

Press Release

"INNOVATION" receives BRAND OF THE YEAR, 2009 Award

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Islamabad, 25th January – “Innovation,” a television program featured on SAMAA TV, one of Pakistan’s leading Urdu news channels has been named “Brand of the Year 2009” in a category recognizing products and services that sharpen public focus on processes of innovation and competitiveness in Pakistan.

The program, a joint collaboration between the Vinnova-Stanford Research Center of Innovation Journalism (INJO) at Stanford University and SAMAA TV beat out more than 500 other competitors from various industries in a nationwide consumer survey and an expert panel analysis. SAMAA will be receiving the award by Prime Minister Mr. Yousaf Raza Gilani in an event scheduled in February.

The award is being given to SAMAA for launching Pakistan’s first dedicated program on innovation and for establishing the genre as an important journalistic beat in Pakistan. The Program has been recognized as the key source through which the journalistic coverage of innovation processes and ecosystems in Pakistan has been integrated into the national socio-economic development plan. The program has also been applauded for playing a leading role in bringing local issues of innovative development to the forefront of public awareness in Pakistan.

Speaking to Amir Jahangir, Chief Executive Officer of SAMAA TV, he said “The program success is based on hard work and a great network of INJO fellows across the world, who through their expertise has been advising on the program content, sharing research, commenting on innovation topics and providing solutions through their input and views. Due to this collaboration, the content of our program has been acknowledged as being credible, containing relevant issues and making efforts in bringing together the relevant stakeholders of each industry to find innovative measures to cater the society needs”.

Mr. Jahangir further said that “The global development has made our world smaller and our communication more effective. We want to bring innovation to the homes of every Pakistani citizen, so that their awareness and ability to be innovative is nurtured. Our future lies in the hands of innovation and for that we need to prepare a workforce which not only knows how to be innovative but also how to link it to the economic development”.

Amir Jahangir also shared that SAMAA is the only media channel in Pakistan, which has been recognized both national as well as internationally for being a responsible business operator using innovation journalism techniques as part of business strategy. This acknowledgement was given to SAMAA by the Asian Forum for Corporate Social Responsibility, who awarded SAMAA the Asian CSR Excellence Award 2009 as the only channel in Asia, for being a responsible business operator creating value for its viewers and empowering marginalized communities for a better tomorrow. SAMAA has also recently won the National CSR Excellence Award 2009, which no channel has received so far.

Dr. David Nordfors, Co-Founder and Executive Director of the VINNOVA-Stanford Research Center of Innovation Journalism coined the term “Innovation Journalism” in 2003. Dr. Nordfors said that “SAMAA has proven the viability for the Innovation Journalism as a genre in Pakistan, and emerging economies. This award is not alone a milestone for SAMAA TV but also for the Innovation Journalism Initiative at Stanford”. He said that by being the first, SAMAA TV is leading the way for other media channels both in Pakistan as well as across the world.

Dr. David Nordfors specially acknowledged Amir Jahangir, CEO SAMAA TV for the strong leadership and commitment in bringing innovation to the Pakistani media. Mr. Nordfors said that Mr. Jahangir’s strong belief in linking innovation to economic development would play a crucial role in creating a new ecosystem in the Pakistan economy.

The program series is dedicated to identifying innovation in all aspects of Pakistani life, and has covered issues ranging from alternative energy to mobile banking.

Mr. Arif Allauddin, CEO Alternative Energy Development Board also appreciated SAMAA TV’s program stating that “ it was the first of its kind show which showcased how different countries are addressing their energy needs using alternative energy -Thus, giving the Government of Pakistan the opportunity to learn and benefit from their experiences and serve as guidelines for us”. He said that the program has been engaging InJo fellows across the world and coming up with global solutions to local issues, which are required more now than ever, as Pakistan continues to face immense challenges in providing quality education, primary healthcare, energy supply and employment opportunities for youth.

The INJO program at Stanford University focus on building the capacity of media professionals to report on innovation, develop interaction between journalism and innovation, including how innovation is changing the profession and business of journalism, how to cover innovation in the news, and how journalism links innovation with society. Four Pakistani journalists come to Stanford each year as InJo fellows. The objective of the fellowship is to train international journalists to cover the innovation economy and network with US media outlets. Fellows participate in workshops and conferences at Stanford and work with newsrooms across the nation covering issues relating to innovation.

SAMAA TV is one of Pakistan's leading private satellite television channels, which takes pride in its fair, factual and independent news coverage through its on-the-hour bulletins, breaking stories, incisive political analysis and current affairs programs. The channel is the first media channel in Pakistan to have established a well-integrated Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Program as part of its business activities.

The channel has also made a niche for itself through its programs on women and youth issues besides infotainment and sports. SAMAA TV, launched in December 2007 has network of district correspondents and five bureaus across Pakistan along with international stringers in the Middle East, Europe and North America.

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