

Legalize bribe-giving to check graft: Narayana Murthy

NEW DELHI: Infosys chairman N R Narayana Murthy on Wednesday said he fully supported proposals from economist Kaushik Basu to make paying bribes legal because this would help members of the public blow the whistle on corrupt officials. Under Basu's proposals receiving a bribe would remain illegal.

"If bribe giving, and not bribe taking, is made legal then the bribe giver shall indeed cooperate with the authorities to expose the bribe taker," Murthy said. "This seems to be an interesting idea and I think it should be implemented," he added.

He said graft had damaged India's growth prospects, adding that "the double-digit growth that has eluded India could have been ours if we had combated corruption."

Government's chief economic adviser Basu had come under attack for his plans to legitimize corruption. He had argued that the fear that the bribe giver will cooperate with the authorities will deter the bribe taker.

Speaking to students at IIT-Gandhinagar, the Infosys chief mentor also raised a few eyebrows when he said the IIT are no longer the quality institutions they were in the 60s and 70s. Blaming the education system, Murthy said very few world-class researches came out of IITs and IIMs in the last decade. "In 2004, China produced 2,652 PhDs and the figure in in our country was 24," he said, adding "this is worrisome. Focus on researches has diminished in the IITs and they have become just a teaching institution."

Murthy also blamed the the decline in the quality on the result of coaching classes. "Today, students prepare hard for a year solving sample questions for IIT-JEE. One of these samples matches in the entrance test and they crack IIT," he said.

Source: The Times of India, 21 July 2011