

SPEECH OF SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE, FORMER PRESIDENT OF
INDIA AT THE ANNUAL DIPLOMA CONVOCATION – 2018 OF THE
INDIAN SOCIETY FOR TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

I am happy to be present here at the Annual Diploma Convocation of the Indian Society for Training and Development (ISTD), 2018. Let me, at the outset, congratulate all the students who have received their diplomas today.

Dear Friends,

2. This is my first visit to ISTD. I am told that this institution was established 48 years ago in April 1970, and I am happy to know that it is currently spread out to 45 chapters across the country. However, I had the opportunity to inaugurate the Indian Federation of Training and Development (IFTDO) Annual International Convention in the year 2013 in New Delhi that was hosted by ISTD, in which ISTD was also a founding member. Today, with the contribution of all institutional builders, ISTD has evolved into a pan India institute of repute and I congratulate the

institution and its members for providing quality education in the field of Training and Development.

3. Convocation is perhaps the most important milestone in a student's life. Needless to say, it is a day when you all feel a sense of accomplishment with a diploma in your hand. However, I want you all to know that Convocation is not just a formal gathering to receive your certificates, rather it is a transition from one stage of your life to another. Upon completion of the years of formal education, characterized by hard work and perseverance, you are on the verge of stepping out into a world of professional exploration.

4. India is vast nation with tremendous growth opportunities. We also have the benefit of having a very young workforce. However, According to the International Labour Organisation, the unemployment rate in India has increased to 3.52% in 2017 from 3.51% in the year 2016. Post-graduates and graduates are often left dejected in search of employment. Despite large numbers of educated youth, there is shortage of skilled manpower. There are unemployed youths and

ironically, companies are facing shortage of manpower. Clearly, there's a huge mismatch between demand and supply when it comes to skilled workforce and employment opportunities, which could place a strain on the economy in the long run.

5. To my mind, skill development and employability oriented vocational training are the essential ingredients for India's future economic growth as the country transforms into a diversified and internationally-competitive economy. Vocational Skills are going to be the defining element in India's growth story. Specific skills are the key requirement for any job role, and these skills can be acquired along with education. The purpose of education has to be beyond just acquiring the right skill set. The biggest goal education should serve is to act as a powerful medium to teach an individual to create opportunities, explore unseen domains, solve problems, and find one's own identity. India's development philosophy must realize that high medium-term growth and sustained poverty reduction, are possible only through a paradigm change

in our approach to the education along with employment of youth.

6. The need of the hour is to re-define the relationship between education, employment and skills development. Furthermore, as a very large population, India would never be able to upskill all of its youth across the country through the conventional education framework. Government alone cannot accomplish this task. It calls for a concerted effort on part of the government, private players and NGOs to address the issue in a comprehensive manner.

Dear Friends,

7. Any discussion on skill development and vocational training cannot be complete without a reference to Germany and South Korea. While one has a system evolved over time and the other has a system created by the government. Both have strong Acts by their respective Parliaments in this regard. It is time we in India also started a debate on this issue.

8. We could emulate a few concepts from the German model.

In Germany, students commence training upon completion of high school and the courses span two to three years. 'Learning by doing' is the cornerstone of the system as it combines hands-on practical exposure with theoretical study. Through this mechanism, students graduate with a university degree and substantial work experience in their field of interest. In order to make the model feasible, Germany relies on government funding for the schools whereas corporate institutions provide skill training and job experience. Due to the system's success, it has been implemented in several countries like Austria, Switzerland, Netherlands, France, and more recently China. Studies have shown that countries with this sort of dual model have resulted in the successfully tackling the problem of unemployment.

9. To my mind, it is through such work-Integrated Learning activities that the needs of industry can be met by the students and universities in developing, delivering and reflecting upon learning experiences that benefit all

stakeholders. Such learning helps students get a professional identity and allows them to advance their theoretical knowledge and transferable skills.

10. I am happy that, as the premium body for training and development in India, The Indian Society for Training and Development acknowledges this change and its influence on today's economies. I would like to congratulate the Indian Society for Training and Development for the various initiatives taken at this institution. The provision of an updated and state of the art syllabus ensures high quality of education to the students. I also appreciate the effort taken by ISTD to offer the diploma course offline and online, making it more accessible to current and potential students. It is indeed commendable that the institution has taken a leap towards modern technologies of today, by utilizing Block-Chain technology for the certificates.

11. Before concluding, I would like to tell my young audience here that in your career, there will be many professional accomplishments to your credit. Your parents, teachers and alma-mater will be proud of your

achievements. And this is a proud moment not just for you, graduating students, but also your teachers, mentors, faculty members and parents. Sail forth into the world with confidence. Lead us in the building of a better India – a better world.

Thank you

Jai Hind.