

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE
AT THE MEETING WITH THE RECIPIENTS OF INSPIRE AWARDS**

Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi: 22-03-2013

First of all my greetings to all the young and budding scientists and INSPIRE Awardees who have come here from various parts of the country. Dear young students, I see the future of India in you, it is for sure that the shape of India to come would be determined by youth of the nation. Science and Technology and Innovation will form the new grammar of development.

2. My dear children, what has differentiated the post-industrial world from the previous centuries is Science and Technology. The way we live on earth has been significantly transformed by Science and Technology. In Twenty-first century, those nations which use Science and Technology are likely to emerge as global powers. Knowledge is also likely to emerge as the next driver of change in the world. Many of you will be driver of change, which will happen in India and the World.

3. India with a strong scientific and technical manpower has an opportunity to become a major knowledge power in the years to come. To make this dream a reality, we have to invest in research and development. Best investment that a Nation could make is in her youth power. To capitalize the advantages of large demographic dividend and huge scientific talent pool, we have announced the Science, Technology and Innovation Policy 2013. The INSPIRE scheme will act as a catalyst in implementation of the newly announced policy.

4. My dear children, you are the future of India. Therefore, nation has chosen to invest into you. Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE) is one of the significant investments of India into the youth of the nation. I congratulate the Ministry for taking the initiative. I am told that all of you who have assembled here today are selected from a group of over 5.2 lakh children who received INSPIRE Awards. I am particularly happy to note that about 48% of the INSPIRE awardees are girls out of the total 8 lakh awards sanctioned since inception. I am informed that, you all have participated in the National Level Project Exhibition Competition and selected for State, Regional and National level prizes. You all have crossed many levels to reach at this stage. I congratulate each one of you individually and also as a group of young people, who are likely to write a new destiny for this nation.

5. I have been told that some of your project entries are so amazing that the Department is processing a few of them for patenting. You have demonstrated interesting potentials. Some of you could become scientists, engineers, doctors and professional researchers. You could discover new facets of science, the way C.V. Raman, J. C. Bose, S. N. Bose and Srinivasa Ramanujan did. Discovery processes in Science would remain one of the most celebrated activities of human kind.

India is a developing country and we need solutions to some of the most challenging problems of the society. We need to find new technologies for meeting our food, energy, water and healthcare requirements. India would need a new brand of solutions designers and this is where you all can contribute.

6. Let us take the example of Edison. He invented a new way to make electrical bulb which would give light. His invention has changed the lives of people all over the world and today we cannot think of life without electricity. We can list innumerable number of inventions which have transformed, the way we work and live in the modern society.

7. INSPIRE aims to help the youth of this country to become scientists and researchers. India has started to invest significantly into Research and Development as well as education sectors. Several new academic and research institutions have been established during the last ten years. There will be new opportunities for talented youth to become researchers. Our industrial and agriculture sectors also have started to invest more into research and development. World over, Indian talent pool is respected. Several Multi National Companies have established their global R&D centers in India. In a way, R&D capability of India is just opening up for planned investments. These developments open up new opportunities and challenges to those who can dream, and sky is the limit for achievement.

8. Sir C. V. Raman won the Nobel Prize in Science for his work done in India. There have been people like S. Chandrasekhar, Har Gobind Khorana and more recently Venki Ramakrishnan, who have won Nobel Prizes for their work done abroad. India is a country of billion plus minds with billion plus innovative ideas. If we can ignite these minds and convert few of them in reality, it will bring glory to individuals as well as to the nation as a whole. I am sure that the young scientists present here will transform India into a league of nations, which proudly owns patents of new discoveries and products and in the process, making India

emerge as a knowledge economy with its own solutions to its necessities.

9. Scientific creativity blooms early in life. I am happy to note that you all have started on your creative projects at the right age. You will be happy to know that our own C.V. Raman wrote his first paper when he was 18, Ramanujan started his own research by the time he was 17 and Astrophysicist Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar's Nobel Prize winning work was done when he was 19 or 20 years old. The list is long, but the trend is very clear. You all have shown the potential of a scientist.

It is the responsibility of the society and all of us to ensure that we as a nation capitalize on your scientific capabilities. I am happy that the Ministry of Science and Technology, in collaboration with the schools spread all over the country, is engaged in this task which will be further streamlined with the e-management of INSPIRE Awards scheme. This is only one way of engaging the creative minds of the society. We have to find many more ways to ensure that no creative idea in this country is left without being nurtured. This will ensure that we as a country are self reliant for our scientific and technological requirements and in the process we emerge as exporter of knowledge based products.

10. In the recently concluded Conference of Vice Chancellors of Central Universities at Rashtrapati Bhavan, I have asked for setting up the National Innovation Clubs and linking up the grassroots innovators to the Central Universities. This is for converting grassroots innovations into value added technologies. During my visits to these Central Universities I will have the opportunity of meeting the regional innovators to see that the linkages between the innovators and the Central

Universities are well established for the benefit of the society and the nation as a whole.

11. Once again I would like to congratulate the INSPIRE awardees for their talent, hard work and devotion towards science. I am sure with your dedication and hard work, you can achieve what you aspire to have.

12. I would also like to compliment the Ministry of Science and Technology and all associated schools in helping the young scientists to realize their potential.

Jai Hind.