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Constructive Dialogues



comfortable one to debate.

And that's precisely why Nilekani's *Uncommon Ground* makes for a good read. It explores the middle ground between the ideological divisions that often polarise the business and voluntary sectors. Her own experience as an ex-journalist, a writer and a philanthropist, has undoubtedly helped her organise a rare dialogue between key stakeholders.

Based on her 2008 show on NDTV, the book brings together Anand Mahindra and Medha Patkar to discuss land acquisition and use; Yogi Deveshwar and Sunita Narain explore how industry can become more environmentally sustainable... And each of the conversation was amicable and productive. Sunil Bharti Mittal, for instance, agreed to all the suggestions made by Aruna Roy. He said: "The state has to do a big job...

seek private sector participation. Today's private sector entrepreneur is different from yesterday's (entrepreneur). Just like the government is different from yesterday. Give us a chance. Place some trust in us. And if we don't perform, punish us."

Raul Bajaj made an equally pertinent point on the debate on personal mobility and transport: "Give him the car; let there be a traffic jam. There will be pressure on the government to build more roads, build flyovers, build mono rails... It may take three to four years but otherwise you don't build this car; you don't build the two wheeler. So he has nothing and he keeps suffering. Because the Indian people are so tolerant of all of us, of the rich and of the powerful, that's why it goes on. But one day there will be a rebellion."

Well, at least the dialogue has begun.

♦ KIRAN YADAV

"The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits," wrote Friedman in the *New York Times* magazine in 1970. While there'd be fewer takers of his doctrine in the present day corporate world, the subject is still not a