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Unveiled: The Biocon story that smashed many myths

A book chronicling the incredible journey of Kiran Mazumdar Shaw launched in city

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"India is yet to realise the potential it has in terms of both entrepreneurs and technology that can take the country to the zenith of modern science," said Biocon MD Kiran Mazumdar Shaw at the launch of the book *Mythbreaker: Kiran Mazumdar Shaw & the Story of Indian Biotech* by Seema Singh. The book was released by Yamini Mazumdar, the mother of the Biocon MD, who holds the unique distinction of "being a stubborn entrepreneur even at 84".

The book tells the story of the incredible journey of Kiran Mazumdar Shaw and the evolution of the Indian biotech sector, which she pioneered in the late 70s.

A persona of Yamini was brought live by an anecdote shared by Seema Singh when she said, "Yamini is a woman who ventured into the world of entrepreneurship at the age of 68 and once when she applied for an industrial land with the authorities in Bengaluru, the officers told her sarcastically that she should follow a spiritual path given her old age. To that, Yamini's quick retort was: 'If Atal Behari can run the country at this age, so can I can run an industry'. Since Vajpayee was the prime



Author Seema Singh, Kiran Mazumdar Shaw and her mother Yamini Mazumdar at the launch of the book in the city on Friday

minister then, she got the land."

The book is a chronicle of the journey of the Indian biotech industry and the challenges that a budding entrepreneur faces while treading on a path untold. The author said the saga of the journey through thick and thin is a subject whose impact is obvious but often lost in oblivion. Speaking on the occasion, Kiran Mazumdar Shaw said, "The book shouldn't be read as a biography, but it is about a journey that in itself depicts the plight of the Indian biotech industry and the challenges

that a person faces while setting up and industry in the country."

While explaining the journey, the Biocon MD said, "Our educational system doesn't focus on research and the government is not interested in funding healthcare sector in the country. We as a country don't focus on product development but is more interested to ape the West and believe in imitation."

"It is not just the story of 'Making of Biocon', it's about the biotech industry, the challenges associated with creating a biotech ecosystem in India, formulation of global best practices and policies to enable the sector. It provides insights to the collaboration of various stakeholders who worked together to script the success of story of Indian biotech," said Seema Singh.

The book is about science and the business of science; it dwells on the challenges associated with pursuing science and innovation in India in early 70s. The narrative also breaks several myths associated with 'Made in India' in business. The book chronicles the three-decade of journey through a motley cast of characters - scientists, ministries, pharma rivals, FMCG giants who came together to produce a narrative that is remarkable for its randomness, and relentless pursuit of excellence.



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-Kiran Mazumdar Shaw