

Mr. Sam Pitroda

Chairman, National Knowledge Commission & National Innovation Council, India

Mr. Sam Pitroda has spent four decades in the world of telecommunications helping bridge the global communications divide. His professional career has been divided between the three continents of North America, Asia and Europe. His strategy of using telecommunications in nation building has been internationally acclaimed.

In the 1960s and 70s he was involved in developing digital switching systems in the United States which went on to become the key to global networks to integrate voice and data. In the 1980s, Mr. Pitroda, as Advisor to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi helped transform Indian's telecommunications and information technology infrastructure. He was the first founding Chairman of the Telecom Commission in India. He also oversaw National Technology Missions related to Drinking Water, Literacy, Immunization, Oil Seeds and Dairy. In those roles he helped transform India's developmental policies and philosophy.

In the 1990s, he worked out of Europe where he collaborated with the International Telecom Union (ITU) to help develop telecom infrastructure in developing countries to reduce the global telecom gap. During a major part his career Mr. Pitroda has been deeply involved in using telecommunications as means to expediting the process of development and nation building.

As an entrepreneur he has owned and run several companies in the U.S. and Europe. As an inventor Mr. Pitroda owns more than 75 worldwide patents. Mr. Pitroda is widely featured in print and television media worldwide for his contribution to telecom development.