

## **mBillionth South Asia Award 2013: Portraits of Mobile Innovations**

The mBillionth Award 2013, showcasing leaders representing every field of mobile space, in a way, achieved what South Asia could not when it was most needed: The power of innovations was only matched by the profusion of ideas.

In policymakers, the arguments of N Ravi Shankar, Administrator, USOF & MD, BBNL who has made broadband development a visionary idea for Indian rural areas, and Tomi T. Ahonen, a public intellectual, motivational speaker who dared to defy the stereotype. Mohammad Chowdhury, the gala dinner speaker, was the embodiment of a strong leader who made the development story of PWC a thriller of innovative ideas in which the citizen, the bureaucrat and other policy making stakeholders are equal partners.

The Leader of Deliverance has to be moderniser as well, and Tomi, parading details and statistics, explained how mobile technology not only enhances governance but makes it transparent as well. His rhapsody of Mobile Innovations brought out the reasons for World Shrinking: The richest people in the world will come from emerging economies via mobile. Augmented Reality will be a huge market for countries such as India by 2020. N Ravi Shankar, appalled by the sight of the rural challenges in technology adoption, argued that Industry needs to step in and scale up B2C mobile services in India. This calls for better PPP partnerships (public private panchayat).

Dr Rajendra Kumar, Joint Secretary (mGov), Department of Electronics & Information Technology (DeITY) opined, "Most mGovernance services are now publicised through SMS, which saves citizens a lot of time." Reshan Dewapura, CEO, ICTA, Government of Sri Lanka said, "Shared devices – leads to services for the family, eg. education for the kids, health, jobs info. Big challenge in Sri Lanka is increasing use of services like Internet – education/awareness and incentives needed."

It was the fourth year in mobile Innovations; mBillionth South Asia Award is recognizing and mentoring for more than hundreds of the best practices and 1500 ideas across South Asia since its inception. Attended by 700 Participants from Diverse Mobile Domains, mBillionth Award concluded awarding 33 winners in mBillionth Award 2013 & announcing 10 lac of cash prize to 4 NGOs using Mobiles innovatively in various areas.