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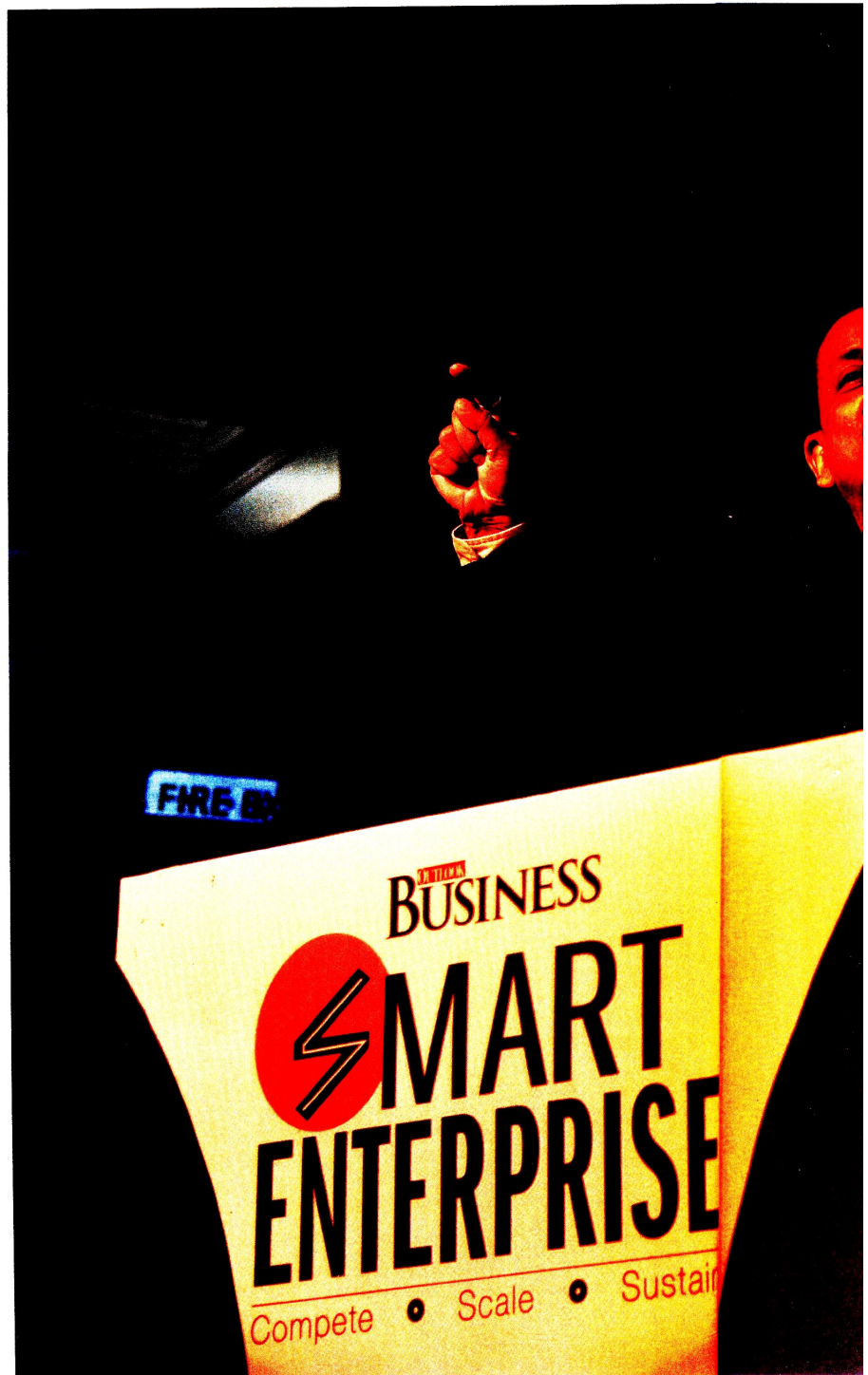
SKILL DEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE SEEN IN ISOLATION

*Union minister
Rajiv Pratap Rudy's
keynote address
calls for a holistic
approach towards
skill education*

The person who drove you here, the person who fixed your cup of tea — they are all a larger part of the ecosystem of skills. These people never had a formal training for their jobs and a large business enterprise depends on these very people to make it successful.

I represent a parliamentary constituency with 1.5 million voters in a remote area of Bihar. But only 3,000-4,000 people have the provision of piped potable water system, 98% do not have toilets and so on and so forth.

We have done a lot of positive things, but when you look at this country, there are a lot of grievances and complaints against the system. Over the past 67 years we did not pick up the pace as we should have, but we caught up really well in the past two years. We have a huge challenge to build up an ecosystem, which includes a smart country, smart politicians





Rajiv Pratap Rudy, Union Minister of State Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (Independent Charge) at the Outlook Business Smart Enterprise 2017 event in Delhi on July 7

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SOUMIK KAR

and smart enterprises. This is a smart India which we are building politically and it's taking a while. I have a small ministry called Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and I have one vertical in it called the ITI. It is the backbone of industrial training in this country existing since 1956. We have more than 2.2 million students enrolled in them comprising fitters, welders and mechanics.

The country's policymakers decided in 1956 that those who do not pass school or are class-8 drop-outs would be admitted to ITI for two years to become a fitter or an electrician. Meanwhile, those who cannot get admission in plus two after class 10 would also be given a chance to be enrolled in ITIs for a two-year course. So 2.2 million students in the last 67 years did not have the opportunity to study class 12. They were believed to be the last of the society who joined ITIs because they could not become engineers. They were considered to not have aspirations and fit for anything. They were deprived of 10th and 12th education and were instead enrolled in ITIs. Why did it take a country 67 years to decide that these 2.2 million students needed an equivalent education system? But for the first time in history, the NCVT has now decided to give them the CBSE/ICSE equivalent examination board.

We are talking about smart enterprise but where were the smart policy decisions of the government? At some point of time, some people may have thought that vertical growth has taken place. Smart enterprise is not just an enterprise, but it's running a government too. In 2003 when Captain Gopinath came to me and spoke about low-cost airlines and paperless tickets, I remember the ministry's people opposing it. They called him crazy, and also the idea of ticketless travelling or card-

less entry into an aircraft seemed alien. When Captain Gopinath's first aircraft took off from Toulouse to Delhi, Air India, Sahara and Jet got together to see that the Mumbai International Airport hanger, in which he had to park his first aircraft, was cancelled by Air India. Once, I told Prime Minister Vajpayee how I had been trying for the past six months to construct a toilet on the apron site of Delhi and Mumbai. The airport authority was refusing to do it and I suggested to have it privatised. He was surprised at the idea and left me hanging. But Mr Vajpayee's principal secretary, Brajesh Mishra, assured me that he would convince Mr Vajpayee since I had flagged the issue. The first decision to change the Airport Authority Act was to privatise this and two benchmarks airports, which came up in India, were in Delhi and Mumbai. Low-cost airlines

changed the face of aviation in this country. These two brown-field projects came in because of a policy decision. What the Prime Minister is doing with Air India today should have possibly been done earlier.

I am telling you this so that you can correlate that smart enterprise is not just confined to a single business. It's a whole country that has to stitch itself together for the larger purposes of life. GST is a process of the larger financial reforms. GST as a process has established larger transparency — it will create more resources, more revenue. In my constituency alone, there are more than 600 villages that have seen electricity for the first time under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya rural electrification scheme. There could be many more such instances. We still have figures of around 250 million people who live on ₹1,000-1,500 per month. In



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larger reforms, smart enterprises can ensure that a section of this population lead better lives.

In the skill ministry, there is no formal training for infrastructural equipment. Similarly, there is no formal training standardised for heavy vehicle operators. I come from the state of Bihar, which was undivided Jharkhand and Bihar. Tata Nagar was the first industrial town which manufactured trucks in this country — the Tata Trucks. For the past 21 years Jamshedpur or Jharkhand did not issue a single heavy vehicles driver's licence because there was no formal arrangement training for truck drivers. That is now true of Bihar also.

There was a boy in my office who wanted to aggregate and set up an app where contractors can look for infrastructure equipment which are there in the market. The challenge is to put this matrix in the

right place — whether its skills, manufacturing, digital India, infrastructure, social mobility, healthcare or education. All have to be integrated in a manner so that the country moves and there are economic reforms. It is a huge challenge for a country like ours, and we are doing many things in terms of policy, like GST which is one of the biggest economic reforms.

But what does smart enterprise mean to me? I would like to give you an example of a very young girl. Radhika did a two-month beautician's course through the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY). She travelled everyday 40 kilometres from her village in Madhya Pradesh, completed the course and then decided to start a parlour on her own. The PMKVY authorities decided to grant a loan of ₹1 lakh and other essentials required to

open a basic parlour. She set it up at her home and named it Radhika's Beauty Parlour. She did not get any customers initially, so instead she began practicing on her mother. When the villagers learned about it and word of mouth spread, she started earning ₹10,000-15,000 every month. She began training her sisters as demand increased. She generated employment and for me, this is also an example of a smart enterprise. A number of people can be trained in this way — it could be technical, digital or software. But everyone needs to be trained and the skill needs to be utilised.

Another example is of a chef, Kanhaiya. Taj Safari Resort Baghvan is located near Pench on the border of MP and Maharashtra. Kanhaiya, who works as a chef there, was a mason when the site was under construction. After the building was constructed, he was given four employment options. He chose to be a chef and Taj trained him to be so. He has come a long way since his mason days. This in itself is a very good example of innovation and smart enterprise, where one's skill is honed and put to use.

There is lot of scope for improvement in this unskilled category. But the real issue is that we look more towards education and not skill-based education. India is an enterprise which is moving ahead and we are lucky to have a smart Prime Minister, smart bureaucracy and smart residents. It's very difficult to define smart enterprise altogether. But small stories like that of Radhika and Kanhaiya are a part of my life.

Skill ministry is not an employment generation ministry. It exists to create employability through training to meet the system's demands. I am trying to do that job and the larger, more sophisticated, more complex things can always be achieved with you all as partners. 🙌