

Publication: The New Indian Express

Date: 29 Aug, 2013

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Of elephant catchers and bee KEEPERS IN TODAY'S INDIA

Fear and entrepreneurship don't mix. That was the message the guests got when Subroto Bagchi, co-founder of consulting company MindTree launched his new book, *The Elephant Catchers*, at the ITC Grand Chola on Tuesday.

Bagchi launched his book amidst jokes about business and management, and warm recollections and warm recollections about Chennai.

"The book is about scale," said Bagchi at the launch. "And in order to succeed, you can't be afraid about scale," he explained. The book, named so after the elephant catchers of Odisha where Bagchi was born, talks about the necessary steps a company has to take in order to grow. "Some companies, especially start-ups, are in love with the idea of 'small'. They romanticise it. But that's not always good. In order to grow, they need to get used to the idea of scale," he said.

He cited Suguna Chicken as an example for scale. "It was started in 1984 and was just a small poultry shop when it began. Now, it's a 5000 cr business model that



Author and co-founder of consulting company MindTree Subroto Bagchi (extreme left) at the launch of his new book on Tuesday | ALBIN MATHEW

engages with nearly 18,000 farmers. How do you go from a simple poultry farm to a ₹5,000 cr business? You can't do that without the idea of scale," he said.

The book is divided into six parts – part one deals with getting comfortable with the idea of scale, part two talks about scaling up one's business, while part three walks you through the steps for sustaining one's business on a bigger scale.

Part four, five and six deal with the importance of scaling up the people you engage in your business as well as scaling up the leader

within you. "It is very important that you take people along with you when you grow. The poultry farmers of Suguna Chicken scaled up along with their companies. That's how they succeeded," explained Bagchi.

Listening to Bagchi's every piece of advice with rapt attention was a roomful of suited and booted youngsters, and a few with the occasional grey hair. And when the questions came, it wasn't just from the young ones.

"With the state the country is in, I think we need bee keepers who will help sustain the company, rather

than elephant catchers who build the company," said one member of the audience.

"I agree," said Bagchi and added, much to the amusement of his guests, "I don't mind taking his advice, because wisdom comes from the unlikeliest of sources."

Wrapping up, he gave his audience with a nugget of information that left everyone marveling at the simplicity of it. "When extraordinary things happen, it is time to do ordinary things extra-ordinarily. That's all."

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