

Clarion Review ★★★★★

BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

Vision India 2020

Sramana Mitra

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Vision India 2020 is a visionary romp through a possible new future for India. It looks back over a decade-long transformation of the country from its current status as “back office for the world” to that of world leader through the application of the principles of visionary entrepreneurship.

“In 2020, I envision a more international India,” writes Sramana Mitra, technology entrepreneur and Silicon Valley strategy consultant. The India of the future will have grown more open and engaged with the world, yet is “not imperialistic, but diplomatic and benevolent. An India capable of complementing its natural strengths with those of its international collaborators. A high-velocity India unencumbered by mindless bureaucracy. A thinking India that can envision its own products, rather than blindly executing on American specs. And finally, a bold, confident India, having shaken off centuries of servility to stand on its own two feet and look out upon its own infinite possibilities.”

Mitra, who holds master’s degrees in electrical engineering and computer science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has founded three companies and writes a weekly column for Forbes.com, as well as her own blog, Sramana Mitra on Strategy (www.sramanamitra.com). She predicts the imminent death of outsourcing to India and advocates innovation, invention, and education as essential if the country is to thrive in the world economy of the future.

Mitra’s “futuristic retrospective” traces the strategies, business models, processes, and alliances that, in her visionary dream, built strong and profitable enterprises in areas that include technology and technology-enabled services, infrastructure, rural and slum development, healthcare, lifestyle brands, education, and entertainment. Building imaginary entrepreneurial ventures in forty-five sectors vital to India’s growth and development, she references real world companies and the people who run them, and bases her strategies in knowledge obtained through experience and filtered through a mind unfettered by stereotypes and the ravages of history.

Although readers feel her heartbreak over the dire circumstances in which many of India’s people still live, her belief in the potential of these same people to build sustainable, prosperous, and creative lives for themselves as they secure India’s future as a world leader makes this an encouraging, lively read. Mitra is bold and adventurous, and her portrait of India as it could be ten years from now offers hope, not just for that country, but for any nation that is willing and able to learn from the past and encourage and support its visionaries in dreaming big for the future.

(March 16, 2010)

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