

English rendering of PM's address on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day

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Namaskar!

Greetings to my young friends!

My greetings to all the youngsters on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day!

This day is dedicated to your skills. The greatest power of the youth or the millennial generation of the 21st century is their skill and their ability to acquire skills.

Friends,

This crisis of Corona has changed the nature of job as well as the world-culture. And the ever-changing new technology has also influenced the same. Looking at the new work-culture and the new nature of job, our youth are increasingly acquiring new skills.

Well friends, many people ask me, that in today's time, businesses and markets change so fast that they do not understand how to retain their relevance. In this time of Corona crisis, this question has become even more crucial.

Friends,

I always give that one answer to this question. The mantra to stay relevant is- skill, re-skill and up-skill. Skill means you learn a new skill. For example, you learnt to make a chair with a piece of wood. That was your skill. You also increased the price of that piece of wood; so value addition is done. But in order to maintain these prices, something new has to be added everyday i.e. new style or new designs etc. One making has to keep learning new things for the same. And the meaning of learning something new is re-skill. And to expand that skill further is called up-skill. Like, from making small furniture if you start designing the whole office, then it is up-skill. Knowing, understanding, and following this mantra of skill, re-skill and up-skill is very important in the lives of all of us.

By the way, when I talk about skill, I always remember a person about whom one of my old acquaintances used to tell me, albeit I did not know him personally. He was not very educated, but his hand-writing was very good. Over a period of time, he added more new styles to his hand-writing, i.e. he re-skilled himself. People started reaching out to him because of his skills. People used to ask him to write invitation cards during special occasions. Later he re-skilled and up-skilled himself! He started writing in many more languages after learning some more languages. And in this way, his business grew over time. People started coming to him to get their work done very frequently. A skill that grew out of hobbies also became a medium of livelihood and respect.

Friends,

Skill is something which we gift to ourselves, which grows with experience. Skill is timeless; it keeps getting better with time. Skill is unique; it makes you different from others. Skill is a treasure that nobody can take away. And, skill is self-reliance; it not only makes one employable but also self-employable. This power of skill, can take a person to greater heights.

Friends,

A true character of a successful person is that he never lets go off any chance to enhance his skill. Moreover, he keeps looking for new opportunities. If you do not have any interest towards skill, if there is no desire to learn anything new, then it puts a halt to life. It feels like a hindrance. In a way, that person makes his personality a burden. And it becomes a burden not only for us, but also for our relatives. On the other hand, interest towards a skill gives a new strength and a fresh enthusiasm to live. Skill is not just a means of earning bread and butter. We need hope and enthusiasm to live and skill becomes our driving force. It brings a new inspiration to us. It brings a new zeal! And age doesn't matter. Whether you are young or old, if you are learning new skills, the enthusiasm for life will never reduce.

Friends,

Everyone must have had some experience of the power of skills. Today, while talking to you, I am reminded of one incident. And it was the time when I used to work as a volunteer in the tribal belt during my youth days. I used to work with some organizations. So once, we had to go out with the people of one of the organizations by their jeep. But the jeep did not start in the morning. Now everyone tried a lot to start the jeep; they pushed it and did everything, but the jeep did not start. At around 7 or 8 o'clock, a mechanic was called. He came and did something and fixed it in 2 minutes. Then we asked him the fee; he said Rs 20. At that time, the value of 20 rupees was a lot. But one of our companions said, "Brother, it was just 2 minutes of work and you are asking for Rs 20?" His answer inspires me even today and creates an impact in my mind. The illiterate mechanic said, "Sir, I am not taking Rs 20 for 2 minutes but for the skill that I have gained while working for 20 years. The experience that I have acquired over the years costs Rs 20." I believe this is the strength of skill. Skill makes an impact not only on your work but also on your talent and influence.

And friends,

It is very important to understand one more thing here. Some people are always confused about knowledge and skill, or create confusion regarding the same. I always give a small example to such people. You can read books, watch videos on YouTube about how to ride a bicycle; how to sit on a bicycle; how the bicycle works; which how each parts function, how to hold the handle; how to put a brake. This is all knowledge. But there is no guarantee that you will be able to ride a cycle because you have this knowledge. In reality, skill is required to help you with cycling. You gradually learn yourself to cycle. And then you enjoy riding a bicycle. You keep going and there is no problem. As soon as you have learnt this art, you acquire a skill or talent. You never have to apply your mind the next time.

And it is very important to understand this difference at every level ranging from the society to governance. Today, India is progressing by understanding the difference between both knowledge

and skills. Five years ago, on this day, Skill India Mission was launched with this idea. The aim was to ensure that the youth could acquire skills along with knowledge. For this, hundreds of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Kendras were set up across the country. The number of ITIs was increased and lakhs of new seats were added. During this period, skill development of more than 5 crore people has been done. And this campaign continues unhindered.

Friends,

In today's rapidly changing world, lakhs of skilled people are needed in many sectors. There is a huge potential especially in healthcare services. Realizing this, the Ministry of Skill Development has now started mapping the opportunities being created around the world. We are trying to ensure that the youth of India can get right and accurate information about the needs of other countries; or about countries where new doors of opportunities are opening in the healthcare sector; or about the kind of demand being created in a particular service sector. Information related to these things will now be available to the youth of India at a rapid pace.

Now take the example of Merchant Navy. The whole world including India is in great need of sailors. We have a coast line of 7500 kilometres. A large number of our youngsters are familiar with sea and the coastal conditions. If we work towards enhancing the skill in this field, then we can produce and provide lakhs of expert sailors to the world, and can also strengthen the coastal economy of our country.

Due to the mapping, the work for giving such information will become easier. Apart from this, a portal of skill mapping of workers has also been started in the country four-five days ago. This portal will play a vital role in mapping skilled people and skilled workers. With this, employers will be able to reach the skill-mapped workers in one click. The workers who have recently moved from cities to their villages, in particular, will benefit the most. You must have also seen how the people, who have reached the villages with a special skill set, have started rejuvenating the villages. Some are painting the school; some are building houses with new designs. Every kind of skill, small or big, will become the greatest strength of a self-reliant India.

I once again congratulate the youth of the country on World Youth Skills Day.

And the world is gripped with pandemic. So it is my duty to keep repeating the same thing again and again. And not only me, but you too must keep repeating it. And what is that thing? First of all I would like you to be healthy. Secondly, I want you all to keep following the 'do gaz doori' or social distancing. Do not forget to wear a mask. Keep explaining to the people to quit the habit of spitting. And always remember the mantra for which we have gathered here today. No matter how educated you are, no matter how many degrees you have, the skill should also be constantly enhanced and upgraded. One should constantly prepare himself for new skills. You will start enjoying your life. You will enjoy getting new opportunities in life. And I am sure that you will enhance the strength of your hands, your fingers, your heart and mind by one skill and will move ahead and will help the country to progress.

Thanks a lot!

Best wishes to you!

VRRK/AKP/AK

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