

'Corporates should support basic sciences'

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Kris Gopalakrishnan, one of Infosys' co-founders, has donated ₹225 crore to set up a new Centre for Brain Research at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. His views on science research:

Infosys has encouraged science research. Why not other Indian corporates?
Corporates are doing their bit for research, but more in

the area of applied sciences. This is because applied sciences have a direct bearing on their business. However, corporates should look at basic sciences as an area for research. One

needs to bear in mind that theoretical sciences often take a long time to bear results and many times may not even result in anything fruitful. For example, physicists took a century to understand some concepts around gravitational waves. So, companies need to brace up to such things.

Why aren't there many world-class research institutes in India?

India spends an abysmal 0.8 per cent of its GDP on research. China spends 4 per cent and the US around 2 per cent. While

some government departments such as ISRO have made terrific advances, along with IISc and IITs, the same cannot be said for other departments.

Corporates spend 2 per cent of their revenues on CSR. Will a similar directive for research help?

The 2 per cent can be used in a smart manner. For example, 1 per cent can be used to spend on problems of today like affordable healthcare. The other 1 per cent can be used to tackle tomorrow's challenges such as eradicating or curing diseases.

