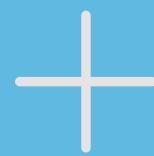




PCE PROJECT

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT





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INTRODUCTION

- Youth unemployment is a major global challenge.
- Millions of young people remain unemployed or underemployed despite their potential.
- The issue is not just a lack of jobs, but a mismatch between skills and industry needs.
- Technology, automation, and changing job markets demand new and updated skills.
- Skill development helps transform unemployment into opportunity.
- Empowering youth with the right skills leads to economic growth and social progress.



ARTICLE 1

TCS hiring, cybersecurity moves under US, UK lens

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Bengaluru: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is under scrutiny as lawmakers in both the US and UK press CEO K Krithivasan for answers regarding the company's employment practices and cybersecurity protocols. US Senators Charles E Grassley and Richard J Durbin from the senate judiciary committee wrote to TCS CEO K Krithivasan, raising concerns about the company's hiring practices.

The senators said that while TCS laid off around 60 employees at its Jacksonville office, it continues to file large numbers of H-1B visa applications. In the 2025 fiscal, TCS received ap-

US senators said that while TCS laid off around 60 employees at its Jacksonville office, it continues to file large numbers of H-1B visa applications

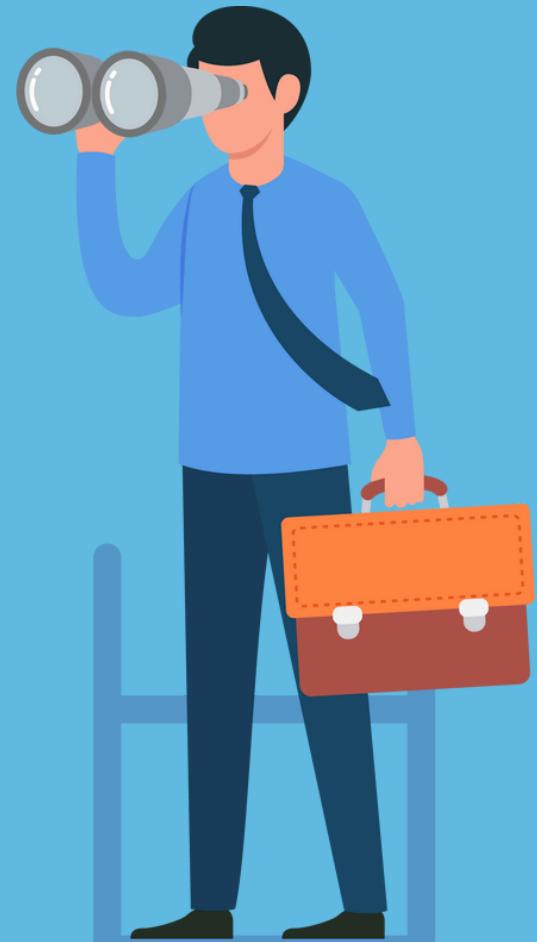
proval for 5,505 H-1B visas, making it the second-largest employer of newly approved H-1B beneficiaries in the US. The senators asked TCS to clarify whether it prioritises hiring foreign workers over qualified Americans during a period of layoffs.

"TCS is already under investigation by the Equal Opportunity Employment

Commission for allegedly firing older American workers in favour of newly hired South Asian H-1B employees. TCS is doing itself no favours by replacing Americans with H-1Bs during this investigation," the letter read.

TCS is also facing questions from UK Labour MP Liam Byrne, who wrote to Krithivasan demanding answers about the company's role in recent cyber incidents at Jaguar Land Rover, Marks & Spencer (M&S), and Co-op.

In his letter dated Sept 26, Byrne highlighted BBC reports that the M&S breach was triggered by a ransomware email "sent apparently using the account of an employee from TCS."



GLOBAL TALENT vs. LOCAL JOBS

The Situation:

- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) under scrutiny in the US & UK.
-

Key Issues:

• Hiring Conflict (US):

- Laying off local American workers.
- Simultaneously filing for thousands of H-1B visas for foreign professionals.

• Skills Under the Lens (UK):

- Linked to major cybersecurity breaches at client companies.
- Highlights the critical impact and high demand for cybersecurity skills.

Takeaways for Youth Employment & Skills:

- Global Competition is Real: Local youth are competing directly with a global talent pool.
- High-Demand Skills are Crucial: Proficiency in areas like cybersecurity is no longer optional—it's essential for job security.



ARTICLE 2

Only 29% agriculture graduates found jobs during campus placements in 2023-24

Desire for higher studies, industry-academia gap and students' poor theoretical application in jobs remain key challenges

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Despite a booming agricultural sector and a surge in student enrolment, India's top agricultural colleges are grappling with dismal campus placement at the Undergraduate (UG) level. NIRF data shows nearly 29% of UG students at top agricultural institutes got jobs in 2023-24 soon after finishing the course, while about 64% went on to study further that year. Meanwhile, AISHE records show a rise in enrolment in agriculture courses, which has doubled from 1.13,595 (2012-13) to 2,94,379 (2021-22). The issue is not a lack of jobs, but a disconnect between academia and industry, ill-equipped faculty, and the low-paying nature of entry-level jobs.

The primary reason for this gap, according to experts, is the significant faculty shortage and a lack of practical, industry-relevant knowledge among educators. "Faculty shortages and skill gaps significantly undermine placement readiness in agricultural education in India," says RC Agrawal, former deputy director general, Agriculture Education, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). "Faculty members at several universities lack specialisation in emerging areas such as precision-agriculture tools (drones, GIS, IoT), and are weak in agri-data analytics and fail to impart soft skills and entrepreneurship training to the students. This academic disconnect leads to a skills mismatch, with employers consistently reporting that graduates are unprepared for the modern workplaces," he adds. While

Universities need periodic curriculum revision to keep pace with changing technologies and employer demands

ICAR has modernised the curriculum in 2023-24, universities still need periodic curriculum updation to keep pace with rapidly changing technologies and employer demands. "ICAR continues to spearhead curriculum modernisation as per NEP 2020 guidelines through its 6th Deans Committee (2023-24) playing a crucial role in updating UG education in agriculture. However, we need periodic revision of the UG curriculum in agricultural education due to rapid technological advancements in the sector," says Agrawal, underlining the lack of training in modern lab techniques, data analytics, and essential soft skills among students, which restrict their employability.

Practical training components exist in colleges, but the outcomes are not defi-

ned. "Mandatory hands-on training and the Rural Agricultural Work Experience (RAWE) are part of most UG programmes; however, several internships do not convert into jobs. Besides, RAWE placements into sustained employment are not well documented. Internships give exposure, but many students still opt for further studies," says SV Suresha, VC, University of Agriculture Sciences, Bengaluru.

There is a gap in campus placement opportunities as it does not capture all employment routes. "Campus placement rates understate the employment picture because many students secure jobs directly through their contacts or by virtue of discipline-specific research. Placement as a metric is not as relevant for agriculture universities as it is for engineering," says Suresha.

Opting for a PG course is a

calculated career move driven by a desire for better pay and senior roles. "Most UG students are offered a starting salary of Rs 15,000-20,000 per month in the private sector, PG students at a managerial level get better packages ranging from Rs 5-12 lakh per year," adds Behal.

Policy Fixes

Students often face geographic challenges, as most agricultural universities are located in rural or semi-urban areas, where fewer corporate recruiters offer jobs. Moreover, the agricultural labour market is highly fragmented, with fewer large, organised companies compared to sectors like IT and finance. "Compared to sectors like IT or finance, private agribusiness investment and organised recruitment remain modest due to fragmented agricultural markets and supply chains," Agrawal adds.

Experts urged practical policy fixes that could be implemented quickly to strengthen employability. "A dedicated, well-staffed placement cell that actively build employer networks, run job fairs and provide systematic pre-placement training in digital tools, presentation skills and interview readiness can help students. Formal partnerships with agribusinesses for live projects, jointly supervised PG research and industry-sponsored internships can lead directly to jobs," says Agrawal. "To have better monitoring and transparency in placement data, publishable tracer studies and NAHEP/ICAR baseline-endline placement datasets are needed so policymakers can track if curricular reforms translate into livelihood gains," he adds.



Students opting for specialised PG



THE GRADUATE SKILLS GAP

The Problem

- Statistic: Only 29% of graduates found jobs on campus.
- Reason: A major disconnect between university curriculum and real-world job requirements.
- Missing Skills: Data analytics, practical application, and soft skills.
-

The Solution

- Modernize the curriculum.
- Integrate with industry via internships and projects.
- Target training on digital and soft skills.



ARTICLE 3

Maha lifts stay on hiring university faculty, changes rules to end crunch

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Mumbai: After years of stalled hiring and empty classrooms, Maharashtra has finally overhauled the way its public universities recruit teachers and officials. The state govt has cut the weightage of interviews from 40% to 25% and raised the share of academic record, teaching, and research to 75% in a bid to make appointments more transparent and merit-driven.

As per the last count, a total of 11,918 teaching posts have to be filled in state universities and affiliated colleges. But the govt is yet to give its nod for the recruitment process for affiliated colleges.

The announcement comes as universities reel from a shortage of staff. A hiring freeze imposed in 2012 left several thousand posts vacant; even after it was lifted, only a fraction were filled. Nearly 10 months after then governor C P Radhakrishnan halted recruitment, higher and technical education minister Chandrakant Patil signed off on the revised rules, aligning them with UGC guidelines.

"After multiple follow-ups and constant review meetings, we lifted the ban on faculty recruitment," Patil said. "This should come as a huge

KEY CHANGES IN RECRUITMENT RULES

Faculty recruitment (professors, associate professors, assistant professors)

75% weightage will be given to academic, teaching, and research (ATR) components
25% weightage to interview performance (down from 40%).

Selection criteria for assistant professors

► Of the 75 ATR marks, 55 will be awarded for academic records, determined by ranking of awarding institution

100% marks | Degrees from IITs, IISERs, IIMs, NITs, or foreign universities ranked within top 200 of QS, THE, or ARWU global rankings

90% marks | Degrees from institutions ranked in top 100 of NIRF or from foreign universities ranked 200-500 in QS, THE, or ARWU rankings

80% marks | Degrees from other state or Central univs



60% marks | Degrees from UGC-approved institutions

Interview weightage - 25%

The 25% interview marks will be distributed across following parameters:

- Subject knowledge & awareness of recent developments: **15**
- Language proficiency & ICT skills: **5**
- Logical reasoning & future plan: **3**
- Extension & NEP knowledge: **2**

relief for colleges and universities that were reeling under immense faculty shortage."

Higher education director Shailendra Deolankar has urged universities to step on the pedal and start the recruit-

ment process. Graduates of IITs, IIMs, IISERs, NITs, or top 200 global universities (QS, THE, ARWU) will get full marks; those from the top 100 in NIRF or 200-500 in global rankings will score 90%. Degrees from other state or Central universities will fetch 80% and UGC approved institutions 60%.

For university officials such as registrars, finance officers, or directors of sub campuses or boards of examination, a uniform 100 marks has been allotted, half of it for educational qualifications. Deans and directors will be selected under the same rules as professors.

The interview marks have been broken down into finer measures: 15 for subject knowledge and awareness of current developments, 5 for language proficiency and ICT skills, 2 for logical reasoning and future plan, and 2 for extension and NEP knowledge.

Selection panels must video-record interviews, seal them, and keep them confidential (they will be accessible only under court orders). For the state's universities, which have long been hollowed out by vacancies, the reforms may finally mean lecture halls with teachers instead of stopgap arrangements like getting faculty on a clock-hour basis, Patil said.



TEACHER QUALITY & YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY

The Problem: A Systemic Crisis

- ~12,000 vacant faculty posts in Maharashtra's universities.
- This directly hurts student skill development and job readiness.

The Solution: Merit-Based Hiring

- Recruitment restarted with a 75% weightage on academic & research records.
- New criteria specifically test for ICT, language, and reasoning skills in teachers.

The Goal: A Foundational Fix

- Better Teachers → Better Skilled Graduates → Lower Unemployment.



ARTICLE 4

No new single-gender schools in Maha; state backs co-education in bid to promote equality

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Mumbai: The state will no longer grant permission to start all-boys or all-girls schools in Maharashtra. The move, announced in a recent notice by the school education department, is aimed at promoting gender equality and mutual respect among students.

According to the department, co-education fosters “an environment of equality, mutual understanding and respect,” helping students develop social and communication skills essential for life beyond school. The notice also directs that any aided or government-run boys’ and girls’ schools op-

erating within the same premises will have to merge and function as a single co-educational institution under one registration number.

While the govt has said the measure will “prepare students for a real-world environment,” educationists say the transition could prove uneven across regions and institutions.

Neelam Yeole, headmistress of a former all-girls aided school near Pune, said her institution underwent a similar change more than a decade ago. “When I started this school in 1992, girls would travel from 10km away because we were the only girls’ school in

the area,” she recalled. “But by 2011, several co-ed schools had opened nearby and we hardly had any enrolments left. We eventually decided to become co-ed just to survive.”

Former joint director of education Bhau Gavande called the move “a practical one,” saying it would help rationalise the system. Adding a historical note, Madhav Suryavanshi of the Shikshan Vikas Manch said single-gender schools became popular in the 1950s to encourage parents to educate their daughters when women’s mobility and interaction with men were socially restricted. “Such schools remained popular until the

1980s, after which enrolments began declining,” he said.

However, Attar Ainul, director of education at Anjuman Islam—which manages over 50 institutions in Mumbai—and a former senior official with the Minority Development Department, cautioned against a uniform approach. “If we are compelled to make all institutions co-ed, many conservative parents will simply not send their girls to school,” she said. “Ideally, boys and girls should learn equally under one roof, but the emphasis must remain on education, especially when drop-out rates within the community are already high.”

CO-EDUCATION: TRAINING FOR THE REAL WORLD

The Policy

- Maharashtra will now only permit new schools to be co-educational.

The Goal: Develop Essential Soft Skills

- Why: To create a learning environment that mirrors the diverse, real-world workplace.
- What: Fosters critical skills like communication, collaboration, and mutual respect.

The Outcome

- Students graduate better prepared for the social dynamics of modern careers, improving employability.



ARTICLE 5



THE TIMES OF INDIA
6 OCTOBER 2025

Setubandha Scheme is a bridge to connect gurukuls with modern education

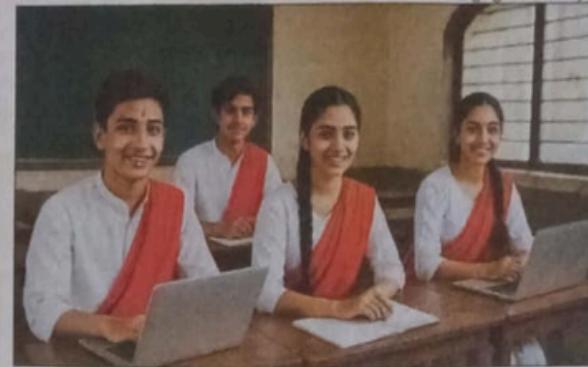
Students without conventional degrees will get to pursue research at IITs

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The gurukul students will get recognition and research opportunities at mainstream colleges. To promote gurukul education and recognise talent, the government has introduced a scholarship programme, which will allow bright students to highlight their knowledge. To boost this, the government has launched the Setubandha Scholar Scheme 2025, partnering with the Central Sanskrit University (CSU) and the Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) Division.

This will connect India's fast-fading 'shastric knowledge' and traditional practices with the new-age education and research demands.

The inaugural shortlist features 222 students and research scholars representing disciplines such as *Vyakarana* (Grammar), *Vedanta* (Vedas), *Nyaya* (law), *Mimamsa*, Performing Arts, Temple Architecture, *Jyotish* (Astronomy), Ayurveda, and Political Science. The initiative aligns with NEP 2020, which emphasises multidisciplinary research and the integration of IKS into mainstream education. The initiative will safeguard India's intellectual heritage, with over 40% of scholars specialising in Vedic studies and around 30% in language traditions. "For the first time, these traditional students are being recognised not merely as custodians of India's past, but as torchbearers of its knowledge future. Setubandha ensures that no student is left behind due to financial hardship or the absence of formal certificates," says Prof Srinivasa Varakhedgi, V-C, Central



Scholars trained in the *guru-shishya* parampara will now receive structured academic certification, and financial aid

Sanskrit University, New Delhi. "The initiative is designed to bridge traditional gurukul education and modern university degrees, hence the name 'setu,'" says Shivdev, guru, Pondhe Gurukul, Dehradun.

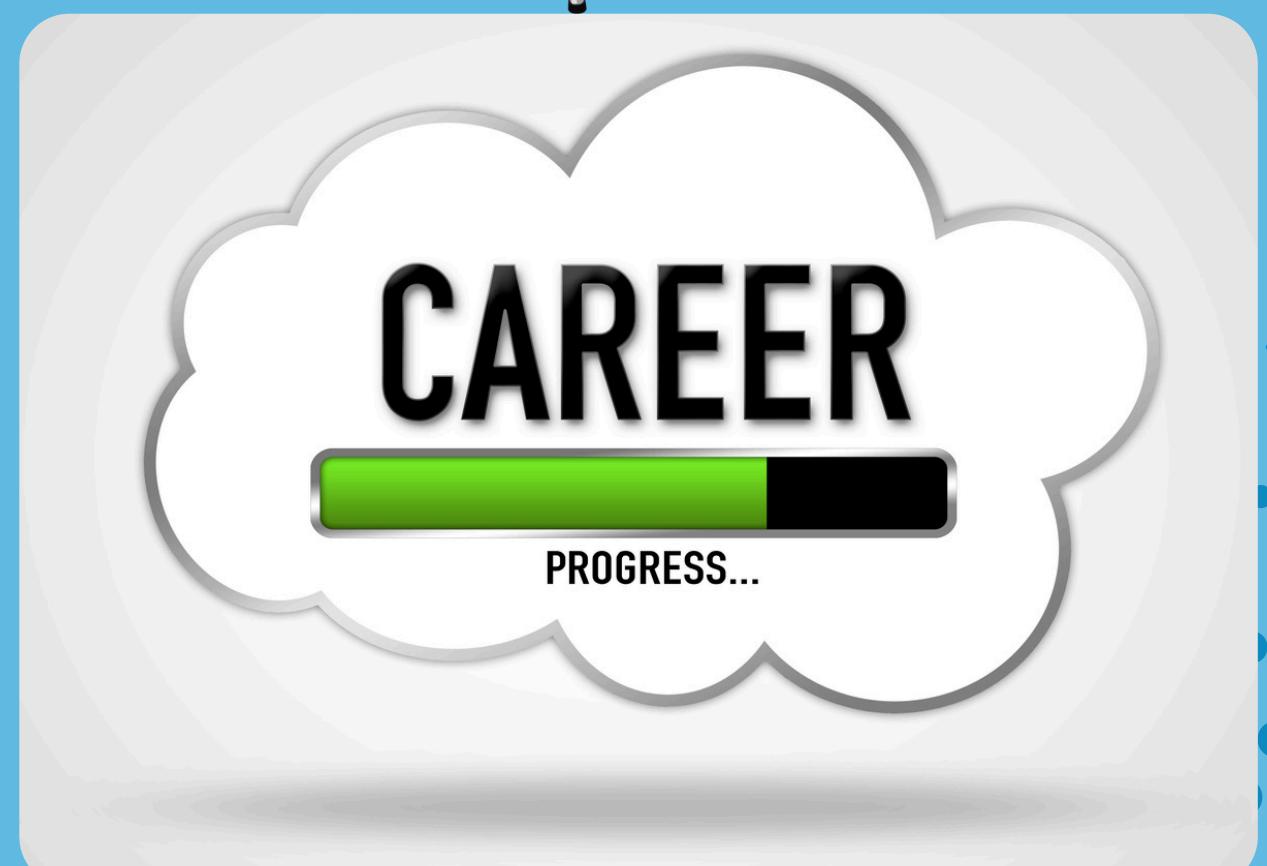
Gaining Importance

Students are hopeful that the initiative will bring gurukul education to the centrestage of the academic framework. To be eligible, applicants must be under 32 years of age and have completed at least five years of study in a gurukul or under a traditional guru. While no formal degree is required, candidates must demonstrate excellence in traditional or classical knowledge. The shortlisted candidates will have to undergo an interview round for final selection.

"The scheme is designed to provide recognition to gurukul-trained students, who do not have conventional degrees such as BA, MA, or PhD. This will help in integrating Sanskrit, Shastras, Yoga, and Karmakanda into the mainstream higher education sys-

tem," says Shivdev. To ensure academic rigour and holistic development, the Setubandha Scheme incorporates a dual mentorship model, pairing each scholar with a mentor from CSU and an expert from a designated IKS institution. The scheme has transformational scope. Prof Varakhedgi says, "The scheme opens the doors of premier institutions such as IITs to gurukul students who lack conventional degrees, giving them the chance to pursue cutting-edge research. For the first time, their deep traditional learning will find structured pathways into India's top research ecosystems."

The programme also brings in an unprecedented scale of financial support. The two-year PG programme offers Rs 40,000 to 47,500 per month, while PhD researchers receive scholarships starting from Rs 65,000 per month in the first year, which rises to Rs 70,000 in the second year, and Rs 75,000 in the third year when the thesis is submitted.



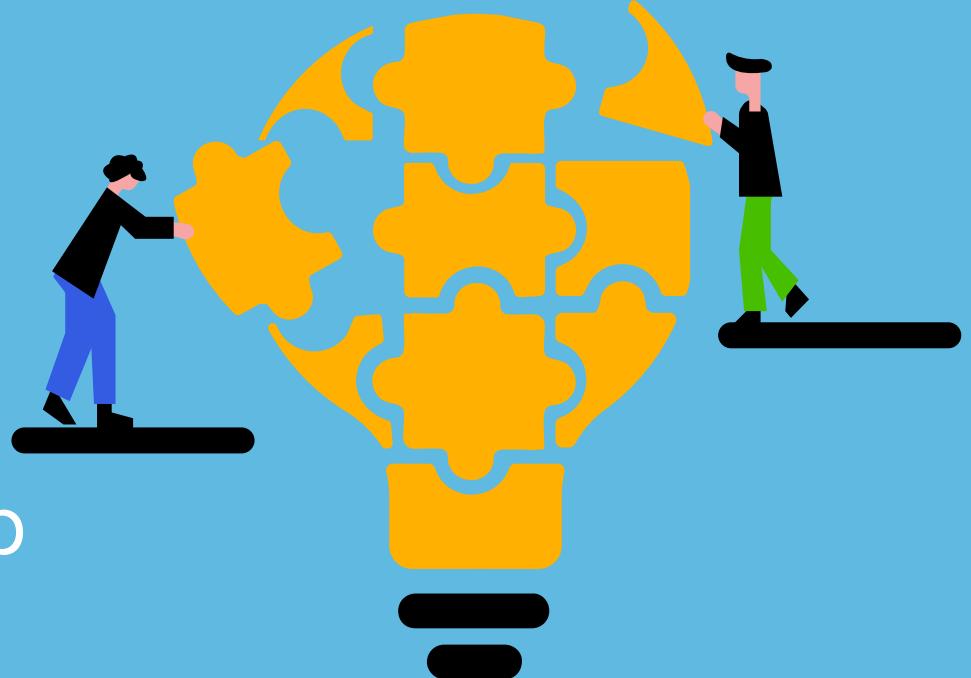
THE SETUBANDHA SCHEME: NEW PATHWAYS FOR TRADITIONAL SKILLS.

- **The Problem:**
 - Youth from gurukuls have deep skills but no formal degrees, locking them out of jobs.
- **The Solution:**
 - A "bridge" program providing scholarships for research at top institutes like IITs.
 - Values demonstrated traditional expertise over conventional paper qualifications.
- **The Impact:**
 - Validates non-traditional knowledge as an employable skill.
 - Creates direct career paths for a previously excluded group of youth.



CONCLUSION

- Youth unemployment cannot be solved by job creation alone.
- Skill development, education, and innovation are key solutions.
- Equipping youth with technical and soft skills builds adaptability and employability.
- Collaboration among governments, educational institutions, and industries is essential.
- Bridging the gap between education and employment ensures sustainable growth.
- Skilled and empowered youth secure their future and strengthen the nation's economy.



*Thank
you!*