

**SPEECH OF SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE, FORMER
PRESIDENT OF INDIA FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION WITH
STUDENTS OF THE ASIAN EDUCATION GROUP**

I am happy to be present here today for this Special Session with the students of Asian Education Group.

Friends,

2. I am informed that the Asian Education Group (AEG) has a legacy of 25 years in the field of education. I am pleased to know that in this short span, through continuous transformation and innovation in the field of education, AEG has become one of the trusted and influential institutions of the country.

3. I am indeed happy to know that the Asian Education Group has created a niche for itself through skill based education in different disciplines like Mass Communication, Journalism, Business Studies, Law etc. It lays emphasis on application of knowledge and individual development of the students. This translates into the students graduating as responsible citizens with inherent integrity, which is the fulcrum for preserving the democratic and secular fabric of India.

Dear Students,

4. You are the future leaders of this nation. Leaders are required in all walks of life and the competence you gain through higher education will make you conscientious individuals who can lead a positive change in the society. It is the time when India is looking forward to become a global power and youth of India has the most pivotal role to play in this. Putting your country at a position in the global landscape where it is known for its values, quality of life and social justice should be your goal. This would, in true sense, translate into reality, if the goal of education is not limited to only getting a remunerative employment but transcends beyond that.

5. Education is the foundation of a nation's political, economic and social well being. It empowers the people and transforms the socio-economic structure towards equitable distribution of income and opportunities. Educational institutes of our country have the onus of building the youth of the country by imparting values which are crucial for shaping the nation's future – values of equality, compassion and democracy which bring together our diverse cultures.

Friends,

6. I have said on many occasions in the past that education is a continuous process, it is the unending quest for the novel and the new. In this regard, I would once again like to emphasize the significance of research in educational institutes for enhancing the quality of education in the country to bring it at par with global institutes of repute. With private institutes complementing efforts of Government through innovative methodologies and research focus, I believe that there is an important role of institutions like the Asian Education Group in making India as a centre of educational excellence.

7. I have been told that the Research & Development Cell at your various schools has been instrumental in bringing together industry and academia for collaboration in research. I firmly believe that bridging the gap between theory and practice is essential to bring about growth and development in the country. To counter the problem of educated unemployment, it is imperative that the educational institutes focus on skills that make an individual employable. It is also important that higher education institutions foster an ecosystem for developing the entrepreneurial mindset as well as abilities in their students.

8. It is important to establish incubation centres in collaboration with industry for supporting the young

entrepreneurs who could become the job creators for the economy. I am happy to know that your institution has already taken steps in this direction and in this short span of time has established the Entrepreneurship Development and Incubation Centre and also your alumni have successfully initiated their start ups.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. A blended learning approach needs to be promoted for achieving the objective of gainful employment for our youth force wherein learning within the four walls of the classrooms is integrated with practical applications in a workplace setting. I am happy to learn that you have adopted this approach and has included live projects, industrial visits and industry mentorship programme in the curriculum along with mandatory internships and research projects. I truly believe that such efforts towards industry-institute interface will help the students to understand the requirements of the industry and students will be able to develop professional competence.

Dear Students,

10. The intellectual capabilities, values and skills that you will acquire here from the distinguished faculty members would pave the path for your successful career, with many professional accomplishments to your credit. Your parents, teachers and alma-mater will be proud of your achievements.

11. Towards the end, i would like to say that, standing amongst this youth force of our nation brimming with vibrancy and aspirations, I feel elated and my belief in a prosperous and just India becomes stronger. I wish you all the very best for professional success and personal well being.