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ET Prime Celebrates Women's Excellence in Business & Innovation

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Mumbai: "I would like to touch upon two emotions which trouble women and come in the way of their growth: guilt and lack of self-confidence. I urge women to battle these emotions and change the scripts that were handed over to them in their early years," said Anu Aga, former chairperson, Thermax, while delivering her keynote address at the ET Prime Women Leadership Awards (presented by Accenture) held in Mumbai on the evening of March 29, 2019.

This was the inaugural edition of the awards, which have been instituted by the new members-only, all-digital offering of The Economic Times, ET Prime. ET Prime is a pioneering product that is predicated on a completely new business model and the ET Prime Women Leadership Awards too is the first-ever awards dedicated only to women leaders of corporate India.

The awards ceremony saw a turnout of more than 500 invitees across top Indian corporates.

The vision of the awards is to set a benchmark for success in business and inspire millions of women to come forward and wield the baton of excellence. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, chairperson of Biocon, won the flagship award Businesswomen of the Year (public limited company), while Anu Aga was conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award for her leadership role at Thermax earlier, and for her philanthropic work after she retired from an executive position at the company.

A Special Mention Award was conferred on the late Meera Sanyal, former CEO of RBS India.

The inaugural edition of the awards had a distinguished jury comprising Aisha De Sequeira (head of investment banking – India, Morgan Stanley), Debjani Ghosh (president, Nasscom), Deep Kalra (group CEO Make My Trip.com), Gautam Sinha (CEO, Times Internet), Kaku Nakhate (India country head, Bank



From left: Nidhi Pant, Gayatri Yadav, Divya Kohli, Anu Aga, Aditi Avasthi, Safeena Hussain, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Alice Vaidyan, Vibha Padalkar, Mira Kulkarni, Rashmi Daga, Preeti Gupta

Winners of the Inaugural ET Prime Women Leadership Awards

Category	Name	Company
Businesswoman of the Year (Public Co)	Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw	Biocon
Businesswoman of the Year (Private Co)	Mira Kulkarni	Mountain Valley Springs (Forest Essentials)
CEO of the Year	Alice G Vaidyan	GIC of India
Entrepreneur of the Year	Rashmi Daga	FreshMenu
Global Indian of the Year	Indra Nooyi	Former Chairman & CEO, PepsiCo
Lifetime Achievement	Anu Aga	Former chairperson, Thermax
Lifetime Achievement Special Mention (Posthumous)	Meera Sanyal	
Beyond Business	Safeena Hussain	Educate Girls
HR Leader of the Year	Preeti Gupta	Aditya Birla Group
Finance Leader of the Year	Vibha Padalkar	HDFC Life
Brand and Marketing Leader of the Year	Gayatri Yadav	Star India
Technology Leader of the Year	Aarthi Subramaniam	Tata Sons
Accenture Vahini Innovator of the Year	Aditi Avasthi	Embibe
Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year	Prukalpa Sankar	SocialCops
Emerging Leader of the Year	Divya Kohli	Nestlé
Emerging Innovator of the Year	Nidhi Pant	S4S (Science for Society)

of America), Meena Ganesh (managing director, Portea Medical), Naina Lal Kidwai (chairman, Altico Capital India and also the jury chair) and Rekha M Menon (chairman, Ac-

centure India). The jury debated the candidature of about 70 women across 11 categories. The ET Prime editorial team and the awards knowledge partners, Accord, used finan-

cial and corporate-governance filters to reduce a long list of 400 candidates to a shortlist of 70, which was handed over to the jury. The ET Prime editorial team and its knowledge partners also adjudicated three winners in "emerging" categories.

The awards ceremony featured two panel discussions. The first of these was titled Leadership Playbook for India Inc: Creating Trillion-dollar Enterprises. Aisha de Sequeira said: "Companies will need to invest in technology and they will need access to capital, because many of these models are unprofitable to begin with but the potential to scale is huge." Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw added that the success of Apple and Amazon show that a strong foundation in digital technology was crucial to scale up to a trillion-dollar business. "We need to think about education to take our country forward," Kshama Fernandes, CEO, IFMR Capital, said at the panel. "It will be as transformative as technology."

Gautam Sinha, CEO, Times Internet, said that while technology will help compress the time taken by companies to hit mega scale, "the fundamentals of building a big company will remain the same: culture, people, and customer experience".

The second panel was on Developing Inclusive Frameworks to drive innovation. Speaking on the panel Rekha Menon said: "The only way for companies to survive is to innovate, and to innovate you have to have an inclusive workforce. So for me having inclusive workforce is not merely the right thing to do. It is the right business thing to do."

"We need to remove the mindset from society that women are not suited to entrepreneurship because they need to settle down," Meena Ganesh, said at the panel.

Geetha Manjunath, founder, Niramai Health Analytix, advised women to follow their dreams. "My personal mantra is, learn something new everyday and remember that whatever happens is for the good," she said.

The curtains went down on the awards ceremony with an electric performance by the rock band Dhara-vi Reloaded.