

“S&T Roadmap for Building a New India”

Riyan Khattar

Humans have come a long way, from first inventing the wheel to launching satellites into space. Slowly and gradually, science and technology has established itself in the core of our being. Everything is on the tips of our fingers from ordering fast food to hacking someone's bank account. Thus, it is not only essential to use the technology at hand in an ethical way but also in a way which catalyses our nation's growth. Realising the significance of technology in a country's development in the modern era, India's resources need to be orchestrated towards science and technology in a way that brings out an aware, educated, and self-sufficient population. Rightly emphasised by Franklin D. Roosevelt, 'We cannot build the future for our youth, but we can build the youth for the future.' The first step to having a progressive nation is educating and empowering our youth. The youth of a country will always be the ones innovating, experimenting and inventing. A platform for young minds to foster will first handedly shape the country. The notion of 'A New India' can be brought to life only by education. Education will act as a pivot for developing all the other sectors. Even with technology acting as a foundation in so many walks of life, so many are still unaware of its potential. A humongous part of our population is still in the dark on the boon, that is, technology. This way, even the greatest intellects won't get the opportunity to shine. This way, we're wasting the human resources which can help develop our country in unfathomable ways.

These unprecedented times have taken a toll on mankind, but we cannot give in. The tragedy of the COVID-19 pandemic can be spun into something useful. Since the start of the pandemic, all spheres of life have been forced to take place via online means. Instead of looking at this as a disadvantage, think about the glass which is half full. With everyone functioning in this online universe, it has given the chance to dive into the dark unnoticed parts of the country. The youth of rural areas, tribals, underrepresented and minority communities need and deserve the education as much as anyone else. An individual from a minority community can have an idea just as ingenious if not more, than the person who has all the facilities. But those communities aren't able to access it and that is exactly where technology comes in! Ensuring that everyone gets education through online methods is a difficult but achievable task. With the use of technology, the process becomes much more efficient. A child from the fields of Punjab or someone in a shikara in the Dal lake in Kashmir can access the same education using technology. Even if infrastructural development is not possible in these areas in the near future, technology can help in education. From academic development to vocational skills to soft skills, everything can be made into online courses which everyone from everywhere can access. A generalised education system providing the liberty to choose what one wants to educate themselves in will fuel literacy around the country. This will lead to a much more uniform distribution and consumption of resources. Educating an entire generation is a task that can be achieved faster via online means. An online education system will also help in knitting the whole

country together as a community. Interactions with people around the country will instil the importance of culture of the diverse land we live on.

So you see? It is a symbiotic relationship. Reaching out and providing youth the education with the help of technology will aid the development of technology further developing 'The New India.' The youth that you'll be educating with technology as the stimulant will help develop every sector from agricultural to commerce, from transportation to research and development, from healthcare to education itself. This way, the foundation to any country's development i.e. an educated population will be strong. The next steps? They will come easy. A farmer with the correct knowledge of fertilisers and land irrigation will have much higher production. At the same time, a farmer's son interested in aeronautics will have the opportunity to gain knowledge and serve the country in unimaginable ways.

Although technology has its own set of problems, no one can deny that with ethical use, it can be an asset and help societies flourish. It can benefit mankind to achieve feats no one could have dreamt of, a century ago. And the first step is right there in front of us: education.

Mr Riyan Khattar, Class X, Hansraj Model School, Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi.
Email: riyankhattar@gmail.com