

World Academy of Higher Education and Development, W-AHEAD

Presidential Address by

**Prof PB Sharma
President-WAHEAD
Founder Vice Chancellor DTU & RGTU
Vice Chancellor
Amity University Haryana**

World Youth Skills Day-2024
“Skilling Youth for Viksit Bharat@2047”

Our Distinguished Chief Guest Prof Anil Sahasrabudhe, Hon’ble Chairman NETF and Chairman EC, NAAC, and NBA, Distinguished Guest of Honour Prof TG Sitharam, Hon’ble Chairman AICTE, Dr (Mrs) Pankaj Mittal, Secretary General of AIU, Er Pradeep Chaturvedi Hon’ble Chairman (Delhi section) Indian National Academy of Engineering, IANE, Prof PR Trivedi, Executive Chairman of W-AHEAD and Founder of NIS and IIEE, Hon’ble Chancellors, Hon’ble Vice Chancellors, Honoured Guests, Distinguished Awardees, Inspired Young Minds, Ladies and Gentlemen.

May I take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome on behalf of W-AHEAD and NIS on the auspicious occasion of celebration of the World Youth Skills Day, today, the 15th July 2024 at the India International Centre, New Delhi in the august presence of our luminaries present here with us. I thank each one of you for your gracious presence in joining on the day of great value for the youth of the world to pledge our unconditional commitment to build a bright and blissful future for the global humanity and submit ourselves to engage, with utmost sincerity of purpose, in imparting to the youth of the world, the skills required to empower them to make profound contributions to the creation of such a blissful future of our dream.

World Academy of Higher Education and Development, World-AHEAD, is a global body of professionals from the world of learning and the world of industries and corporate, deeply devoted to serve as a catalyst for excellence in higher education and development- promoting equity, inclusivity, and sustainability. Through cutting-edge research, innovative teaching methodologies, Skilling for Youth and impactful outreach initiatives, World-AHEAD seeks to empower individuals, institutions, and communities to thrive in an increasingly complex and interconnected world. Grounded in the principles of integrity, diversity, and collaboration, W-AHEAD is committed to fostering a culture of lifelong learning, nurturing agile skill sets, critical inquiry, and social responsibility.

We feel immensely delighted to host this great day to celebrate **the World Skills Day 2024** and also to recognise outstanding young entrepreneurs who dared to make a great difference to the world community and by their eminence both at the individual and at the

organisational levels made Mother India proud. Such highly successful entrepreneurs of great eminence are present here with us today and we wish to thank them for their eminent presence. The **Academy Entrepreneurship Excellence Awards** shall be presented to them by our luminaries today.

We are in Great Times of Great Opportunities:

I need not over emphasise that peace and great times of great opportunities to co-create such a bright future for us, the current as well as the future generations, as we have a great advantage of the connected world and game changing technology innovations, giving us conviction that we all can make a big difference in the state of affairs and build the future that we wish to live in during our own lifetime and also create the pathways of growth and advancement of human society on the trajectories of sustainable development that shall guarantees prosperity, environmental sustainability, peace and harmony.

UNESCO message on World Skills Day:

“Let us unite in recognizing the potential of young people as agents of peace and commit to providing them with the skills and opportunities to address challenges and contribute to a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable future” is the call from UNESCO on this day “World Youth Skills Day”. The theme for World Youth Skills Day 2024 this year has been chosen as **“Youth Skills for Peace and Development.** It highlights the crucial role that young people play in peace building and conflict resolution efforts. “The world faces a multitude of challenges today, many of which affect the youth. Violent conflicts disrupting education and stability, a polarized online environment fostering negativity, and persistent economic inequality limits opportunities. These issues threaten not only individual futures but also the overall stability of societies. It is crucial to equip youth with the necessary skills for fostering a culture of peace, nurturing responsible global citizens, and promoting sustainable development to build a more just, inclusive, and sustainable future for all” says the UNESCO charter in its clarion call for the global community, that includes all of us present here today and our 1.42 plus billion countrymen here in India, the Bharat that we aspire to build as Bhavya and Divya Viksit Bharat@2047.

Reimagining Higher Education and Skill Development:

Focusing on the Youth, especially the young people below the age of 25 years, comprising of almost 42 percent of the world population, of which 660 million plus young people below the age of 25 years are here in India, we are conscious of the fact that the future of work is rapidly changing. **In this scenario we need to reimagine education and skill development that shall create zero unemployment, creating both the enterprising minds as well as capable and tech-savvy professionals to meet the growing requirement of skill sets for the new and emerging technologies, revolutionised by the advent of AI and smart automation of workplaces both in the manufacturing as well as the service sector.**

I am of the opinion that as India prepares to shape itself as a front runner in the community of nations and continue to advance on trajectories of growth and development as the world's fastest growing economy, it needs to focus on ensuring continuous supply of skilled

manpower as per the needs of the knowledge intensive, technology-savvy work environment for the industries and for the fast-growing service sector.

For economy to continue to grow faster than any other, besides economic stimulus provided by physical infrastructure push, increased urbanisation and investment in new emerging technology areas such as semiconductor technology, new age manufacturing, advancement and applications of Augmented Intelligence (AI, as I have often called Artificial Intelligence for humans and Artificial Intelligence for machines and robots), foreign direct investment and above all the positive environment for ease of doing business that the Government of India has facilitated through its structural reforms, would require massive investment in Knowledge and Skill Infrastructure to shape it's 700 million young people below the age of 25 years into the world's largest talent powerhouse of innovative and enterprising India, that the Viksit Bharat @2047 Vision entails to make our country a prosperous, happy and healthy nation on planet Mother Earth.

The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2023 clearly outlines that six in 10 workers will require training before 2027, with analytical and creative thinking, as well as utilizing AI and big data topping the list of priorities for skills training. By 2025, 85 million jobs could be replaced due to changes in how work is divided between humans and machines. However, the report also expect 97 million new jobs to emerge that will better fit the evolving roles of humans, machines, and algorithms. As technology becomes more prevalent, the skills needed for jobs will shift. About 40% of essential skills in current roles are expected to change by 2025, and half of all employees will require retraining, which is a 4% increase.

The India Skills Report 2024 highlights the growing importance of AI skills for India's future workforce. The report indicates a significant gap between the demand and supply of AI professionals, with a projected demand of 1 million AI skilled professionals by 2026 and this requirement shall further grow to staggering figures as the Indian economy grows leaps and bounds in the next two decades, christened as India decades 2024- 2034 and 2035- 2045.

This further underscores the need for skilling initiatives focused on artificial intelligence, robotics, and data science for the young students currently at colleges and universities in India and also reskilling the current work force in Industry and corporate and in service sectors of the economy.

Round Table on Brain Storming on "*Skilling Youth for Viksit Bharat@2047*"

I am indeed delighted that this round table in its first session has taken up the task of brain storming on "*Skilling Youth for Viksit Bharat@2047*", and in its second part on "Skilling Youth for Peace and Sustainable Development". It recognises the critical role of equipping our youth with the skills needed to realize our vision of a fully developed India, the Viksit Bharat@2047, by the centenary year of our nation's independence.

As we look towards building a self-reliant India, a country full of innovation and prosperity, the importance of a skilling young workforce becomes most important. Giving our young minds the skills to understand technology and think critically to solve problems will be essential for this exciting journey ahead. But make no mistake that technology and work

skills alone would form only a part of the success story, a lot will depend on our success to mentor the youth of our country with life skills of peace and sustainable development, skills of living in peaceful existence and combining conviction and capabilities to serve the cause of environmental sustainability and world peace.

Picture a future where India doesn't just use the latest technologies but creates them. Our young minds, skilled in areas like artificial intelligence, robotics, and data science, will design a self-sustaining India, guiding us towards a better tomorrow. But skilling our youth goes beyond just technical expertise. Nurturing soft skills like communication, teamwork, and adaptability will be equally important. These well-rounded individuals will not only be competent but also possess the leadership qualities to steer our nation towards a self-reliant future.

On top of technology and soft skills of communication and leadership, we need to ensure the youth are equipped with skill set as well as the mindset tuned to the basics of human excellence that pace and harmonious living in a multicultural society and also assure highest commitment to sustaining a healthy environment. **A caring and compassionate humanity has to remain as our cherished goal of skilling and education for the youth of the world, with the abiding faith in the Vedic Sanatan concept of *Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam*, “One world, One Family and One Planet”.**

The government, educational institutions, both in public and the private sector should join hands to create a robust skilling ecosystem that empowers youth as the cocreators of a bright and blissful future. This will involve revamping educational curricula to focus on practical application of knowledge, providing industry-relevant apprenticeship programs, and encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship among our youth while sensitising them about their responsibility to live and work for creating and sustaining a peaceful and compassionate human society.

The World academy of Higher Education and Development together with IIEE and NIS is fully committed to work with Educational institutions, Industry. Corporate, Community and the Government with a *Panchhamrut* approach to empower India, the Bharat and world at large in skilling the Youth of the World for cocreating a bright and blissful future for the global humanity.

Let me close by once again extending a warm welcome to our distinguished luminaries and each one of you and request you to enrich our understanding of devising a road map for skilling the youth of the world, and of our own country and a pan of action that can pave the way for rapid-track development of Skilled, *Sanskrit* and Capable global citizenry, deeply committed to cocreating a bright and blissful future that we all aspire for.

Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen, for your gracious presence.
