Greatest asset of Viksit Bharat is skill of youth: PM in U.P.

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ITI students deserve the same respect as IIT students, Modi says, calling them the country's assets

The world needs skilled youth, not merely degree-holders, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the fifth Kaushal Deekshant Samaroh, a national-level convocation ceremony for graduating Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) trainees, in Lucknow on Saturday. "Dream big, develop your skills and put in all your strength to fulfil your dreams," Mr. Modi said at the ceremony. Trainees from across the country participated in it.

He described skills, hard work and capabilities of the youth as the greatest assets of Viksit Bharat. "The skills acquired at ITIs are not merely a means of securing employment but also an opportunity to participate directly in nation-building. India's future will take shape through the hands and skills of its youth," he said.

He said that IITs and ITIs represented the country's assets, capabilities and future. "ITI students deserve the same respect as IIT students," he said.

He called for changing the mindset that considers young people enrolling in ITIs inferior. "While some people in large companies may work with paper qualifications, hundreds of skilled technical workers are required to run those companies," he said.

Amid concerns about artificial intelligence (AI) taking away jobs, the Prime Minister said young no one can take away the employment of someone who possesses skills. "During the COVID period, the whole world realised the importance of skilled workers. The skills of young people have played an important role in increasing the country's manufacturing capabilities," he said. He highlighted that nearly 5,000 new ITIs had been established across the country in the decade after 2014.

Mr. Modi said that ITI-trained youth played an important role in everything from operating medical equipment in hospitals to increasing industries' production capacity. "The government endeavours to ensure that ITI curricula, machinery, and trainers' knowledge remain aligned with new technologies and that training is directly connected with industries," he said.