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# Pranab's near miss at Summit 2010

## New Delhi November 14, 2010

The India Economic Summit 2010 by the World Economic Forum had a less than fantastic beginning, as finance minister Pranab Mukherjee missed out on the opening session.

Without the star, the other panelists were left discussing what the government needs to do to ensure the demographic dividend in India does not turn into a demographic curse.

Airtel's Sunil Mittal worried how the service sector created 'white collarish' jobs, but there was a need to provide different opportunities for the entire 320 million that would be joining the workforce in another 10 years.

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) President Hari Bhartia spoke about the need to provide better education, which will impart skills for better livelihood of the students.

Gita Gopinath, Economics professor at Harvard University, opined the Reserve Bank needs to be more forthcoming about its policy objectives.

But Pranab had to fight other fires. Rumour mills say Mukherjee was closetted with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, discussing the future of Telecom Minister A Raja.

The Finance Minister did come to the summit, just in time to steal the limelight from World Economic Forum chief Klaus Schwab. Schwab was scheduled to deliver the opening remarks of the next session, but allowed Mukherjee to take the stage first.

So what did Mukherjee say? "I am confident we are in a position to sustain high economic growth."

It's a pity, for the exchange between Mukherjee and other panelists of the session where he was supposed to speak originally, would have been so interesting.

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