

Editorial

Don't frustrate the youth

Mpower at IIM unleashes power of youth

At a recent conference of transporters in Mumbai, a former President of All India Motor Transport Congress said "Don't frustrate the youth". It was a clarion call and the reference was to the politics in the transport associations that was keeping the youth away from participating in the activities of transport associations. However during the same conference we saw that a young transporter was actively involved in the affairs and was the Convenor of the organising committee. He had been running around for the last few days in making sure that all the arrangements were in order. At the end of the day we could see a sense of satisfaction on his face because his hard work had paid off. Everyone appreciated his hard work and involvement. Incidentally this same person is also involved in another organisation that was driven by politics. His frustration was evident as he spoke to us, but his commitment to the trade remained undeterred.

Unfortunately not all youth have this kind of an attitude where they will continue to work and contribute to an association that is ridden with politics. The road transport industry has many problems that have to be dealt



with at various levels. Under this scenario removing time for politics or even wasting your energy for such petty issues is dismal. We have seen a few youngsters who have contributed selflessly for the association / industry lose elections because of petty politics. We would recommend that every association should have 4-5 seats reserved for such youngsters who make a difference to the industry.

Last week I was invited by Mahindra to be a jury member for the War Room at IIM Ahmedabad. The War Room is

another unique initiative by Mahindra to connect with the industry and at the same time make an effort to connect the industry. We had 20 young transporters make presentations on what they learned from IIM during the MPower course and how they implemented the same in their organisation. The involvement and enthusiasm of the participants was absolutely brilliant. Most of these youngsters had never made a presentation in their lives before and here they were putting forth their cases in front of a Jury that was ready to grill them. These

youngsters were swimming against the tide of the market forces and had recorded impressive growth in their business in the areas of operations, fleet, IT and ofcourse turnover. Each one had a unique thing about their working pattern, which could be replicated by the industry. However who would carry this message to the other transporters? The industry would get so much to learn from these youngsters if the associations invited them to be a part of their association. These youngsters are spread all across the country and it would be a wonderful thing if associations invited these youngsters to share their knowledge with other transporters who do not get the opportunity to learn at institutes such as the IIM. We were surprised at what these youngsters were doing at work. A few of them stepped away from their family business of transportation and ventured into areas connected with transportation. A couple of these youngsters came up with start-ups that were doing exceedingly well – in fact much better than what their elders were doing. Yet they were humble and very much grounded.

The other good thing about these youngsters was their willingness to share knowledge. None of the participants at the War Room were hesitant to share information of their new business ventures, including the strengths and weaknesses. Everyone in that room was a competitor. But despite that the youngsters went ahead and shared critical information. In fact one of the participants

pointed out how a few others had helped in various areas where he was stuck up due to various issues. If 20 people together could make so much of an impact, imagine the strength of hundreds of transporters working together with the same attitude.

Road transport associations today are stuck in time and most of them are discussing the same issues year after year. At times it seems that the associations are running in auto mode, with only the faces changing every year or every second year. The issues and discussions remain the same. I am eagerly waiting to see a day when youngsters start involving themselves in associations. I am more than certain that these youngsters would bring a sea change to the association and its activities. Take a look at what these 20 youngsters have done to

their organisation, including setting up their own ventures. If these brilliant minds are brought into associations, it would make a difference to the industry on the whole. While the youngsters are working with a fresh mindset, the seniors are stuck in their period. I would request the seniors to give a fair chance to the youngsters to work for the association and give them a free hand to implement their ideas.

Needless to say that the transport industry is going through a tough phase with costs going up, problems increasing and freight remaining stagnant. If the youngsters can, through their innovative ideas, make even the slightest of difference to any of the above it would be a blessing for the industry. And as the senior transporter said, "Don't frustrate the youth", we also plead that don't frustrate the youth.

