

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB  
MUKHERJEE AT THE FELICITATION CEREMONY OF THE  
WINNERS OF THE HACKATHON CODING COMPLETION**

Rashtrapati Bhavan: Mar 19, 2016

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1. First of all, I would like to congratulate all the participants of this Hackathon for Social Innovations which was held today. I am told that they all arrived quite early this morning to participate in this twelve-hour long event. This shows not only the enthusiasm but also a deep commitment on the part of these young and brilliant minds for the cause of nation and society. I take this opportunity to also compliment Shri Mohandas Pai and Shri Karl Mehta of *Code for India* for hosting this event in collaboration with my Secretariat.
2. The four themes on which the Hackathon was conducted today are important from a developing country perspective. If innovative solutions can be found to issues such as these, it will provide a significant boost to our developmental process.

Young friends, ladies and gentlemen:

3. A country like India may have reached a certain level of technological advancement. It may have promoted the development of a scientific bent of mind and temperament

amongst its citizens, especially the young ones. However, unless the young minds are sensitized to the need for finding creative solutions to top-ranging socio-economic problems of our country, the goal of inclusive development will remain elusive. Unless the young creative minds are driven by commitment, devotion, empathy and sensitivity, a just social order envisaged in none other than our Constitution will remain evasive. If we are able to leverage ingenuity to address social needs, it will result in social innovations beneficial to the society. It is this bridge of technology and society which, to my mind, has been addressed adequately in today's event.

4. In the second edition of the week-long Festival of Innovation that commenced last Saturday, we have had a number of Roundtable discussions relating to inclusive innovations in various social sectors. One of the Roundtables was on the theme of social innovations for large scale change. And today's event aimed at creating a digital system will take forward the mission of large scale change through social innovations. The agenda and the themes of the Festival of Innovation have attempted to build inter-linkages amongst various stakeholders

essential for an inclusive society based on inclusive innovations and technologies.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

5. Over hundred of you have participated in this Hackathon and put in your best efforts to offer solution to four social challenges put before you. Four amongst you – one in each category of problems- have been declared winners by the jury. I understand these four winning entries will be in public domain, which will be free for use by anyone. I compliment the organizers and the participants for putting open innovation into practice. I like to urge upon the winners of this event to work closely with relevant stakeholders and ensure that the applications created by them are widely used to usher in societal transformation.

Young friends, ladies and gentlemen:

6. I would like to share my view on one of the applications that relates to attendance system in the classroom. Today on an average, a student and a teacher spends around half an hour daily on attendance. This is the time which could have been utilized productively for teaching and would have increased learning hours in schools and colleges. Finding a solution for an intelligent attendance system is particularly crucial in a scenario of shortage of

teachers and faculty which most educational institutions in our country experience. If we can save precious time, we can definitely contribute to enhancing the quality of the education system.

7. Similarly, the other applications also have the potential to transform and bring large scale social change in society. I would not like to further elaborate as the applications developed in each of the areas have already been described by the winners.
8. I once again congratulate the winners and sincerely appreciate all of you for your participation in this Hackathon, which is a unique event held in Rashtrapati Bhavan. I hope each one of you to keep contributing to social causes through the use of modern technology. Remember that it is in your mindset and skill-set that the task of transforming our country rests. Make yourselves the worthy sons and daughters of this great nation!
9. This Hackathon, which is a part of this year's Festival of Innovation, should inspire young talented individuals to contribute to social change. I now declare the Festival of Innovation 2016 closed.

Thank you.

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