

# PM Modi toasts young innovators, Indian CEOs of global majors

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NEW DELHI: Hailing the important role of youth in nation building, PM Modi on Monday underlined the growing prowess of India in innovation and the start-up sphere as he conveyed the nation's pride in the fact that some major global companies are being led by young Indian CEOs. "Today we feel proud when we see the youth of India excelling in the world of start-ups. We feel proud when we see that the youth of India are innovating, taking the country forward," the PM said at the virtual awards ceremony in which he conferred select children with the "Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar" for accomplishments across fields, including innovation. The PM awarded certificates to the recipients digitally using block chain technology.

The PM also lauded the children for showing their "modern and scientific thinking" in the vaccination programme. "Since January 3, in just 20 days, more than 40 million children have got the corona vaccine," he said. Highlighting the leadership children have shown in the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, he appealed to them to be ambassadors for "Vocal for Local" and lead the campaign of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.

Modi said policies and initiatives in all sectors are keeping youth at the centre. He cited initiatives like Start-Up India, Stand Up India, Digital India and Make in India. This, he said, is in sync with the speed of the youth of India, who are leading this new epoch both here and abroad. Among those present at the ceremony was women and child development Minister Smriti Irani.

The prime minister also remembered the contribution of Birbala Kanaklata Barua, Khudiram Bose and Rani Gaidinilu to the freedom struggle. "These fighters had made the country's freedom the mission of their lives at a very young age and dedicated themselves for it," he said.

Talking about the unveiling of a hologram statue of freedom fighter Subhas Chandra Bose at the India Gate, he said, "The biggest inspiration we get from Netaji is of duty and of nation first, and you have to proceed on your path of duty for the country."

He also recalled his visit to the Nowshera sector of Jammu and Kashmir on Diwali last year where he met Baldev Singh and Basant Singh who had played the role of child soldiers in the post-independence war.

They helped our army at such a young age without caring about their life. The Prime Minister cited examples of the bravery and sacrifice of the sons of Guru Gobind Singh.

Twenty-nine children, including 14 girls, were awarded in six fields - innovation, scholastic achievements, sports, arts and culture, social service and bravery. Each child has been given a medal, a cash prize of Rs 1,00,000 and a certificate.

The PM also greeted everyone on the occasion of National Girl Child Day.