

IFQM NEWSLETTER

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Indian Foundation For
Quality Management

India's Time to Sprint Towards Quality

A silhouette of several mountaineers on a rocky peak against a sunset sky. Two mountaineers in the center are high-fiving, while others are positioned around the peak, some appearing to be climbing or resting. The scene is set against a warm, orange and yellow sky with a soft glow from the setting sun.

This edition spotlights IFQM's continued efforts to elevate Quality as a strategic asset for India. There is a growing momentum in shaping a culture of capability, competitiveness, and excellence. With MSME transformation, global benchmarking initiatives, strategic partnerships, learning missions, and CEO engagements, IFQM is catalyzing Brand India's ascent in global value chains.

Highlights

- **IFQM CEO Soumitra Bhattacharya's note** on Quality as India's strategic economic asset
- **MSME Symposium, Chennai:** 250+ leaders convened; launch of five flagship MSME initiatives
- **Industry-Academia Engagement:** Quality Clubs at NIT Jamshedpur & BIT Sindri foster experiential learning
- **Taguchi Methods Symposium:** 252 participants; global benchmarking with Shin Taguchi.
- **TITAN recognizes IFQM Academy** for Business Excellence as a strategic learning partner
- **Supplier Cluster at Tata Steel:** MSME cluster program launched with six of the key suppliers

- **Capability Building:** First QEP-focused training to build assessor capability
- **Digital Platform:** Guided roadmap for MSMEs to elevate performance

Upcoming

- April 20-24: JUSE-IFQM Learning Mission to Japan
- April-June: QEP Assessments
- June 7-14: AOTS Japan Study Mission
- June 8-9: 8th IFQM CEO/CXO Learning Mission at BIAL
- June: Learning Solution on Robust Engineering – Taguchi Methods

Welcome to the **IFQM Newsletter**, a platform from IFQM (Indian Foundation For Quality Management) to collaborate, communicate and create a culture of quality, innovation and excellence. As the Economic Survey 2025-26 points out, **"India's long-term success will depend on its ability to integrate with global value chains as a high-tech, high-productivity hub."** We are in this journey together. Please share your inputs, your feedback, and what else you would like to see in the coming editions.

MAKING QUALITY INDIA'S STRATEGIC ECONOMIC ASSET

Note from Soumitra Bhattacharya, CEO, IFQM

India enters the second half of the 2020s with macroeconomic fundamentals that rank among the strongest in the world. Yet India's global trade footprint remains modest relative to its scale. In 2024, it accounted for just 2.9% of global manufacturing gross value added and 1.8% of merchandise exports—signaling a vast opportunity to expand its manufacturing presence on the world stage.

India must steadily climb global value chains (GVCs). The next phase of global manufacturing will be shaped less by cost arbitrage and more by **"strategic indispensability"**. Success will depend on India's ability to embed itself in GVCs as a high-tech, highly productive and trusted manufacturing hub. In this context, quality must evolve from a functional goal to a cultural anchor—shaping decisions from the boardroom to the shop floor.



"India must treat quality as a strategic economic asset. Quality must evolve from a functional goal to a cultural anchor."

India does not have the luxury of time. Japan and South Korea spent decades building industrial scale and quality ecosystems. India's window is narrower—and closing fast. As product and technology life cycles shorten, the time required to master a sector is shrinking. **India must harness its demographic dividend within the next five to ten years or risk stagnating as a middle-income economy, ageing before it reaches developed status.** To win in this global race, India must treat quality not as a compliance burden but as a strategic economic asset. IFQM is putting practical tools in the hands of MSME leaders — not policies on paper, but frameworks they can act on starting immediately.

IFQM MSME SYMPOSIUM, CHENNAI

IFQM marked a milestone by convening its first-ever MSME Symposium at Anna University, Chennai on March 20, 2026. The gathering brought together over 250 MSME CEOs, industry leaders, and academia, united under the powerful theme: **India Needs... A Resurgent MSME Sector.**

Quality, Innovation, and Excellence More Important now: Industry Titans

The day opened with a warm welcome from **P. Kaniappan, Head Counselling & Assessment, IFQM**, setting the tone for a dialogue that called for nothing less than a **“National Quality Sprint”**—a collective push to integrate Indian MSMEs into global value chains.

The compelling keynote addresses by **Venu Srinivasan, Chairman, IFQM, and Soumitra Bhattacharya, CEO and Director, IFQM**, delivered insights on how productivity, robust quality systems, and supply chain integration can transform competitiveness. Venu Srinivasan underscored IFQM’s cluster approach—already spanning 67 MSMEs—as a force multiplier to strengthen the ecosystem. He framed this mission not merely as operational improvement but as a long-term aspiration: **building Brand India through globally competitive MSMEs**.

The symposium drew an impressive lineup of leaders from Biocon, Tata Electronics, TVS, Boeing, Bosch, Cummins, Maruti Suzuki, Larsen & Toubro, and Deloitte, who engaged in sharing case studies and interactive sessions. A special highlight was the screening of the snippets from IFQM Symposium 2025, where industry leaders had shared their thoughts and approaches towards global competitiveness of MSMEs in India.



Venu Srinivasan, Chairman IFQM, Kavita Sandeep Kaushik, IFQM board member and Director of Quality and Six Sigma, Cummins, Soumitra Bhattacharya, CEO and Director, IFQM, Prof Dr. V Kumaresan Registrar i/c Anna University, Malini Gautham from Wilton Weavers, CV Raman from Maruti Suzuki, and Arvind Balaji of Lucas TVS at the inauguration of the IFQM MSME Symposium in Chennai.

IFQM reiterated its commitment to five flagship initiatives tailored for MSMEs

1. **Cluster Development** – enabling benchmark-level performance for MSMEs.
2. **IFQM Quality Excellence Prize (QEP)** – India’s first industry-led excellence award, with a rigorous multi-stage assessment framework designed specifically for smaller enterprises.
3. **Leadership Development Program** – through the IFQM Academy, nurturing future-ready MSME leaders.
4. **Academic course designed with industry experts:**
 - **‘Zero Defect Manufacturing’ Course** – being co-created in collaboration with SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai and Chennai Institute of Technology, Chennai.
 - **‘Excellence in Manufacturing Engineering’ Course** – with VelTech University, and a shorter version with Anna University.

Together, these initiatives signalled IFQM’s commitment to turning intent into measurable impact. The symposium was not just an effort to improve the MSME ecosystem – **it was the launchpad for our long-term aspiration to build brand India**, a movement to elevate standards, and position India as a global hub of quality-driven enterprises.

'Quality, innovation, excellence key for MSMEs to drive growth'

CORE GROWTH. Japan, China made strides because of MSMEs: Venu Srinivasan, Chairman Emeritus, TVS Motor

Sindhu Hariharan
Chennai

The importance of quality, innovation and excellence cannot be understated in today's times and MSMEs must level up in these parameters for India's overall development, said Venu Srinivasan, Chairman Emeritus, TVS Motor Company, and Chairman of the Indian Foundation for Quality Management (IFQM), on Friday.

"MSMEs are the feeder units to large industries. Large companies are ultimately fed by small MSMEs that are the source of products and services. If you look at Japan, China and Korea, all of them have made huge strides because of the support of their MSMEs," said Srinivasan.

He was speaking at IFQM's first MSME Symposium in Chennai, which brought together manufacturing industry titans and other business leaders, including MSMEs, policy-



INDUSTRIAL PUSH. Venu Srinivasan (left), Chairman, IFQM and Chairman Emeritus, TVS Motor Company, with Soumitra Bhattacharya, CEO and Director, IFQM, and Chairman, Bosch Ltd, at the IFQM MSME Symposium in Chennai 2024-2025

makers and members from the academia.

IFQM, a Section 8 company, is an industry-led organisation that seeks to catalyse Indian companies to be globally competitive.

CLUSTER APPROACH Srinivasan noted that IFQM adopts a cluster approach to bring about the quality culture in India's vast pool of MSMEs, and this will, in turn, act as a "force multiplier" for achieving breakthrough. "China is a very

good example for us, as a large country which has done a remarkable, miraculous growth, and therefore, there is something that we can learn from them," he said.

IFQM, established in 2023, has Biocon, Boeing, Tata Group, TVS Motor, Sun Pharma and Motherson among its founding members. In its mission to make Indian industries embrace quality and R&D, IFQM is guided by a marquee board which has Srinivasan (Chairman), Tata Sons' N

Chandrasekaran, Sun Pharma's Dilip Shanghvi, Larsen & Toubro's SN Subrahmanyam and Soumitra Bhattacharya of Bosch Ltd, who is also IFQM's CEO.

"This is the first time ever in India that nine industry captains have come together to do something purely focused towards the nation's competitiveness in the areas of quality, innovation and excellence. Right now, we [IFQM] are working with 10-12 large companies and 70 MSMEs. This will grow to around 80-100 large companies and 500 MSMEs in the next 2-3 years," Soumitra Bhattacharya, CEO & Director, IFQM, told *businessline*.

BENGALURU FACILITY IFQM is also investing around ₹120 crore on a new campus in Bengaluru, which will be up and running by the end of March 2027.

The 1 lakh sq ft facility will provide learning solutions in the form of action-oriented programmes. "In India, industry-academia is very sporadic, and it needs to be more holistic," said Bhattacharya.

The geopolitical situation also presents an opportunity for India because of its economic parameters, demographic dividends and an aligned nature, but the country must build on this, he said.

"People will give India chance only on merit and consistently providing world class quality," he added.

Media story in *The Hindu Business Line* highlighting IFQM's message on Quality, Innovation, Excellence for MSME growth at the MSME Symposium – featuring Venu Srinivasan, Chairman IFQM and Soumitra Bhattacharya, CEO and Director, IFQM

INDUSTRY ACADEMIA CONNECT

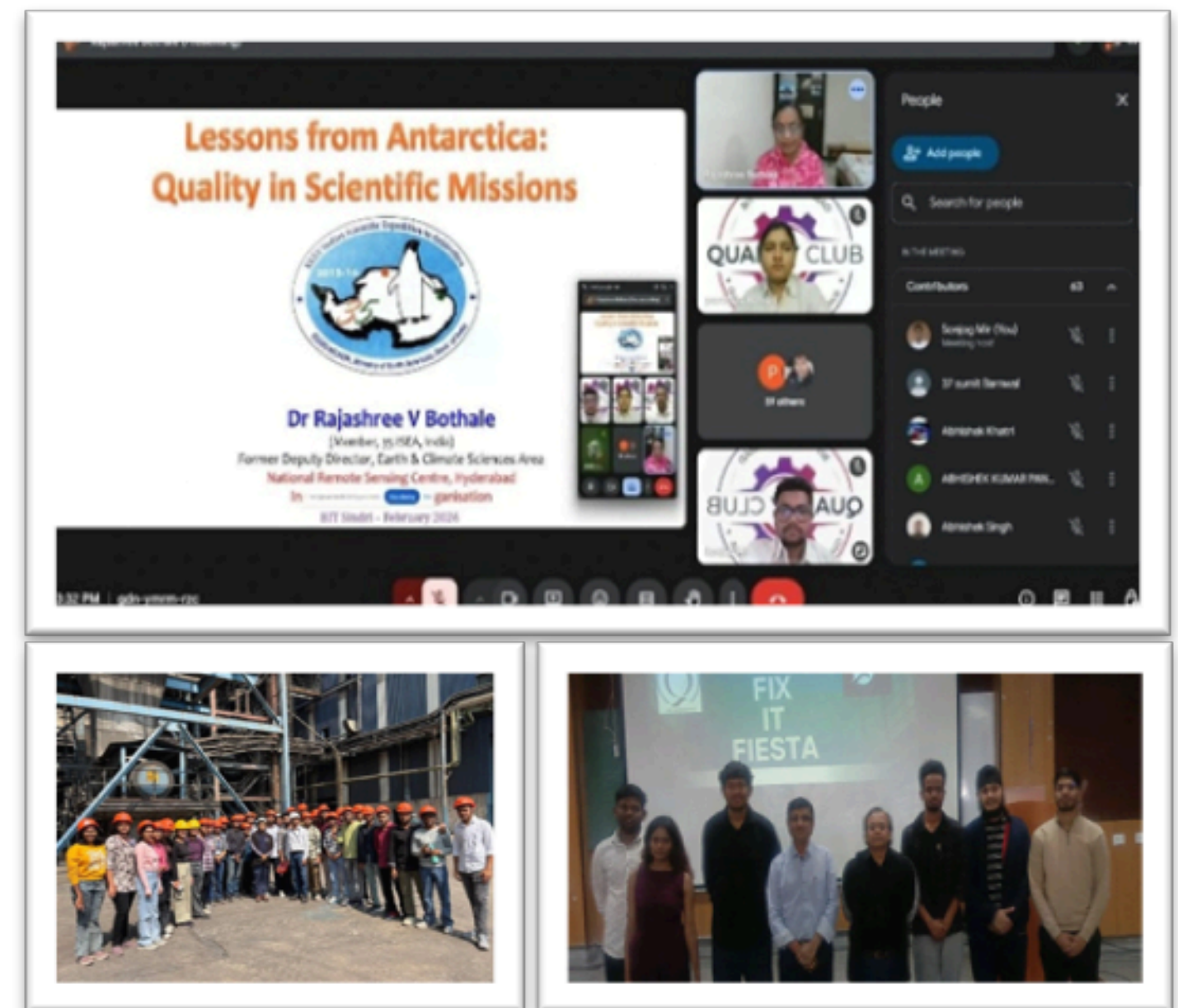
IFQM is enabling a culture of quality that defines the engineering leaders of tomorrow

In February 2026, the Industry–Academia partnerships pillar of IFQM enabled vibrant campus engagement that blended learning with inspiration. At **NIT Jamshedpur**, members of the **Quality Club stepped into the Adhunik Power Plant**, where they gained firsthand insights into the principles of operational excellence—a rare opportunity to see quality in action at scale.

Meanwhile, at **BIT Sindri**, the **Quality Club hosted an extraordinary session with Dr. Rajashree V. Bothale**, former **Deputy Director (Earth & Climate Sciences Area) at the National Remote Sensing Centre, ISRO**. Drawing from her experiences on Antarctic scientific missions, she shared powerful lessons on discipline and leadership, leaving students with a deeper appreciation of resilience in extreme environments.

Innovation took center stage at **OJASS '26**, where students showcased their creativity through the "Fix It Fiesta" Quality Redesign Challenge at NIT Jamshedpur. Here, young engineers reimagined everyday products with a sharp focus on safety, reliability, and user-centric improvement, proving that quality is not just a standard—it's a mindset.

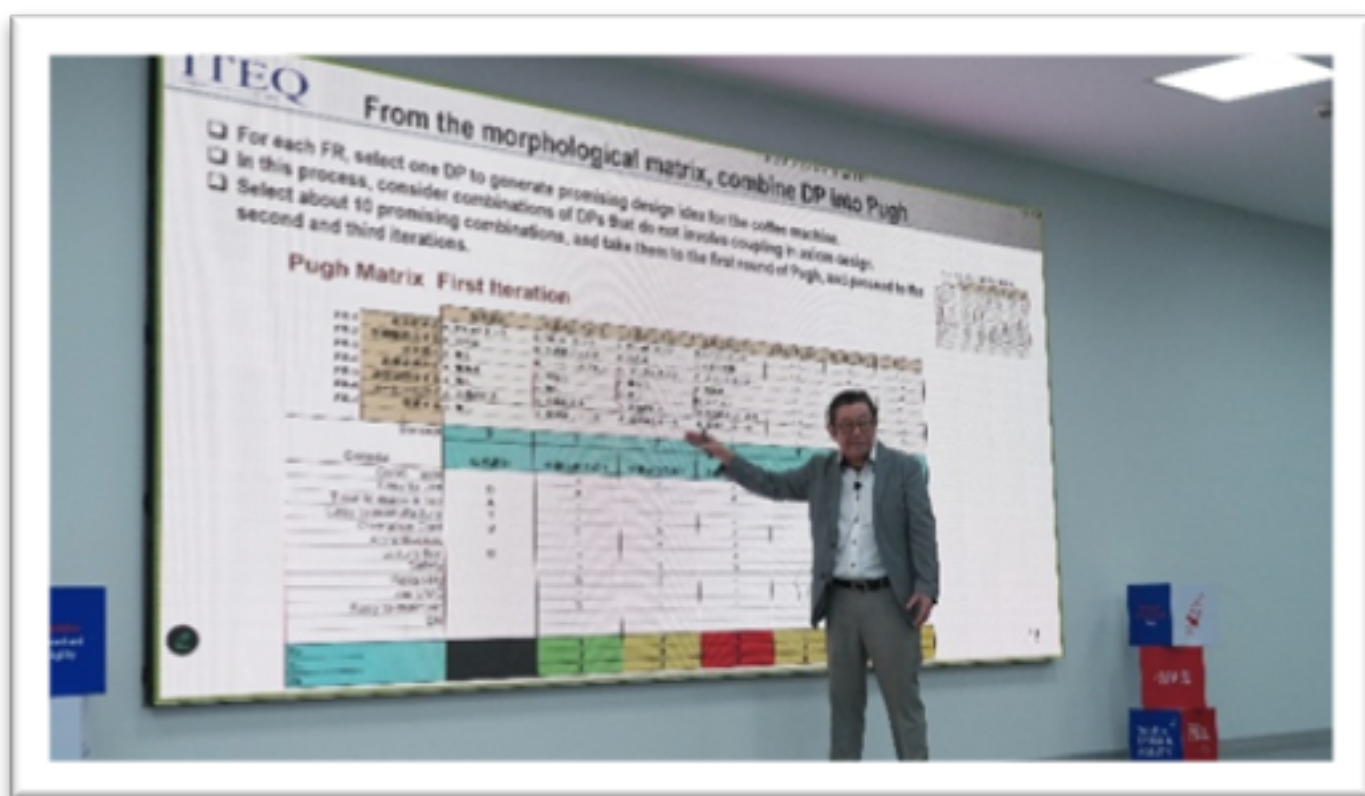
Together, these initiatives underscore how experiential learning and thought leadership are **shaping the next generation of engineers—equipping them with a strong foundation in quality and preparing them to lead with impact.**



Taguchi Methods Symposium

On February 2, 2026, the **Taguchi Methods Symposium unfolded at Tsuda Hall, TVS Institute of Quality and Leadership (IQL), Bengaluru**, jointly organized by the IFQM Academy for Business Excellence and TVS IQL. The event drew an impressive 252 participants, both in-person and online, underscoring the growing momentum around quality-driven innovation.

A defining moment of the symposium was the keynote address by **Shin Taguchi, Head Advisor, ITEQ International**, whose insights set the stage for a day of deep learning. His perspective was enriched by contributions from international experts from Japan and China, fostering a spirit of cross-industry learning and global benchmarking that resonated across the audience.



Keynote address by Shin Taguchi, Head Advisor – ITEQ

The program spotlighted 11 applied case studies, bringing theory to life through real-world application. Of these, 4 case studies were presented by IFQM, while 7 projects were exhibited in dedicated showcase areas, spanning diverse sectors including automotive, EV, healthcare, pharma, electronics, and manufacturing. Each case study illustrated how Taguchi methods can drive measurable impact in complex, high-stakes environments.

Adding to the significance of the day, 11 individuals from 3 IFQM member companies were certified, marking a tangible step forward in building a cadre of professionals equipped to champion excellence. The symposium was more than an event—it was a platform for knowledge exchange, global collaboration, and practical demonstration of quality methodologies. By blending international expertise with local innovation, it reinforced the role of Taguchi methods as a cornerstone in advancing India's competitiveness across industries.



Taguchi Method Symposium participants

Japan Study Mission for MSME CEO/CXO

Cohort 1 as part of the Leadership Development was launched by IFQM Academy in collaboration with AOTS (Association for Overseas Technical Cooperation and Sustainable Partnerships), Japan on February 27, 2026 at L&T – Construction Skills Training Institute, Bengaluru. Three participants from the cohort of 30 members were selected and handed over invitation letters for the Japan Study Mission, which is scheduled from June 7 to 14, 2026.

Taguchi Methods for Robust Optimization learning solution

Cohort 2 was launched by IFQM Academy on February 3, 2026 at TVS IQL, Bengaluru, with 23 participants from three member companies. The online seminars commenced on February 26, 2026 facilitated by Shin Taguchi, Head Advisor ITEQ International.

TITAN recognizes IFQM Academy for Business Excellence as a strategic learning partner

Titan Company Limited conducted a Learning Conclave on March 6, 2026, during which IFQM Academy was recognized for its contribution to strengthening Titan's organizational capability and capacity building initiatives.

Dr. Ravi, Dean – Academy, and Dr. Calvin, Head – Pedagogy, IFQM Academy receiving award from Ajoy Chawla, MD, TITAN Company Limited.



PROGRESS TOWARDS QUALITY CULTURE FROM QUALITY CONTROL

IFQM and Tata Steel came together to launch the MSME Cluster Assessment and Counselling

In March 2026, IFQM and Tata Steel came together to launch the MSME Cluster Assessment and Counselling program, initiating with six of the key suppliers of Tata Steel. Together, the stage is set for a deep, candid exchange on **strengthening MSME competitiveness, aligning supplier expectations, and building resilience through quality-driven practices**. The initiative underscored **IFQM and Tata Steel's shared commitment to empowering MSMEs—not just as suppliers, but as strategic partners in India's industrial growth story**. In the launch program, academicians from XLRI, NIT Jamshedpur and Arka Jain University also participated to later come up with approaches on how academia can enable MSMEs through resources and trainings.



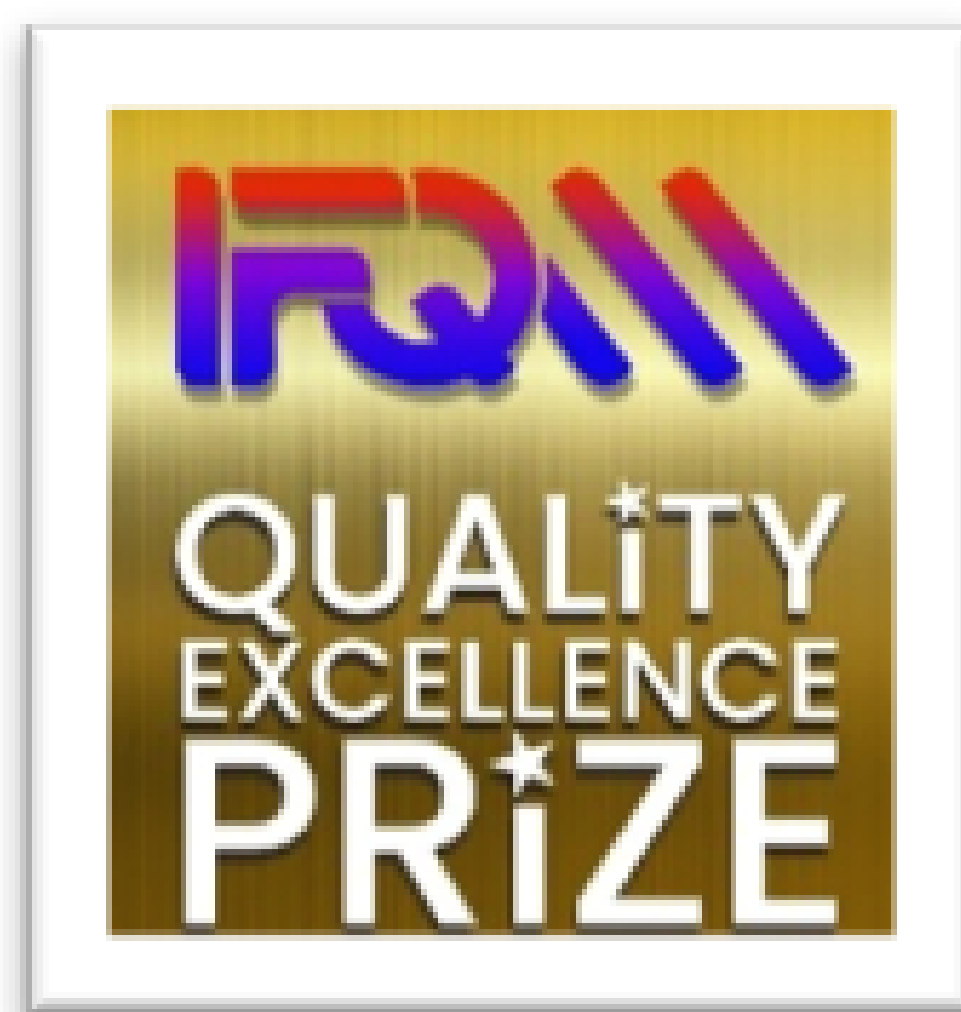
P Kaniappan, Head Counselling & Assessment, IFQM and Ranjan Kumar Sinha, Chief Procurement Officer, Tata Steel along with distinguished speakers and other participants during the IFQM and Tata Steel MSME cluster launch at Linde Hall, Golmuri Club, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, India.

The participating companies included **Swift Strips India, Phoenix Engineers, Nath and Sons, Ashoka Foundry and Equipment, SR Industrial Solution, and Eastern Coatings and Services**. The session was enriched by insights from a distinguished panel of leaders: Tripti Srivastava, Chief TQM & CQA, Tata Steel; Ranjan Kumar Sinha, Chief Procurement Officer, Tata Steel; Soumitra Bhattacharya, CEO & Director, IFQM; P. Kaniappan, Head Counselling & Assessment, IFQM; Satyabrata Mahapatra, Head Supplier Management, Tata Steel; and Srihari Ramachandran, CEO, El Forge Ltd.

Quality Excellence Prize (QEP) Assessments

IFQM hosted its first Assessor Training at TVS-IQL, Bangalore, in December 2025, setting a new benchmark in capability building for quality professionals. This landmark initiative was a commitment to shaping a new generation of assessors, equipped not only with technical rigor but also with the vision to champion quality as a national movement. The program had an inspiring thought-provoking address from Jairam Varadaraj, MD, Elgi Equipment, who emphasized the critical importance of MSMEs in India's growth story.

At the heart of the training was a deep dive into the Quality Excellence Prize (QEP) Assessments, exploring the essential elements that define excellence. The full-day forum brought together assessors from IFQM and L&T, while Deloitte highlighted the broader objectives of the QEP—underscoring its role as a catalyst for organizational transformation.



Participants engaged in case studies and expert-led sessions, navigating QEP frameworks for both large organizations and MSMEs. They examined scoring maturity models, contextual criteria, and reporting practices, sharpening their ability to evaluate and drive excellence across diverse industries. **By strengthening assessor capability, IFQM is laying the foundation for a culture of excellence that will ripple across India's industrial landscape.** At IFQM, we have started receiving QEP applications for this year from Large as well as MSME companies. Kindly write to <QEP@ifqm.org.in> with your interest.



IFQM'S DIGITAL PLATFORM TO CRAFT WORLD CLASS BUSINESS ROADMAP

IFQM offers a self-guided digital platform designed to help organisations cut through the complexity of their unique ambitions and critical roadblocks. It provides a curated suite of context-specific tools, enabling tailored implementation based on each organisation's needs. Built on a robust inventory of proven methodologies, the platform empowers businesses to independently craft a structured roadmap for meaningful change - enhancing performance across every function. **We request all MSMEs to sign-up (offered free) on the IFQM platform (Journey to Worldclass – IFQM) to access the programme.** And then take the guided tour to self-discover to execute with or without external support to elevate performance.

MSMEs looking to stay competitive in today's rapidly evolving business landscape, can greatly benefit from the digital courses offered. These courses are designed to provide practical insights, modern management practices, and actionable tools that can be directly applied to improve efficiency, quality, and overall performance. **By exploring these flexible, self-paced learning modules, MSMEs can upskill their teams, drive continuous improvement, and effectively implement the learnings from industry interactions and symposiums.** Explore: <https://ifqm.org.in/courses/>

UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

April

- Special JUSE IFQM Learning Mission to Japan – April 20 to 24

This Learning Mission is curated to offer firsthand opportunity to visit and learn from Deming prize winning Japanese organizations. The objective is to enable participants to draw deep, practical insights from these world-class exemplars and translate them into meaningful action within their own organizations.

- QEP Assessment – April to June 2026

June

- 8th CEO/CXO Learning Mission at Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL), Bengaluru – June 8,9
- AOTS Japan Study Mission – June 7 to 14
- Learning Solution on Robust Engineering – Taguchi Methods

Know more on any upcoming activities and be a part of it, kindly write to <info@ifqm.org.in>

GATEWAY TO THE INDIAN WAY OF EXCELLENCE

IFQM membership enables organizations to transform capabilities, learn from the best, and achieve global competitiveness through the Indian Way of Excellence

Key USPs of IFQM Membership:

Access to the “Indian Way” of Business Excellence

A unique, India-centric framework that integrates global best practices with local business realities—helping organizations build sustainable excellence.

CEO/CXO Learning Missions

Exclusive opportunities to learn directly from leading organizations through curated visits, enabling real-world exposure to best-in-class practices.

Capability Building & Transformation Support

Structured pathways for leadership, organizational, and workforce transformation—designed to drive measurable business outcomes.

Strong Industry Network & Peer Learning

Access to a powerful network of industry leaders, enabling cross-learning, collaboration, and exchange of best practices.

Knowledge Sharing & Thought Leadership

Participation in symposiums, workshops, and knowledge forums led by industry experts and practitioners.

Practical, Implementation-Driven Approach

Focus not just on learning, but on translating insights into actionable strategies and real business impact.

ABOUT IFQM

A section 8, Not-for-Profit, Industry Led movement to Catalyze Indian Organizations to be Globally Competitive and Export Capable through Quality, Innovation and Excellence

Want to learn how IFQM can help you Assess, Train, and Transform your Industries?

Whether you want an introduction to IFQM or details on specific products and services, our team is here to help. Contact us today at <info@ifqm.org.in> to start your journey toward the best quality output from your company.



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