

Dr. K.M.Vasudevan Pillai presents his book **EduNation** to the Hon Union Minister, HRD, Mr. Kapil Sibal



Dr. K.M.Vasudevan Pillai presented his book *EduNation* to the Hon Union Minister, HRD, Mr, Kapil Sibal. The book addresses the country's education systems with old ideas challenged and new concepts created and his initiatives at the state and institutional level that have led to meaningful social and professional change..

As Dr. Pillai says in Chapter 1, the potential that is to be awakened with this vision of education is not only the scientific and management skills that are critically needed in the 21st century, but also “that we will be seen as larger than ourselves, capable of working for a more progressive humanity.” The vision is to prepare students for their world, so that they can be more effective citizens as well as managers, including supporting each other with mutual understanding and respect, and all of this now in a more complex, multicultural, high-tech global setting. Students and teachers increasingly have to adapt to rapid change, and older educational bureaucracies have floundered. Educators like Dr. Pillai recognize the need for new kinds of private educational models and methods that, like the changing world around them, challenge the status quo that is maintained both by local traditions and large-scale government inertia.

EduNation is a remarkable account of the relentless pragmatism—graciously directed toward whatever it takes to serve students, start and sustain good schools—behind the Pillai legacy. From obtaining a government permit above all odds, to keeping a student solvent through life crises, and everything in between that an educator faces, this is not only a book about how to start and run schools, but also an affirming, optimistic autobiography about how to live out the following questions: ‘What would you do if you didn’t know you couldn’t?’ What is the immediate solution to the problem, even if nobody else has considered it?

This is also a book about the pros and cons of different approaches to education—and examples from around the world are used as ‘EduNation’ is extended toward a vision of ‘Eduworld.’ Given the current global economic crisis, social and political strife around the world, climate change, poverty, malnutrition, and other global concerns, we need more books like this one to guide us in the 21st century. On the more social and environmental level, the more competitive, dynamic, and extractive global economy poses problems of infrastructure management, pollution, destruction of soil fertility and water quality. The poor around the world, unlike the rich, are less able to protect themselves from contamination or the loss of common property resources such as common grazing or productive dry-lands, affordable inner-city housing, or access to food, fuel, and building materials. Many of these challenges put pressures on families to relocate,

communities to re-organize themselves, and there is a greater chaos of institutions and associations that may make sustainable development more difficult.

It is through the kinds of blossoming educational initiatives and partnerships described in this book that we can rise to these challenges. Helping those less fortunate, who otherwise might not have had a chance to free themselves from the weight of their poverty or marginalization, with a useful education, is likely to be the real legacy of the Pillai's and other educators. Serving the underserved is always an unconventional if not revolutionary endeavor. Doing it with a successful business model as well is truly a cause for celebration.