

Tomorrow's world will belong to young India: Karan Billimoria

Britain-based liquor baron Lord Karan Billimoria, one of leading voices of the Indian diaspora in the British business fraternity, says young Indians do not realise how lucky they are because tomorrow's world will belong to them.

'You are just seeing the trailer, you are yet to see the blockbuster,' he said Saturday at the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit here.

'Inspiration creates aspiration and aspiration creates achievement,' Billimoria, the founder of Cobra Beer, a popular British brand, told a packed house.

The 46-year-old liquor magnate, who has been facilitating business collaborations between India and Britain over the last decade as the chairman of the UK-India Business Council, expressed concern over the abject poverty in India.

'It is fine that India has a 300-million strong middle class, who make up the clan of consumers, but the abject poverty is shocking,' Billimoria said.

Citing a Goldman Sachs projection for the country, he said in 2003, when the firm published its first Brits Report on the economies of the world, India did not figure in the list of 40 countries. 'But three years down the line, the company admitted that it had underestimated India and said by 2050, India and China would be the largest economies in the world.'

Reminding the audience of the country's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's dream of wiping every tear from every eye, he said: 'May Nehru's dream of wiping every tear from every eye come true.'

However, on an optimistic note, he said despite the challenges, hope still outweighed pessimism and enterprise scored over obstacles. 'India will succeed. It is still reaping the benefits of the opening up of 1991,' he said.

The India-born Billimoria is the first Parsi to enter the prestigious House of Lords. As one of the youngest members of the 714-member chamber, he said his focus would be on 'enterprise, entrepreneurship, trade and investment'.

Speaking on behalf of the vast Indian diaspora, he said he was proud to be an Asian in Britain. 'More so, I am proud to be an Indian. India takes pride in its diaspora and recognises the achievements of Indians abroad,' he said.

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