiple geographies such as the US, Middle east and India, explored how crisis—both visible and invisible—can serve as catalysts for national renewal.



Mr. Alf Faber: In an expanding global market, there was growing awareness that poor quality was costing American businesses up to 20% of sales, and that improving quality would boost productivity and profits. Identifying latent issues such as high defect rates in manufacturing, inconsistent service in health care, or in supply chains can certainly create a sense of urgency. India can proactively use benchmarking to reveal gaps that otherwise may go unnoticed.

Mr. Sunil Sinha: Viksit Bharat will only be possible when India becomes a hub for global innovation and produces world class goods and services. Total quality becomes all pervasive when there is complete proliferation of big Q in every industry and MSME. It is like a grand orchestra where several instruments have to play simultaneously to create a symphony. The importance of leadership commitment, training and education and the culture of continuous improvement are non-negotiable. It sounds very logical, yet it takes much effort to make them happen.



Mr. Soumitra Bhattacharya: Frameworks such as Baldrige, EFQM, IFQM-QEP and TBEM prevent drift and measure progress. They, however, need to be tailored to MSMEs in simpler terms, including options for self-assessment. Quality transformation efforts need to be institutionalised before crisis become acute.

Synopsis: India is facing an invisible crisis. Indicators such as per capita income, MSME quality gaps, and rising global expectations demand proactive action. Leadership matters the most. Sustained excellence requires board-driven continuity for transformation efforts and leadership walk-the-talk. Excellence is not a campaign but a continuous journey—it is a 'race without a finish line'.

SECTORAL INSIGHTS

The Symposium 2025 drew experts and Business leaders from specific sectors to dive-deep and evolve a set of ideas and perspectives that can shape the transformation roadmaps for India. The Speakers addressed themselves to the following topics:

1. Auto & Engineering
2. Aero & Defence
3. Pharma & Health Sciences
4. Health & Hospitals
5. Electronics & Semiconductors
6. IT – Digital AI
7. MSMEs

1. Auto & Engineering –

Making products in India for the World.

Led by Mr. Kabir Bhandari, the panel explored the future of India's automotive and engineering sectors, emphasizing digitization, sustainability, innovation, and the role of MSMEs in global competitiveness. The leaders shared strategies for accelerating quality, supporting supply chains, and driving engineering excellence.



Mr. Scot Gardner: We at Siemens, having been a part of the industry for long, believe that with continuous digitization and automation, you can drive quality. Bringing digital and physical together through IoT is a great opportunity for the industry, particularly using digital twins, to accomplish improvements through quality control and assurance. We need to think of the software engineering model, not only in the products, but right through from the design to products to production. At Siemens, we focus on Technology and its adaptability to applications, and AI is a central part to it. People matter the most, particularly the manner they understand AI.

Mr. Anil V Parab: At L&T, our Strategy plan is to answer a question on continued relevance. That is how we at L&T got into new businesses important for sustainable energy transition. Thanks to that, we today have the largest track record for setting up solar plants across

the world, of 34 gigawatts. We now do green hydrogen plant, which is the biggest in the country.

MSMEs need to focus a lot on cultural transformation of workforce because that brings a big advantage. The second thing is the customer centricity, without which activities will not be sustainable. And the third is about digital tools which they should not shy away from using. Besides, Sustainability practices are key to help realise the ambition to capture the global market. It may take time, and we need to prepare for it.

Mr. Akash Passey: At ZF, we have about 650 suppliers but need a few 100s more to meet our vision to be able to not only make products for our customers in India but also for global markets. We believe India is the place to be in for an OEM company. MSMEs in India have a huge potential and we understand the opportunities. In this journey all of us need to collaborate by learning from each other, and more importantly through clusters, to succeed in conquering challenges related to Quality, Cost, delivery, and sustainability, through innovations.



Mr. Kabir Bhandari: The progress in China is stunning, to say the least. We focused very heavily on being process driven, low-cost manufacturers building to print, but it needs many times more than that to be counted a manufacturer for the world. The Panel has highlighted how Repeatability, skill development, automation, and adopting sustainability standards are essential for continued relevance. Large firms are actively clustering and mentoring suppliers to raise standards, which is a welcome step.

Synopsis: There is an urgent need for cultural transformation from shop floor to top-floor, wider and collaboration that is driven by purpose, investment in R&D and large-scale use of digital tools to position India as a global manufacturing powerhouse. We need to switch to Innovation, like China did, and use it as a template for widespread resurgence in manufacturing excellence.

2. Aero & Defence

Making products in India for the World.

This panel discussion, led by Mr. Salil Gupte, explored India's growing role in **aerospace and defence**, focusing on modernization, indigenization, and the opportunities for global competitiveness.



Mr. Banmali Agrawala: Most of the manufacturing or technology that happens gets tested in the in defense applications first. And once it works, it gets commercialized. We therefore need to understand commercializing the same technology to make it cheaper, and to make it more is a huge opportunity. Second, there are several large long-term bets that one would need to take, which is a stabilizing factor. The significance of Digitisation to accomplish self-reliance in manufacturing, is extremely important. It is amazing that how, particularly the aerospace industry, has not adequately digitized. We need to have an approach to do it at a scale and that will be crucial for scaling and connecting systems. It requires a multi-dimensional effort that integrates knowledge of new technologies with sophisticated systems that drive manufacturing processes.

Mr. Jayant D Patil: Today, a war is not fought by people on the field, but those sitting behind computers. The amount of AI in our weapon systems, as witnessed recently during the operation Sindoor, is immense. Short of aviation platforms, anything and everything that the armed forces need today has been, in terms of capability and capacities, built in India. If I look at the future about Rs. 15 lakh crores of purchases the ministry will do, more than 90% will be from Indian companies. And that's a huge statement, as it is a strategic imperative. Second is that there should be absolutely no denial of use. Third is acceptance by government of the capability of Indian companies, both private and public. This is indeed a big movement forward.

Mr. Hari Marar: Thinking Customer convenience is a key driver of innovations and improvements. For example, efforts have been made to improve security

using new technologies to help reduce the process of taking out things from bags and then put them back. Despite a relatively natural monopoly an Airport enjoys, there has been significant improvements from the quality of infrastructure to customer experience including retailing. We have come a long way from learning from international players to hosting learning missions from there.

Mr. Salil Gupte: India will buy upto 3,000 civil aircrafts over the next twenty years. That's what's driving India to place orders well over 1,200 for airplanes over the last two to three years. While this is going to make up more than two-thirds of the global aviation market over these next few decades, at the moment, we only contribute a third of that in terms of the supply chain, in terms of manufacturing. And if you think about the MRO sector, they're naturally going to be located at the airports as well. So, this is where the services sector comes into this as well. Overall, it is indeed an ideal time for the sector to pull things together, and benefit from the tremendous aspiration that is comprising the present environment.

Synopsis: The infrastructure transformation, defence self-reliance, public-private partnerships, and the need for scaling manufacturing and technology absorption, are key to success of the Indian Aero and Defence sector. Building clusters, investing in semiconductors and engines, fostering skills, and integrating AI for future-readiness, and collaborating with Research institutes are the real accelerators that can fuel the ambitious growth trajectory, already signalled by the market demand.

3. Pharma and Health Sciences

Moving up the Pharma value chain



The panel, led by Mr. Sudarshan Jain, discussed how India can transition from being the "pharmacy of the world" in generics and vaccines to a true **global pharma powerhouse** in innovation and high-value therapeutics. Speakers emphasized the dual priorities of **quality**—as a license to operate—and **innovation**, which drives future growth and competitiveness. They outlined industry challenges such as regulatory complexity, skill development, funding, infrastructure,

and the need for stronger industry-academia collaboration. The session concluded with calls for passion, continuous learning, and out-of-the-box thinking to build future leaders and innovators in pharma.

Mr. Rahul Awasthi: The subject of Quality in Pharma has a different context than in other industries. Quality, or efficacy as seen as that which serves the purpose of the pharma product, is largely well taken care of by the industry. The Regulatory requirements, which are very critical for the industry to demonstrate compliance excellence, vary from country to country. This multitude of expectations add complexity to the manufacturing systems. SOPs, efficient use of data, digitalisation for seamless sharing of information across systems, and continuous employee education go a long way to living up to the Regulatory standards.

Mr. Sanjeev Asgekar: Quality in Pharma starts its journey from R&D. The design of the product and the plan to produce defect free products in the production process, determines the overall quality performance. Given the increasing Digitalisation that electronically senses and processes data, skilling the current and new talent in interpreting data becomes extremely critical, besides improving pharma, process and functional knowledge. This can help the industry deal with natural variation, without affecting product and process quality.

Mr. Murali Ramachandra: Two thirds of value in pharma is centred on innovative therapeutics. We have an eco-system that is characterised by – A body of training institutes that are preparing pharma talent relentlessly, a market that is unparalleled in its genetic diversity that keeps adding to the demand for treatment, and a pharma industry that has proven itself at the global level for quality manufacturing. Add to it the fast-maturing CRO sector that is contributing in discovery or development of products for global partners. All we need a method by which we direct desired actions in the innovative therapies space. Our strengths in Chemistry has enabled us build small molecules. We need to take the next steps to progress beyond that.

Mr. Sudarshan Jain: It is critical to make the Indian industry globally competitive. For that, being a value adding partner in the global supply chain is extremely important so that we are able to plough back investments into the industry for meaningful growth. While India has more US certified plants operating in the country than that of US, our value component is far behind the volume component. We have excellence but largely in pockets, and we need to democratise it sooner than later. Coupled with a Innovation centred strategy, Indian Pharma can turn the tide and become the most desired health-care destination for the world.

Synopsis: We need to make the talent pipeline even richer, capable of high end research and data analytics in an innovative manner. We also need a more optimistic funding environment for research and Capex in the pharma sector, which inherently has a longer gestation for returns. The Regulatory system, while highly accepted as an important driver of consistent quality, has scope for harmonisation to make it simpler to operate. There is a positively supportive policy environment for the industry to take advantage of.

4. Health and Hospitals

Improving access to quality Healthcare

This panel, moderated by Mr. Girish Krishnamurthy, addressed how India can improve access to quality healthcare and build world-class medical infrastructure. Speakers from leading hospitals and healthcare organizations shared perspectives on affordability, accessibility, chronic disease management, technology adoption, and the role of insurance.



Dr R V Ramani: Every year, the number of doctors who graduate in India is 180K. It is 90k in China, 70k in Russia, and 27k in United States. The irony is even with so many doctors coming out, 80% of the doctors stay either in the cities or near the urban areas, and only 20% are there in the villages where the need is large. So, there is a disparity in the availability of not just doctors, but also para medical personnel as well. India needs an innovative Health care delivery system that is inclusive and affordable, to take advantage of its huge talent pipeline and demographic dividend.

Dr S Raja Sabapathy: We have been very fortunate that in India there have been very great institutions which have clearly shown that high quality healthcare does not mean high-cost healthcare. However, equity in access to modern and advanced healthcare is crucial for India's future. When 75% of our population is in rural areas, we sometimes forget that within that there are a huge number of people who require high technology care. For example, spinal cord injuries are very high in rural areas because of the kind of work they do. So, one paralyzed patient actually ends up

paralyzing the entire family. As a result, the whole family's socio-economic slab keeps coming down. All this can be completely avoided if this person got access to good healthcare facilities, in the proximity and at affordable terms.

Dr S Rajasekaran: Good quality healthcare for low cost needs high volume. The gap between need and availability as also between availability and utilisation needs to be bridged. To improve access to high quality healthcare for everybody, the government should step in and help setup super speciality hospitals.



Dr Devi Shetty: India must come out of the mindset that everyone should get health care free-of-cost with the taxpayers money. That is possible only in countries with three important prerequisites--low population of not more than 5 million, very high tax to GDP ratio of 25% to 45% (in India it is about 11% -12%), and spending up to 18% of the GDP on health care (India is hardly spending 3%.) So, no large country in the world, including the US, can offer health care to the citizens free of cost. The option then is affordable health insurance for all. However, the trust deficit of in the healthcare eco-system in India is very high. Hospitals and insurance companies don't trust each other. Neither the patient trusts either or evokes trust from others. The way forward is the employers who are requiring the employees to have a health insurance to partly fund the Health industry in India. We believe that India can become the first country in the world to dissociate health care from wealth and prove that wealth of the nation or of the family has nothing to do with the quality of health care its citizens receive. That cannot take the next 30 or 50 years but has to happen within the next five to 10 years.



Mr. Girish Krishnamurthy: Low cost and high-quality healthcare that is accessible to all is possible in India. However, our caring model has to change from a reactive to a more proactive where we prioritize prevention over cure. This is critical given the rising number of chronic diseases in the country. With innovation and indigenization, we

have the opportunity to become the front runner in providing high quality affordable healthcare in the world.

Synopsis: There is an urgent need for patient-centric, proactive, and high-quality care, in the urban and rural regions alike. There is need to minimise the trust deficit across the stakeholders and humanise the healthcare administration experience. The Industry, which benefits from a healthy workforce, should proportionately fund the health-care system so that citizen wealth is dissociated from availing healthcare. With the help of the Government, when India provides enhanced access to super speciality health facilities to all, India can rise to pioneer innovative models in healthcare delivery for the needy.

5. Electronics and Semiconductors

What does it take to succeed globally?

This panel discussion, moderated by Mr. Srinivas Satya, focused on what it will take for India to succeed in the global electronics and semiconductor industry. Speakers from industry, government, and academia highlighted India's strengths in talent and policy support, while also addressing challenges around technology complexity, capital intensity, supply chains, and innovation. The conversation emphasized the importance of system-level thinking, localized solutions, quality standards, and ecosystem development, alongside long-term government policy and industry collaboration.



Mr. Dominic David: The semiconductor industry has grown tremendously globally and in India. Each of us has developed depth, bringing in know-how. Dependability means being trusted by all stakeholders, and density means creating and facilitating suppliers to align with the big goals of the industry. Localising all the consumables, developing interim products and reducing the total cost of ownership are some of the crucial endeavours for the industry.



Mr. Santhosh Kumar: India is an attractive destination for talent, not for low cost but for their potential. We have an amazing demography with IT talent, but we do not have systems that can develop solutions to help irrigation or agriculture. There is a big opportunity in terms of electronics and semiconductors taking part in solving big ticket national challenges. It is the best opportunity to be in this business in India, and IFQM can focus on quality, lowering costs, and looking to work at the school level to nurture talent.

Ms. Jaya Jagadish: Many countries are attempting to enter the Semiconductor industry, and some are trying to excel. We have access to raw talent to meet the domestic and global demands. Regarding chip design, we had 20% of resources from India, but there has been a shift, and all are moving towards systems and architecture products. So, the startup ecosystem is present, but more are required, as well as investment, trainers, and R&D. IFQM can define a framework on quality to help the semiconductor industry.

Mr. Srinivas Satya: The growth in manufacturing will be vital to the country's progress. The challenges of developing the semiconductor industry are essentially in terms of size and potential. Its impact on other industries, from Defence to Finance, and many more, is crucial. Along with the electronic industry, the semiconductor industry has a significant role in the country's future. But challenges are present in areas such as shaping production systems, building a robust supply chain that is resilient, honing an entire ecosystem that enables the fast pace of production and deliveries, ensuring the talent pipeline is full and needs to be addressed by all stakeholders.



Synopsis: India's semiconductor industry, projected to reach \$110 billion by 2030, have the talent. Nearly 20% of global chip design engineers are in India. There is a need to build system-level solutions and manufacturing expertise to complement the brilliance of the talent. The government's upcoming Semicon 2.0

policy will expand support from fabs to the entire ecosystem – chemicals, gases, and equipment. Quality isn't just a badge – it's non-negotiable trust that will define India's global competitiveness. India needs to surge ahead to leverage benefits from collaboration, innovation, and relentless execution, to emerge as a true semiconductor hub.

6.IT – Digital AI Making Friends with AI

This panel explored how humans and AI can coexist productively, addressing both fears (job loss, bias, data security) and hopes (innovation, efficiency, new opportunities). Speakers shared practical applications of AI in industries such as automotive, pharma, FMCG, OTT, and agriculture, while stressing the importance of aligning AI with business problems, and not just technology adoption.



Mr. Gopichand Katragadda: You make friends with AI exactly as you make in real life. It is about introducing yourself and keeping the relationship personal and special. Try it if you want it to cover for your vulnerabilities or leverage your strengths. If you want hallucination, you can deploy AI, legitimately. It is fair. AI is 80% data and 20% algorithms and that tell us which is more important. Choose the right problems to solve, else AI will be just waste of time and effort. While on B2C you can readily scale, look for maturity before scaling in B2B.

Mr. Shalabh Srivastava: AI can be an Assistant, a Partner or can help you as a citizen. It can be used to disrupt the market to your advantage. When you befriend AI, you get to understand how it works, and therefore you can better results. Avoid underrating AI by using it for routine things. Scale your successes to the Division and organizational level, to multiply benefits.

Ms. Lalitha Indrakanti: AI is like a friend, but you will need different friends for different purposes. With AI, some things work but not all. Perhaps 8 out of 10 may not be optimal, but the two that works will bring remarkable results. A few things about AI adoption – It is here to stay, so better embrace it and use it to strengthen your core. Evaluate critically and deploy it for innovation rather than merely for automation.



Mr. Romal Shetty: AI can convert Capex to Opex, as in case of paying per Km of usage instead of buying a Tyre. AI drives huge business benefit for fleets for whom Tyres are second only to Fuel in costs. AI can think ahead and tell us if our intent is possible (Say assembling a car in 2.5 mins) given the constraints we create in production lines. Even buying commodities that fluctuate with wind, can be in AI's scope. Therefore, it is cutting edge. Outcomes depend on how we use it.



Synopsis: To deliver breakthrough results, AI needs responsible use of data, the need for upskilling, ethical considerations, and personalization. It is extremely critical to identify appropriate subjects for AI deployment that have the potential for big-ticket impact, thereby enable India to leapfrog by embedding AI into value adding products, differentiated service, social welfare and community development.

7. Transforming MSME sector through Quality, Innovation and Excellence

This panel, led by Mr. Peeyush Gupta, explored how Indian MSMEs can transition from incremental improvements to holistic transformation by leveraging quality, innovation, and excellence. Speakers from Boeing, ZF, Bosch, TVS, and Aldica Technologies shared perspectives on clusters, cultural change, leadership, collaboration, and ecosystem support. Discussions covered regulatory and technical readiness, the role of OEM partnerships, and the importance of both digital literacy and soft skills. The session highlighted real-world examples of cluster impact, including transformations within the ZF–Jamshedpur cluster.



Ms. Tracy J Daly: Deploying MSME clusters is a great opportunity to leverage, accelerate and amplify opportunities, to provide that step improvement in quality. This is indeed a proven route, including at Seattle, where we have the Pacific Northwest Aerospace Alliance. There is a very similar system to IFQM, who have created a cluster system. Accelerated learnings happen, besides strengthening of partnership between the suppliers and OEMs. It is just not providing training alone, but about advanced practices like APQP (Advanced Product Quality Planning) that reinforce root cause centred corrective actions and methods to sustain improvements. Deep involvements by Regulators, who visit Boeing as well as its suppliers, add to acceleration in learning and improvements.

Mr. Ponraj Pandian: The world is rapidly changing, with Digital transformation, climate change, and global market shifts, and everything is happening around us, now and here. We, at ZF, are moving ahead along with our MSME suppliers. It is a big challenge, but the efforts are worthwhile and long acting. We need to support MSMEs by helping them discover their true potential through Assessments, Training and Counselling.

Mr. Madhav Dusane: Bosch has a supplier base for the last four of its seven decades of presence in India. That was a time where we gave Drawings, Tools, Gauges, methods. It was not almost like 'Build as I say'. Now, the story is different. They have will, technology, ability to design components, production process and we learn from them. We can now engage with them at a different level with Assessments, combined SWOT analyses, strategic thinking and more, all feeding into numerous programs we have for the future of our Suppliers. That is a true indicator of Partnership.

Mr. R Anandakrishnan: At TVSM, building Quality based on Philosophies, concepts and long-term thinking are always beneficial. What we provide to our Suppliers is, an opportunity to learn and, come back to work with us to attain more successful outcomes. With nearly three fourths of components coming from outside, one can imagine their critical importance. We have deployed a Cluster approach through which we provide principles, frameworks and methodologies,

be it for DWM or QFD, and that is helping accomplish simplicity and resulting in mutual benefits.

Mr. Deepak Bagrecha: As an MSME representative, I can say that IFQM is a great thing to happen for us. We did not know where to go. Who would assist us in the



next phase of growth, was a big question. Just as syllabus change with grades, we need to look at new concepts and vocabulary to internalise. The IFQM Counsellors visit us to share very practical insights, and there is focus

on leadership. Discussions on where to head over the next five years lead us to do things which we would not have even thought about. Gap Analyses, initiatives, branding, technology – everything gets under the scope. We visit each other's factories, and with veterans around, we have immense learning, and opportunity to implement. Ex: Do we have Lead management? We realise there is much to do to grow and become even more relevant in the future.



Mr. Peeyush Gupta: India is expecting its MSMEs to rise. It is not about what you can do and fix, but about speed, fast tracking, progress and profitable growth. OEMs, who themselves were small in the past, are great examples for MSMEs to emulate. We need to embrace Growth despite uncertainties and ambiguities, since that is the way forward to enhance our relevance to the world we live in.

Synopsis:

- Clusters accelerate learning and transformation: Boeing and Bosch emphasized that MSME clusters, coupled with OEM guidance and regulatory preparedness, significantly raise quality and competitiveness.
- Cultural shift is as vital as tools: ZF highlighted that MSMEs need leadership-driven cultural change alongside technical skills to

- Partnership models evolving: Bosch described moving from “build-to-print” support to expecting suppliers to design processes and innovate, with only those willing to transform being part of the Future Fit Supplier Program.
- Investment dynamics: Today, OEMs expect MSMEs to invest financially, while OEMs contribute knowledge, training, and ecosystem access.
- Simplified frameworks for MSMEs: TVS stressed adapting global TQM and TPM frameworks into bite-sized, Indianized methods, making them consumable and impactful.
- Cluster case study (ZF–Jamshedpur): Deepak Bagrecha shared that IFQM's CEO sessions reshaped thinking, created cross-learning among eight companies, tied up with XLRI and NIT for case studies, and improved operational excellence without overburdening leaders.
- India vs. China SMEs: Chinese SMEs are faster, more agile, and leverage ecosystems readily. Indian SMEs tend to be conservative with investments and rely on one-to-one partnerships rather than broader ecosystem networks.

LATERAL NUGGETS

Viksit Bharat is an inclusive concept, integrating Business sectors with everything else, including Academia, non-business and Fine Arts. There is so much for each segment to learn from others, in a journey that needs to accelerate since 2047 is not too far.

- Manufacturing Excellence
- People

Several leaders, across Panels, highlighted the need to favourable alter the culture and mindsets that go to affect each and every part of what we do, be in the factories, offices, market, or community. This is most crucial as all improvements deliver sustained outcomes, moving us closer to our goals.

1.Manufacturing Excellence Learnings from Dr. Kano

This session, one of the most sought after as it featured Dr. Noriaki Kano speaking on Total Quality Management (TQM), showcased Japan's multi-decade journey from quality improvement to innovation and global competitiveness. Dr. Kano, while describing trends in evolution of knowledge in papers and practice (theory vs implementation), linked quality improvement to product innovation and stressed on self-responsibility, staged improvement, and the role of QFD and TPM in design and manufacturing.



Compelling case studies in automotive (Toyota/Nissan/Honda) enunciated the significance of 'Attractive Quality', a key feature of the world-renowned Kano model, balancing improvement vs innovation investments, and the lessons they hold for India as it rapidly moves from compliance to customer-centric approaches.



Key Insights

- 1. Implementation matters more than theory:** Noting the initial trends of SQC conferences showing domination by theoretical papers, while implementation reports (practical, sweat-driven work) rose later, Dr. Kano highlighted real progress requires practical, often difficult, on-the-groundwork.
- 2. Three-stage quality cycle:** Framing quality activity as (1) under-control/maintenance, (2) continuous improvement, and (3) breakthrough innovation – Dr. Kano argues organizations must progress through these stages to realize innovation, reliably.
- 3. Improvement is prerequisite for sustainable innovation:** Innovation requires prior problem solving and process improvements; Citing numerous examples where design problems and tool/process issues had to be solved before chosen innovations could succeed, Dr. Kano stressed that Innovation follows efforts in sustained improvement.
- 4. Investment trade-offs constrain innovation frequency:** Daily improvement and training need to continue to be the bedrock and practiced more frequently, and they demand less risky investment. Senior executives, who often limit innovation because innovation requires capital with uncertain ROI, need to rethink on the power of step changes.

- 5. Practical design linkage (QFD example):** Dr. Kano demonstrated the use of QFD to translate customer voices (e.g., forklift attributes like safety, reliability, and compactness) into design specifications and competitive targets – showing a concrete method to make customer-centric design decisions.



Synopsis:

The daily rigour, rhythm and discipline are corner stones for accomplishing Innovation. Incorporating insights derived from observing the customers and their foreseeing their requirements enable organizations to incorporate Attractive Quality in their products and services. Usage of Tools such as QFD and TPM provide a sustained advantage of being ahead of time and help seize opportunities that present themselves arising out of changes in customer requirements and advancements in technology.

2. People

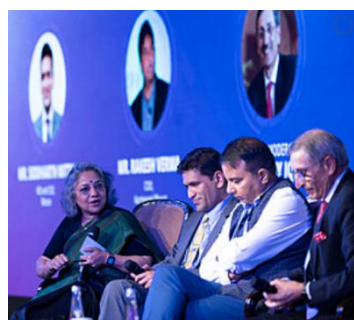
The Ultimate Drivers of Quality, Innovation & Excellence

This fireside chat focused on people, culture, and leadership as the foundation of quality, innovation, and excellence. Panellists emphasized how organizations must move beyond compliance toward a culture of pride, empowerment, and continuous improvement. They discussed governance, skilling, attrition challenges in MSMEs, and the role of leadership in setting quality standards. Examples from IT, pharmaceuticals, and government highlighted how culture, documentation, and employee empowerment are critical to sustaining excellence.



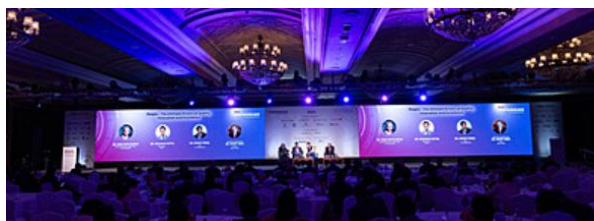
Mr. Siddharth Mittal: People are the one who are going to make it or break it. We all have a common vision of taking quality culture that stands out at the global level. The quality and compliance come from the company's culture, about how people recognise and identify it with the product and brand. As the organization grows, the culture of innovation and quality need be intensified, and never compromised.

Ms. Hema Ravichandar: People in every organisation take cues from the corner office – be it for inspiration, direction, or priorities.



The right tones at the top will be remarkably reflected in all work units, ensuring alignment and enabling integration. A higher purpose takes us to superior quality of

effort, way beyond where we thought we would end up. It is all in the mindset and the culture, and therefore they need to be seeded from the beginning. It is very critical to provide Quality a highchair in the organization, reflecting the quality intent of the entire organization.



Mr. Rakesh Verma: The government is good at compliance and has a credible record at that. The challenge is in continuous upskilling, and improvements in critical functions including procurement and execution. After consultations and benchmarking with countries like Singapore, UK and Australia who are well known for civil services training, Mission Karmayogi was launched on a sound digital platform, offering multi-disciplinary training inputs to transform from a Rule based regime to role based state. The results have been immense, with more than 50 million course completions. We are partnering with

numerous government establishments, private firms and entities like IFQM, to improve the governance at different levels.

Mr. Sonny Iqbal: People and culture are the ultimate enablers of any organization, and therefore the mainstay of what drives quality, excellence and innovation. Inspiring them on this path are leaders



who guide them to adapt and grow, even as they continue to meet and exceed the customer requirements. This needs the energy of both internal and external collaborations, that make learning led improvements possible. This is something that our country needs, now

and here, so that the profound goals we are pursuing of being a developed nation comes to fruition.

Synopsis: Culture is a central driver of quality, led by leadership commitment, institutionalized processes, and empowered environments. This needs to be at scale, expanding rapidly. Upskilling is now becoming all pervasive, across public, private and community levels. Competency-based skilling, immersive training, and partnerships with academia and industry are the levers for success. In the process, compliance need to be seen as a friend and not a limitation to innovate and grow. Taking along MSMEs in this journey, where attrition and reliance on contract workers are even bigger challenges impacting quality, is important. Some of the means and solutions include meaningful articulation led documentation, emotional and learning value adds for employees, and consistent culture-building across both permanent and contract workers. Balancing cost–time–quality and linking quality metrics to incentives are key governance mechanisms to nurture and sustain excellence.

WORKING WITH THE ACADEMIA

1. Industry Academia – Participation of Academia in enabling India's Growth story

This panel explored the challenges and opportunities in strengthening collaboration between academia and industry to better prepare students for the workforce and enable India's growth story. Panellists from academic institutions and industry leaders discussed gaps in readiness, the balance between theory and practice, and structural barriers like differing objectives and lack of trust.



Ms. Vandana Sonwaney: I spent around a decade in the corporate and then came into academics with the sole vision of making application based learning a great experience for teachers as well as students. The education system, particularly post-graduation, has to be industry centric so that there is a forward path for the students. Theory is not abstract as it stems from practical research. The presentation of theory has to be made in a manner that it reflects a need for transition to the vocabulary used in the industry.

Fr. Sebastian George, SJ: At XLRI, we focus on Quality in Admission, Teaching and Placement. While a combined view on the importance of Academia is positive, the individual opinions of Industry managers and Professors vary significantly, largely driven by a feeling of insecurity from one another. To beat that, XLRI does several things: a) Get the Managers handle one part of the classical courses, b) Offer curated courses that are managed by the Managers and Professors, and c) the vast Alumni who are in the industry are assigned to students as mentors, and to offer placement guidance and d) through internships, students get the opportunity to do live projects. There are, of course, many more miles to cover, for the Industry and Academia to complement their strengths. Theory taught in colleges may sound abstract or imaginary to start with, but when applied judiciously to the practical needs of life, it becomes indispensable. If there is no theory that is studied, there is no practice that the industry implement.



Mr. Zubin Palia: The role of Academia in preparing 'employment ready' talent for the Industry can never

be overstated. Equally important to the industry is about the skill levels of the contract employees. While knowledge is important, instilling the right mindsets is equally crucial. The Industry expects that the new talent has the fundamental grounding in the theory and concepts. With the right mindsets, they can harmonize with the culture and practices of the organization. Deep research connected with real world problems can unravel new tech and practices, that are crucial for productivity and business success.

Mr. Neeraj Sagar:

Education systems need to provide sample opportunities on practice to the students. This can improve the current imbalance in theory vs practice and enhance the trust the Academia and Industry share. The Association needs to be continuous and ongoing, so that both improve on real-time.

Synopsis: It is important to embed industry centred subjects into curricula, longer internships, and co-created projects. IFQM's role in facilitating clusters and regular dialogues can speed up progress. There was a call for actionable collaboration, not just agreements in principle, including the following.

- Industry can set up centres of excellence inside universities rather than independently.
- Academia can start with internal improvement projects.
- IFQM could facilitate clusters, governing council participation by industry, and frequent local dialogues instead of once-a-year forums.
- Greater involvement of alumni networks, and guest lectures to bridge the practice-theory gap.

2.Actions to integrate Academia - Industry ways of work

This facilitated session had an open discussion among industry representatives, academics, and students about workforce readiness for manufacturing sectors (with emphasis on semiconductors and Biotech).



Participants shared concrete examples of employer-led training programs (e.g., Biocon Academy, Tata initiatives, JNTVTI collaborations), debated curriculum vs. internship timing, and surfaced practical barriers—credential credibility, entry compensation, and students’ inability to explain projects. The session prioritized actionable solutions: vocational/industry-run training, campus–industry internships, centralized training facilities, and clearer pathways for non-traditional disciplines.

Synopsis:

1. Employer-led vocational training scales up hiring readiness: Companies cited programs (Biocon Academy, Tata’s training at JNTVTI) as effective pipelines—industry can fund or host short, focused curricula and recruit directly from cohorts.
2. Internships embedded in final semesters reduce onboarding time: Multiple speakers recommended that the last 6–8 months of university include mandatory internships or industry projects so graduates “hit the ground running” and reduce employer training burden.
3. Centralized industry training are a practical solution: Proposals included industry-run campuses offering certification and continuous upskilling that can serve multiple employers and sectors.
4. Non-technical barriers affect recruitment choices: Higher entry compensation in IT and air-conditioned roles draws talent away from manufacturing; aligning compensation and improving perceived career value can attract students to shop-floor roles.
5. Hiring friction includes credibility and authenticity gaps: Recruiters reported difficulty trusting academic scores and frequently encounter candidates unable to explain their own projects—highlighting need for assessment or certification mechanisms and stronger emphasis on demonstrable skills.

LEARN FROM EVERYWHERE

Quality in Indian Fine Arts

Indian Fine Arts is world class. Perhaps, it has reached this state much earlier than the industry. Its consumers are all over the world, and they need more and more from it, all the time. That is repeat purchase and positive referral, as the industry would choose to call it. Stemming from organized knowledge, captured in a code which is no less than a Java in sophistication, coupled with rigorous practice and most importantly, a connection with a higher purpose while demonstrating excellence in performance,

Indian Fine Arts has earned its place in the global stage.

1. Abhinava Dance Company:

Ms. Nirupama Rajendra: Classical Kathak naturally blends with storytelling, an inseparable component of transformation, be it individual, organizational or institutional. Through three plays, we seek to tell you tales that wind around themes of quality, Indian values, and the pursuit of excellence. While the *Bhagavata Purana*, symbolizes surrender, humility, and the soul’s yearning for perfection, *Abhisar* manifests the river’s journey to the ocean, conveying perseverance and purpose, while enjoying the process of striving toward higher goals.



The closing play, *Bahurang* – a fusion work by young dancers who represent the youth of India, integrate Kathak with world percussion and music, showcasing collaboration, diversity and creativity, while keeping continuity of tradition intact. These are very terms and phrases the industry uses as it transcends from being a small organization to becoming a large value adding corporation. They are the value creators of the nation, on whom rests the very promise of a Viksit Bharat.



2.Total Quality – Lessons for Business from the disciplines of Fine Arts

This session, led by Mr. Aroon Raman, explored the profound connections between fine arts and industry, examining how businesses can draw lessons in precision, rhythm, and creativity from artistic disciplines. The panellists highlighted several aspects where the arts offer significant lessons to business success and organizational culture.



Ms. Vinita Bali: The unique contribution of art in quality is that it helps develop empathy, excellence, ambition, collaboration, and sensitivity. Excellence in the great minds is not a destination but a journey. Arts are an inspiration for business. The arts' fundamental nature can teach an organisation a lot about soft skills. We need to do more than pay lip service to the arts and benefit from it by treating it as a source of inspiration.

Ms. Swati Munjal: In finding the right Guru, getting the right essentials and purity of purpose, Dance is a great source of insights. Besides, it inculcates discipline, an invaluable ingredient for success. In an academic setting, there is a lot of collective thinking, and 'agree to disagree' is the norm that encourages empathy and caring. Arts encourage vulnerability, self-reflection, and resilience – traits that support open, empathetic organizational cultures. These are invaluable lessons for the industry, especially at a time when it is seeking to rediscover its potential against a profound vision of making India a developed country.



Mr. Bhaskar Bhat: Storytelling is a powerful way of building a culture, and it is a way to establish ethical standards, where a larger goal is achieved collectively and not by the person in control. It can effectively communicate values and collective goals more

powerfully than traditional corporate methods. The Indian film industry has learnt the lessons well, and so are other forms of Art.

Mr. Aroon Raman Lateral thinking, the foundation of innovation, can spur interest in developing excellence.



We can take a big leap if we look at the positives and negatives of using fine arts in our industry and business. The Dance performance was spontaneous and insightful; effectively connecting artistic theory and performance back to business, highlighting parallels in passion, craft, and excellence.

Synopsis: Lessons from fine arts of empathy, discipline, storytelling, innovation, and humility, can enrich leadership and organizational culture. Arts can influence strategy, culture, and excellence in business. It nurtures empathy, self-reflection, teamwork, and the pursuit of excellence as a continuous journey. Pointing to AI both for its potential as a useful tool and a possible undesirable disruption, the human capabilities in creativity, ethics, and judgment are far ahead of science, and perhaps irreplaceable.

Learning from JUSE, AOTS and JIPM

Mr. Ananda Krishnan: We at IFQM are looking at learn from best of the organizations in the world, to deliver the best for our MSMEs. We're happy to announce the partnership with, of IFQM with leading Japanese



institutions JIPM and AOTS, to add to what we already have with JUSE. These organizations bring with them decades of proven expertise in their quality, innovation and excellence journeys that have transformed industries across. What makes these

collaborations unique and their ability to serve diverse sectors, including manufacturing, automotive, health care, and pharma.

Through IFQM, Indian companies gain direct access, to structured learning solutions, model-based training, and practitioner led coaching rooted in Japan's celebrated way of continuous improvement. The benefit for these companies is twofold. They not only acquire globally benchmarked methods to solve today's business challenges but also build collective and cultural capabilities that enhance competitiveness, foster innovation, and ensure long term sustainability. IFQM has already launched a learning solution on robust optimization techniques, providing companies the tools to strengthen design and decision-making process.

As a part of our partnership with JIPM, IFQM will launch a customized level one TPM program in India from November 17 to November 22, this year, as a major step in building a strong TPM foundation locally. With AOTS, (Association for Overseas Technical Cooperation and Sustainable Partnerships), IFQM is, designing global cooperation programs. The five-to-ten-day programs held in Japan will be custom tailored to organizational needs, enabling participants to engage directly with the global best practices and sustainable models. Above all these, we have JUSE, represented by Masato Onodera san and Maida san today, a very important partner in supporting IFQM to develop counselling and assessment capabilities, and more.

4.A Message from JUSE:



Mr. Masato Onodera: Next year, 2026 will mark the eightieth anniversary of establishment of JUSE. As you all know, after the second World War, Japan was in a



state of total ruin. Under those circumstances, we advanced management centred on quality, achieving rapid economic development of Japan. JUSE has contributed to the economic development of Japan through, various seminars, lectures, symposium,

forums, and various certification programs related to quality management. These achievements were made possible through collaboration among industry, government, and academia.

The Deming prize was our initiative and contributed to the economic development of Japan. And IFQM and JUSE signed a memorandum of understanding on 20 Oct 2023. By sharing our respective organizational capabilities and quality management, both organizations aim to foster further advancement and build stronger relationships.

We have had many meetings so far. And, at the ICQ 2025 that JUSE hosted recently, Mr. Venu Srinivasan, the chairman of TVS Motors and IFQM, spoke as a

special guest and delivered very insightful messages. So going forward, we plan to develop and implement, more concrete programs for counsellor training, top management training, TQM training, as well as training sessions and company visits in Japan. The Japan study mission will, be proposed to you by IFQM between April and June next year. So you will be able to learn from many distinguished Japanese instructors.

Some of the topics they will cover are the basics of TQM, policy management, and customer value. The program includes visits to multiple well-known companies where you can directly experience TQM in action. So, during your one week stay in Japan, I believe you will be able to gain not only a wealth of knowledge, but also valuable experiences from both manufacturing and service companies. We hope that a closer cooperation between IFQM and JUSE will contribute to the development of, both the countries.

4.Pursuit of Beauty

Mr. Harald Kroeger: *Quality is not the goal, but the shadow cast by a life lived in search of beauty.*



Beauty and design are inseparably connected to quality and national competitiveness. Using personal stories rather than data, he praised India's people and aesthetics while noting that unclean public spaces can distort outsiders' quality perceptions of 'Made in India'. He argued that true quality goes beyond function to include beauty and encouraged India to balance analytical rigor with creativity in education and product design.



Emphasising that Imagination is more important than knowledge, Mr. Harald Kroeger, an admirer of India for years, spoke about how mesmerizing it is for him to observe India and its exquisite sense of Beauty, be it in Design in Arts or the stunning richness of cultural attires of people on the streets. The job for us is to magnify these traits across other sectors of life, to realise the full potential of India.

Insights:

- **Gap in Perception Matters:** Foreign visitors often form quality impressions during brief exposures (e.g., airport-to-hotel drives). Cleanliness of public spaces significantly influences perceptions of Indian product quality and the "Made in India" brand.
- **Quality is more than Function:** Quality includes beauty and thoughtful design, not just reliability. He argued beautiful design does not necessarily cost more than "not beautiful" design Rx: Car body lines, UI layouts.

- **Balance in Education:** Intense exam-focused systems can produce high-performing 'speed solvers', risking suppression in creativity; An IIT professor reportedly sees ~20% of students arrive exhausted after admission.
- **Design Talent is Strategic:** India should strengthen its 'design muscle' alongside engineering—adding designers to tech teams Ex: EV charging station UI with dense data can have superior aesthetics/usability.
- **Comparative Trajectory:** China shifted from 'don't make mistakes' to 'dazzle customers with design'; India can accelerate a similar journey by nurturing creativity and exposure in its youth.

LAUNCHES

In keeping up with the commitments made in the last Symposium, IFQM launched two significant platforms to engage both the MSMEs and large organizations in the journey.

1.DIGITAL TOOLS

This session marked the launch of IFQM's digital tools platform, designed to help MSMEs improve productivity, quality, and competitiveness. Senior digital leaders from Tata Steel, L&T, TVS Motors, Bosch, Motherson, and iECHO collaborated to create practical and industry-tested solutions. The platform integrates self-assessment, skill management, daily work management, quality control, digital learning, and idea crowdsourcing into a unified offering. Panellists emphasized customer-centric design, light and scalable applications, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing. Each company showcased its specific contributions, while IFQM invited broader industry participation for future tool development.



COLLABORATION AT WORK

KEY FEATURES OF DIGITAL TOOLS:

MSMEs as focus

Tools are tailored for MSMEs, emphasizing affordability, ease of use, and scalability.

Platform Features:

- Self-assessment with recommendations.
- Skill management tool with face recognition + Aadhaar to match workers to jobs.

- Digital learning via courses and experiential modules (hosted on L&T EduTech LMS).
- Daily works management for operations and maintenance tracking.
- QC tools to identify root causes and prevent recurrence.
- Real-time collaboration through digital repositories and expert communities.
- Ideathon tool to capture workforce ideas and implement suggestions.



Company Contributions to Digital Tools:

- L&T: Learning management system (LMS), FR-based worker ID/skill system.
- Motherson: Ideathon idea-harnessing platform, proven at scale (200,000+ workforce)
- TVS: Digital courses and digitized total quality management (TQM, DWM).
- Tata Steel: Digital learning modules, upcoming safety-focused tools.
- iECHO: Collaborative digital infrastructure for "all teach, all learn," adapted from healthcare to industry.
- IFQM: Overall Orchestration.

Design Principles:

Lightweight, user-centric, offline/online capable, based on real shop-floor needs.

Governance:

Blueprint developed by TCS; execution supported by multiple tech partners.

Vision: To continuously expand tools by integrating more industry best practices and making them available across India.

2.IFQM QUALITY EXCELLENCE PRIZE - QEP

The session marked the launch of the IFQM Quality Excellence Prize (QEP), designed to recognize organizations that demonstrate sustained commitment to quality, innovation, and excellence. Leaders from IFQM and Deloitte outlined the prize's objectives, framework, and evaluation process, stressing inclusivity, rigor, and its role in building national competitiveness.



Launch of IFQM Quality Excellence Prize

- **Purpose of QEP:** To build a culture of quality across industries and services, enabling India's journey toward global competitiveness.
- **Evaluation Framework:** Distinct six-feature model with maturity levels (Aspirers to Visionaries), nine enabler dimensions (vision, strategy, customer centricity, etc.), and rigorous 10-step evaluation covering 250+ sub-dimensions.
- **Commitment to handholding:** IFQM counsellors will provide guidance and feedback to participants, ensuring improvement beyond the award itself.
- **Governance safeguards:** Governing council members and subsidiaries are ineligible for the first three years to ensure fairness.



QEP Criteria Framework

3.CELEBRATING YOUNG TALENT:

More than 3000 students from institutions across India participated in the IFQM Quality centred competitions, held in collaboration with BML Munjal University. The event celebrated young talent who excelled and impressed through awards in paper writing, case writing, and a quality redesign challenge, highlighting the contribution of academia and future leaders to the quality movement.



PROUD WINNERS
AI for Quality' Hackathon: VIT Chennai <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aayush P Menon • Rohit N
Portal Design Challenge: IIT Guwahati <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayush Srivastava • Devanshu Garg • Rhythm Sachdeva
Case Solving Competition: Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shruti Rathi • Kanishka Hetamsaria
Paper Writing Competition: FORE School of Management (FSM), New Delhi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riny Maheshwari • Archishmaan Saxena
Case Writing Competition: Great Lakes Institute of Management, Gurgaon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shweta Kumari • Shrijita Das
Quality Redesign Challenge: IIT Delhi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheersh Shah • Rohit Kumawat

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

The concluding sessions of the IFQM Symposium 2025 consolidated insights from parallel tracks, shared key learnings, and outlined commitments for the year ahead. Highlights included a synopsis of sessions covering industry-academia collaboration, MSMEs, AI, pharma, and regulation.



Reflections by Mr. TV Narendran and Mr. Soumitra Bhattacharya on leadership, basics of quality, and customer centricity; and closing remarks from Mr. Vivek Chaand Sehgal emphasizing quality as a national responsibility and long-term growth driver.

The symposium concluded with concrete IFQM commitments and a call for collective **action to move the “needle” on India’s quality journey.**

Takeaways

- **Government’s role:** The Finance Minister highlighted the emerging role of AI in India’s productivity journey and invited the Industry at large to participate in upgrading the ecosystem with vocational training at ITIs, and for MSMEs. She also invited the Industry to have a constructive engagement with the Government, on an ongoing basis.
- **Leadership alignment:** True commitment requires Boards and CEOs to prioritize quality consistently in strategy discussions.
- **Customer focus as strategy:** Models of acquiring or partnering to address customer needs directly are most critical. Valuing customer awards is more important than external recognition.
- **Industry–academia trust gap:** Students, industry, and academia often speak different languages. Suggested solutions include guest lectures, clusters, and embedding universities within industries.
- **MSME quality challenge:** Current TQM models may be too rigid; proposals included a more adaptable Indian version alongside regulation-led discipline, as seen in pharma and aerospace sectors.
- **Discipline as foundation for innovation:** Dr. Kano emphasized self-responsibility and continuous improvement before pursuing innovation.

IFQM commitments for 2026



Like last year, Mr. Soumitra Bhattacharya set targets for IFQM for the coming year. This commitment includes engagements with at least 100 MSMEs through 15 MSME clusters serviced by 30 counsellors, a digital operating model that enables scaling up interactions with MSMEs, 50 experiential learning solutions, and the launch of IFQM Academy.

Call to Collective action

Mr. Vivek Chaand Sehgal: Quality is not optional, but a shared responsibility to embed excellence into India’s DNA and make it a global benchmark.

Let’s pause and reflect on what we’ve achieved over the past two days. We began this journey with a shared purpose to accelerate India’s path to quality and excellence and to shape a future where innovation, sustainability, and inclusiveness are not just aspirations, but everyday



practices. The energy, insights, and bold ideas shared over the last two days give us confidence that we are moving swiftly from dialogue to action. But this is a journey, not a destination. The true success of the Symposium 2025 will be measured by our commitments we carry forward, the collaborations we build and the impact we create in our workplaces, industries, and society.

Institutions like IFQM must continue to inspire and catalyse progress. We need to raise ambitions centred on quality, innovation, and excellence. This means unlocking new growth streams and accelerating the existing ones. The potential is there. We just need additional motivation and direction.

While we manufacture products and deliver services that customers experience, there is a full chain of processes before and after. We must examine each link carefully and uplift quality throughout so that excellence is sustained end to end. Let’s leave with a renewed sense of responsibility to lead by example, raise the bar of quality in everything that we do, and ensure India’s journey of quality, excellence, and innovation accelerates with purpose and pride. I urge all stakeholders to become champions of quality movement, share best practices, strengthen partnerships, and support MSMEs in their journey.

On behalf of IFQM, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Hon. minister of finance and corporate affairs, our speakers, panellists, delegates, IFQM governing council members and executive office, and all our partners who collaborated with us to deliver a knowledge filled experience in the Symposium.

A FEW GLIMPSES FROM THE LENSES



THANK YOU!

End of Report

AGENDA

IFQM Symposium

Sept 18-19, 2025, Taj Palace, New Delhi

QUALITY & INNOVATION TO MAKE INDIA GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE

AGENDA

Day 1 - 18th Sept 2025, Thursday, Durbar

Registration: Begins at 8.00 am

9:00 am - 9:10 am

Opening Session

Lighting the Lamp

Welcome

Mr. N Chandrasekaran, Chairman, Tata Sons

09:10 am - 10:00 am

Viksit Bharat - Imperatives and Opportunities

Towards a self-reliant, inclusive and globally respected India

by propelling India's ability for economic value addition and social advancement thru' global competitiveness.

Ms. Nirmala Sitharaman, Honorable Minister for Finance and Minister of Corporate Affairs, Govt of India

Mr. N Chandrasekaran, Chairman, Tata Sons

10:00 am - 10:30 am

Keynote: Integrating Quality and Innovation for Excellence in Manufacturing

The Virtuous cycle of Productivity, Competitiveness, and Value creation

Quality and Safety in Design, Development and Operations as a Force Multiplier for Sustainable Growth

Dr. Hans-Joachim Neumann, Executive Vice President and Head of Integrated Supply Chain, Merck Electronics

10:30 am - 11:00 am: Networking Break

11:00 am - 11:05 am

Event Film

11:05 am - 12:05 pm

Fireside Chat: Leading in a BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Non-linear, & Incomprehensible) Environment

Approach of Leadership towards guiding their people in uncertain business environments

Adaptability, empathy, and purpose-driven clarity, creating resilient systems, empowering people, and staying grounded

Mr. N Chandrasekaran, Chairman, Tata Sons

Mr. Vivek Chaand Sehgal, Chairman and Co-Founder, Motherson Group

Mr. Srikanth Padmanabhan, Independent Director, IFQM

Mr. Dilip Shanghvi, MD, Sun Pharma (virtual)

Speaker Moderator: *Mr. Jacques Esculier, Member of the Supervisory Boards, Daimler Truck AG and S&P Global (virtual)*

12:05 pm - 1:05 pm

Fireside Chat: Imperatives for India to be a significant player in the Global Supply Chain

Positioning India as a dependable and competitive player in the global supply chain ecosystem

Manufacturing excellence, quality systems, policy frameworks, digital readiness, infrastructure, skill development, and sustainability

Mr. TV Narendran, CEO & MD, Tata Steel

Dr. Randhir Thakur, CEO & MD, Tata Electronics

Mr. KN Radhakrishnan, Director & CEO, TVS Motor Co.

Mr. Salil Gupte, President, Boeing India & South Asia

Speaker Moderator: *Mr. R Mukundan, CEO & MD, Tata Chemicals Limited*

1:10 pm - 2:00 pm: Lunch

IFQM Symposium - Sept 18-19, 2025, Taj Palace, New Delhi

QUALITY & INNOVATION TO MAKE INDIA GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE

Day 1 - 18th Sept 2025, Thursday

2:00 pm - 2:50 pm

Sector Panel Discussion: Auto & Engineering - Making Products in India for the World (Durbar)

Serving the global market with products that reflect innovation, reliability, and sustainability

The roadmap comprising bold reforms, targeted investments, and strong public-private partnerships for India to not only meet domestic aspirations but also aspire for leadership in the global market.

Mr. Scot Gardner, Executive Vice President, Global Sales & Marketing, Siemens AG

Mr. Akash Passey, President, ZF Region India

Mr. Anil V Parab, Whole Time Director and Sr. EVP, Larsen & Toubro Ltd

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Kabir Bhandari, MD and Chairman, PVNA Group

Concurrent Panel Discussion: 2:00 pm - 2:50 pm

J1 - Industry Academia - Participation of Academia in enabling India's Growth story (Jehangir)

The essentiality of building a knowledge-driven, innovative, and self-reliant nation through Industry-Academia partnership

Fr. Sebastian George, S.J., Director, XLRI Jamshedpur

Dr. Vandana Sonwaney, Director, Symbiosis Institute of Operations Management

Mr. Zubin Palia, CHRO India Manufacturing, Tata Steel

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Neeraj Sagar, Founder & CEO, WisdomCircle

3:00 pm - 3:50 pm

Sector Panel Discussion: Aero & Defence - Making Products in India for the World (Durbar)

Exploring strategies, opportunities, and challenges in positioning India as a global hub for aerospace and defence manufacturing.

Actionable insights and collaborative pathways to enhance India's role in global aerospace and defence research and manufacturing.

Mr. Hari Marar, MD & CEO, Bangalore International Airport Ltd

Mr. Jayant D Patil, Member of Executive Committee and Former Whole Time Director, Larsen & Toubro Ltd

Mr. Banmali Agrawala, Chairman, Tata Advanced Systems

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Salil Gupte, President, Boeing India & South Asia

Concurrent Panel Discussion: 3:00 pm - 3:50 pm

J2 - Digital - Making friends with AI (Jehangir)

Where technology enhances human capability - to build a smarter, fairer, and more creative future

Insights on how embracing AI can enhance human collaboration, drive innovation, and foster a more intuitive digital future.

Mr. Gopichand Katragadda, Founder and CEO, Myelin Foundry

Mr. Shalabh Srivastava – Head, Digital Transformation & Client Delivery Excellence, Wipro Ltd

Ms. Lalitha Indrakanti, CEO, Jaguar Land Rover Technology and Business Services India

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Romal Shetty, CEO, Deloitte South Asia

4.00 pm - 4.30 pm: Networking Break

IFQM Symposium - Sept 18-19, 2025, Taj Palace, New Delhi
QUALITY & INNOVATION TO MAKE INDIA GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE

Day 1 - 18th Sept 2025, Thursday

4:30 pm - 4:40 pm

Launch: IFQM offerings – Digital Tools (Durbar)

4:40 pm - 5:20 pm

Fireside Chat: Steering India's MSMEs into Global Supply Chain (Durbar)

MSMEs' role as significant players for strengthening the foundations of Indian Economy

The Policies, Approaches and Systems that can reinforce and leverage the best from India's MSME segments

Mr. L Krishnan, MD, TaeguTec India

Ms. Ashu Suyash, Independent Director, Hindustan Unilever Ltd.

Mr. Oezmeral Hueseyin, Executive Vice President Manufacturing & Quality, Bosch India

Mr. Sandeep Maini, Chairman, Maini Group

Speaker Moderator: Dr. Jairam Varadaraj, MD, ELGI Equipments Limited

5:20 pm - 6:00 pm

Fireside Chat: People - The Ultimate Drivers of Quality, Innovation and Excellence (Durbar)

Drawing the best out of India's talent pool and demographic dividend

The cultures, methods, and mindsets that can leverage the best from India's people for sustained success and competitive advantage

Ms. Hema Ravichandar, Independent Director, Indian Hotels, Trent and Bosch

Mr. Siddharth Mittal, MD and CEO, Biocon

Mr. Rakesh Verma, COO, Karmayogi Bharat

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Sonny Iqbal, Partner, Egon Zehnder

6:00 pm - 6:15 pm

Launch: IFQM Quality Excellence Prize

6:15 pm – 7.30 pm: Networking Break

6.45pm – 7.15 pm

J3 - Pursuit of Beauty – The Path to Excellence (Jehangir)

Mr. Harald Kroeger, Board member & President Automotive, SiMa.ai

7:30 pm – 8.15 pm

Thematic Dance Performance on "Quality in Indian Culture" (Durbar)

Abhinava Dance Company

8.15 pm – 10.00 pm

Dinner at Durbar

IFQM Symposium - Sept 18-19, 2025, Taj Palace, New Delhi
QUALITY & INNOVATION TO MAKE INDIA GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE

Day 2 - 19th Sept 2025, Friday, Durbar and Jehangir

9:00 am - 9:05 am

Film - Recap of Day 1 (Durbar)

Snippets of day 1 shown through an AV

9:05 am - 10:05 am

Panel Discussion: How does India ramp up to World Class Quality? (Durbar)

Drawing upon global learnings from American, European and Chinese economies

Adopting best practices from across the Globe, where successes have been demonstrated in creating globally competitive industries.

Mr. Frank Sieren, China Bureau Chief, Wirtschafts Woche

Mr. Srikanth Padmanabhan, Independent Director, IFQM

Mr. Harald Kroeger, Board member & President Automotive, SiMa.ai

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Soumitra Bhattacharya, CEO & Director, IFQM

10:05 am - 11:00 am

Panel Discussion: Total Quality - Lessons for Business from the disciplines of Fine Arts (Durbar)

Learning from the fields of Fine Arts

How business can be culturally aware, structurally sound, creatively agile, and harmoniously tuned into the world around

Ms. Vinita Bali, Non-Executive Director, Syngene International

Ms. Swati Munjal, President, BML Munjal University

Mr. Bhaskar Bhat, Former MD of Titan Company Ltd and Former Member, Board of Tata Sons Pvt Ltd

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Aroon Raman, MD, Telos Investments & Technologies

Concurrent Panel Discussion: 10:05 am - 11:00 am

J4 - Transforming MSME sector through Quality, Innovation and Excellence (Jehangir)

Total Quality centered Assessments, targeted Counselling and integrated Learning Solutions can drive sustainable performance improvement

Ms. Tracy J Daly, Vice President, Supplier Quality, Boeing Commercial Airplanes

Mr. Madhav Dusane, Head Supply Chain, Bosch Ltd

Mr. R Anandakrishnan, President & Group HR, TVS Motor Co.

Mr. Ponraj Pandian, Head of Materials and Project Purchasing, ZF CVS

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Peeyush Gupta, VP, TQM, GSP and Supply Chain, Tata Steel

11:00 am - 11:30 am: Networking Break

11:30 am - 12:25 pm

Sector Panel Discussion: Electronics and Semiconductors – What does it take to succeed globally? (Durbar)

Exploring the strategies, capabilities, and collaborations India needs, to build a globally competitive electronics and semiconductor ecosystem

Actionable insights, policy recommendations, and collaboration opportunities to accelerate India's global competitiveness in electronics and semiconductors - building depth and scale

Ms. Jaya Jagadish, Country Head and SVP, AMD India

Mr. Dominic David, President, KLA India Operations

Mr. Surinder Singh, Advisor, India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)

Mr. Santhosh Kumar, MD, Texas Instruments India

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Srinivas Satya, President, Components Business and Supply Chain, Tata Electronics

Concurrent Panel Discussion: 11:30 am - 12:25 pm

J5 - Sector Panel Discussion: Pharma and Health Sciences - Going up the Pharma Value Chain (Jehangir)

Exploring strategies and innovation to elevate India's position in the global pharma value chain and enhance its health sciences ecosystem

Actionable insights and collaborative pathways to strengthen India's capabilities and competitiveness across the pharma value chain

Mr. Rahul Awasthi, Global Head of Operations, Management Team, Sun Pharma

Mr. Sanjeev Asgekar, Chief of Quality, Cipla

Mr. Murali Ramachandra, CEO, Aurigene Oncology

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Sudarshan Jain, Secretary General, Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA)

12:25 pm - 1:20 pm

Sector Panel Discussion: Health and Hospitals: Developing India by improving access to quality healthcare and superior infrastructure (Durbar)

Securing the well-being of India's citizens towards accomplishing India's global stature as a forward-looking, inclusive nation.

Directions for expanding access to quality healthcare and investing in superior medical infrastructure

Dr. S. Raja Sabapathy, Chairman, Division of Plastic Surgery, Hand Surgery, Reconstructive Microsurgery and Burns, Ganga Hospital

Dr. R.V. Ramani, Founder and Managing Trustee, Sankara Eye Foundation

Dr. S. Rajasekaran, Chairman, Dept. of Orthopedics, Trauma and Spine Surgery, Ganga Hospital

Dr. Devi Shetty, Chairman & Founder, Narayana Health

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Girish Krishnamurthy, CEO and MD, Tata MD.

IFQM Symposium - Sept 18-19, 2025, Taj Palace, New Delhi

QUALITY & INNOVATION TO MAKE INDIA GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE

Day 2 - 19th Sept 2025, Friday, Durbar and Jehangir Halls

Concurrent Panel Discussion: 12:25 pm - 1:20 pm

J6 - Engagement: Learnings from Dr. Kano - Quality plus Innovation in Design and Manufacturing (Jehangir)

Products and Manufacturing Systems - Embedding Quality and Innovation at each step

For a deeper understanding of drivers of quality and innovation including design thinking for reinforcing an overall Quality driven Culture

Dr. Noriaki Kano, Professor Emeritus of the Tokyo University of Science

Introduction by Mr. Sanjeev Singh, Head, Tata Business Excellence Group

1:30 pm - 2:30 pm: Lunch

2.30 pm – 2.40 pm

A Message from JUSE (Durbar)

Mr. Masato Onodera, Managing Director, JUSE

2:45 pm - 3:30 pm

Fireside: Crisis as a catalyst for National resurgence (Durbar)

Learnings from national level implementation of excellence frameworks

The need to recognise the invisible “burning platform” and prepare to mitigate the impact

Mr. Al Faber, CEO Emeritus, Baldrige Foundation, Interim CEO and Board Member, CAHME (virtual)

Mr. Sunil Sinha, Founder & CEO – Ignite Excellence DMCC

Speaker Moderator: Mr. Soumitra Bhattacharya, CEO and Director, IFQM

Concurrent Roundtable: 2:45 pm - 3:30 pm

J7 - Actions to integrate Academia - Industry ways of work (Jehangir)

Actions that bring the Industry and the Academia closer to solving real world problems

Finding platforms, programs, and resources to harmonise Industry-Academia connect

Moderator: Mr. Neeraj Sagar, Founder & CEO, WisdomCircle

3.30 pm – 4.00 pm: Networking Break

4:00 pm - 4:10 pm

A Report from the Jehangir Hall (Durbar)

Mr. Neeraj Sagar, Founder & CEO, WisdomCircle

4:10 pm - 4:30 pm

Symposium Takeaways (Durbar)

Translating insights to roadmaps

Mr. TV Narendran, CEO & MD, Tata Steel

Mr. KN Radhakrishnan, Director & CEO, TVS Motor Co. (Tentative)

Mr. Soumitra Bhattacharya, CEO & Director, IFQM

4:30 pm - 4:40 pm

Closing Remarks

Mr. Vivek Chaand Sehgal, Chairman and Co-Founder, Motherson Group

4.40 pm – 4.50 pm

Vote of Thanks (Durbar)

Master of Ceremonies

5 pm: End of Symposium