

Blog: IP and Youth: Innovating for a better Future

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IP and Youth: Innovating for a better future

The alarm didn't go off, so I was running late for college. I decided to book an Ola Cab for easy transport. Time went by pretty quick as I busied myself with my assignments. At about 1pm, my stomach grumbled and I settled on ordering some Samosas from Zomato. Ola Cab, Zomato, Cred, Paytm are household names now. And the best part is that they're all Indian Start-Ups, so the feeling of Atmanirbhar Bharat has made its' way into everyone's heart.

The 21st century has been curious one. What we had imagined, was flying cars and robots, but instead we have pandemics and wars. An intriguing development took place while everyone was busy with their monotonous lives. Honorable Finance Minister, Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman, remarked that India had the youngest start-up founders, and 72% of the total start-ups were managed and owned by people below the age of 35.

Indian Youth has taken a decisive lead, in almost every sector. From chess to space to tech, we have prodigies who have proved their mettle, time and again. We are seeing more and more people in their 20s willing to take risks, and having the courage to step out of their comfort zones. And, that is why, we live a much more comfortable life.

Under the Start-Up India flagship over 50,000 start-ups have been recognised and 5.5 lakh jobs have been created this initiative. What is 'Start-Up India'? Well, it is a scheme launched by Honorable Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, in 2016 to promote and nurture Indian Start-Ups. The idea of promoting Swadeshi goods and tech, isn't rooted in 'hatred for others', or 'plain xenophobia'. We wish to become Atmanirbhar because we want our countrymen to have the best possible choice. If an unprecedented calamity occurs, like a pandemic, we should be able to hold our own, without having to rush to others for help. Being self-reliant is the need of the hour, it's what our leaders like, Netaji Bose have taught us.

Intellectual Property is any form of intangible property, such as ideas, designs, concepts, et cetera. Thoughts can't be locked up in banks to safeguard them, and can be easily stolen, which is why stringent laws are brought in to protect the individual and the idea. The current scenario is a worrying one. People blatantly steal ideas at the drop of the hat, which makes the youth vulnerable.

What was currently witnessing in morning it's a bloom of startups and unicorns all around, and this can be attributed to the surge in innovation Indian minds. In the past year alone, we have seen a rapid growth, an unprecedented spike in registration of patents. In,

December 2021, India became home to 79 unicorns, with a total valuation of \$260.5 billion. It brings me great joy to note that, 42 unicorns with a total valuation of \$82.1 billion emerged in 2021 alone, which is a record in itself.

We have left no stone unturned, and no territory uncharted, from hotels to banking to management scientific research and even public transport. At all of this is possible because the present generation of our country is very tech savvy and is open to taking risk which will reward them in future. When you club the spirit of entrepreneurship of our youth with the strong support provided by the Central Government, we get a recipe for success. As they innovate and work, to create a better future, it also becomes essential that we protect our youth from malpractices and other external enemies. India has a series of laws which protect intellectual property.

When I was 6, I used to get hurt on the playground almost every week. I used to sob all the way to home, and my grandma used to apply 'haldi', onto my wounds. I'm sure, you have all done the same at least once in your life. But there were two gentlemen, who tried to patent this remedy, which has been used since time immemorial.

In 1995, Soman K. Das and Harihar Kohli of the University of Mississippi Medical Centre, applied for a patent on 'Medicinal Uses of Turmeric'. They were promptly granted the patent, as it was proven that turmeric had the ability to accelerate healing of issues. However, the larger point is that, we have been using turmeric for medicinal purposes for centuries, and so, Mr Das and Mr. Kohli are simply late to the party, and have no right to claim ownership over a universally accepted fact.

The Indian Government, with the help of CSIR (Council of Scientific and Industrial Research), challenged the patent in American Court, and won. They showed centuries old texts of Ayurveda to prove that what Das had presented as a 'novelty', was a widely known and accepted ruse. Their patent was scrapped off shortly afterwards. The basic premise of the debate is that people shamelessly latch onto someone else's creation and discoveries, because they feel that they're superior to the other and can get away with it.

Prominent Fashion Designers suffer from theft too. Everyone copies their style and claims it as their own, which results in decades long court cases and a river of money being wasted.

In order to stop such malpractices, a series of laws were brought in, to protect Indians and their ideas. Some of them include:

1. The Patents Act
2. The Trade Marks Act
3. The Copyright Act
4. The Designs Act
5. The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration & Protection) Act
6. The Semiconductor Integrated Circuits Layout Design Act

Most of these acts have been amended several times, to keep up with the times. Breaking the law, will result on imprisonment and much more. Theft of ideas is just as much of an offense, as the theft of a wallet or theft of a handbag. Scientific advancements being stolen

by miscreants and trade secrets being leaked are a major concern. Indian justice system is harsh on those who try to make others miserable. Indian youth continues to achieve greater heights, and I assure you, the future is in safe hands.

As I wrap this blog up, I would also like to place on record that the modern world has opened gates for a new dawn. For the first time, I have seen an environment where the youth can become active stake-holders in every field, and I thank The Central Government for that.