

PRIME MINISTER SHRI NARENDRA MODI INTERACTS WITH THE PARTICIPANTS OF GRAND FINALE OF THE LARGEST EVER ONLINE HACKATHON IN THE WORLD THROUGH VIDEO-CONFERENCE

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Education and related issues

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi interacted with the participants of Grand Finale of the Smart India Hackathon (Software)-2020, via Video Conference today.

Smart India Hackathon

Speaking at the Grand Finale of Smart India Hackathon, PM said that students are working on several solutions to the challenges being faced by the country. Along with providing solutions to the problems, it also strengthens India's aspirations regarding Data, Digitization and Hi-tech Future. Acknowledging that in the fast paced 21st century, India needs to swiftly change itself to continue playing an effective role, the Prime Minister said that the necessary ecosystem is being built in the country for Innovation, Research, Design, Development and Entrepreneurship. He asserted that aim is to make India's education more modern, and to create opportunities for talent.

New Education Policy

Speaking on the New education policy, the Prime Minister said it was drafted keeping in mind the thoughts, needs, hopes and aspirations of 21st century youth. This is not just a policy document but also a reflection of aspirations of more than 130 crore Indians, he added. He said "Even today many children feel that they are judged on the basis of a subject in which they have no interest. Due to the pressure from parents, relatives, friends etc children are forced to pursue the subjects chosen by others. This has resulted in a large population, which is well-educated, but most of what they have read, is not useful for them." He highlighted that New Education Policy seeks to change this approach by bringing a systematic reform in India's education system and attempts to transform both Intent and Content of education. He said that NEP focuses on Learning, Research and Innovation to make the school, college and university experience: Fruitful, Broad-based and one that guides to one's natural passions.

Addressing the students, the Prime Minister said "This Hackathon is not the first problem you have tried to solve, nor is this the last." He wished the youngsters to continue doing three things: Learning, Questioning and Solving. He said when one learns, one gets the wisdom to question and India's National Education Policy reflects this spirit. He added the focus is shifting from the burden of the school bag, which does not last beyond school, to the boon of learning which helps for life, from simply memorising to critical thinking.

Access to Education

Quoting Baba Saheb Ambedkar that education should be accessible to all, PM said that this education policy is also dedicated to his idea of accessible education. National Education Policy is big on access to education, starting from primary education. He said the policy aims to increase Gross Enrolment Ratio in Higher Education to 50 percent by 2035. He added this education policy emphasizes on creating job creators rather than job seekers. That is, in a way an attempt to bring reform in our mindset and in our approach.

Emphasis on Global Integration

PM said while the Policy focuses on Local, equal emphasis has been laid on global integration. Top Global Institutions have been encouraged to open campuses in India. This will benefit Indian youth in getting world class exposure and opportunities, and help them prepare for global competition as well. This will also help in building world-class institutions in India, making India a hub of global education.

[Click here to see the full text of PM's address at Grand Finale of Smart India Hackathon 2020](#)

Earlier this morning, Union Human Resource Development Minister , Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' inaugurated the Grand Finale of 4th edition of Smart India Hackathon (Software) - 2020 virtually in New Delhi today. Minister of State for HRD, Shri Sanjay Dhotre; Secretary, Higher Education Shri Amit Khare; Chairman AICTE Prof. Anil Sahasrabudhe; Chief Innovation Officer Dr Abhay Jere were present on the occasion. The Hackathon has been organized by the Ministry of HRD, Government of India; All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Persistent Systems and i4c.

During the inauguration ceremony, the HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' said an over whelming response from more than 4.5 Lac students was received in the first round of this year's competition. He said that Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, envisages a Digital India to bridge the digital divide in our country and further promote digital literacy in order to make development a comprehensive mass movement and put governance within everyone's reach in India. We all are witnessing dividends of Digital India initiatives in the current COVID 19 Pandemic.

Shri Pokhriyal highlighted that this Hackathon is the World's biggest open innovation model involving more than 4.5 lakh students, 2000+ educational institutions, 1000+ mentors, 1500+ evaluators, 70+ problem submitting agencies including central ministries, state govt departments, and private industries thereby having true PPP model. This type of model exists nowhere in the world where simultaneously such large number of students would be participating.

Shri Pokhriyal emphasized on culture of Innovation for Atmanirbhar Bharat. He said, solution created by participants of SIH will strengthen the Prime minister's intent "Vocal for Local" to boost economy. The Minister informed that this year, we will have more than 10,000 participants competing to solve 243 problem statements from 37 central government departments, 13 state governments and 20 industries. Each Problem Statement carries a prize money of Rs. 1,00,000 except the student innovation theme which will have three winners, 1st, 2nd and 3rd with prize money of Rs. 1,00, 000, Rs. 75,000 and 50,000 respectively.

Speaking on the occasion Shri Dhotre said that we face problems in our daily lives. Thus, to inculcate a culture of product innovation and a mind-set of problem solving, to utilize demographic dividend, energy and ideas of youth, it is necessary to have such activities at Institute level round the year. He also suggested that Institutes should have a bank of problem statements, so that a student can attempt to solve a problem as per his interest. Students get exposure at school level through ATAL Tinkering Labs. The ideas or models developed at ATAL Tinkering Labs can be taken further in SIH. Another prominent Drug Discovery Hackathon is on way to discover new drugs to help fight such pandemics.

Secretary , Higher Education, Shri Amit Khare said that the software edition of Smart India Hackathon 2020 is being conducted through an online platform. Education system is being transformed by adopting online platforms of learning. After the great success of Smart India Hackathon, two prominent International Hackathons i.e. India- Portugal Hackathon and India-ASEAN Hackathon are going to take place, these are true indicators of going from Local to Global.

He said that SIH is one of the most important means of empowering youth with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process. Even the New Education Policy emphasizes the need and execution of Innovation. Moreover, SIH is also one of the best examples of public private partnership. He further said that we are very keen on encouraging innovation culture in our educational institutions. Even during the lock down period our students participated in “Ideathon” and “Samadhan” virtual Hackathons that laid the foundation of organizing this year’s SIH software edition virtually.

Chairman AICTE Prof. Anil Sahasrabudhe said that NEP will help to spread India’s rich ancient knowledge to masses. Inclusion of research in Social Sciences in National Research Foundation of New Education Policy (NEP) is a good sign to have holistic research and innovation culture.

Dr Abhay Jere said that it has kickstarted Hackathon culture in the country and now even small cities and civic bodies are organizing hackathons to engage with youth and harness out of box ideas to improve their governance.

Smart India Hackathons till date, around 331 prototypes have been developed, 71 startups are under formation, 19 startups are successfully registered. Further, 39 solutions have already been deployed at various departments and around 64 potential solutions have been funded for further development. SIH is helping in growing culture of Startup and Innovation.

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