IISF will bring spirit of collaboration between science and industry: PM Narendra Modi

New Delhi, Dec 22 (India Science Wire): Prime Minister Narendra Modi officially inaugurated the sixth edition of India International Science Festival (IISF) 2020, today, through virtual mode. The four-day festival is being held on digital platforms till December 25. In his inaugural address he said that celebrations and festivals have been a part of India’s character. “We are celebrating science and the human spirit of inquiry and innovation through this festival that look at the past with pride but want a better future. I hope this science festival will bring spirit of collaboration between science and industry” PM said.

In his address he also pointed out how the education system is being reformed to let young minds listen to their own calling and look beyond the textbooks to develop the spirit of inquiry and scientific temper. Citing the newly framed education policy after a gap of 30 years, PM expressed confidence that the policy reforms will go a long way to create a pool of top quality teachers and help researchers in the emerging fields. “Earlier the focus was on outlays but now it is on outcomes. Earlier the focus was on textbooks but now it has shifted to research and application. To compliment the changes that have been made in the new education policy, the government has started Atal innovation Mission. As a part of this mission many tinkering laboratories are being established in schools that are proving to be new innovation playgrounds. Similarly the Atal incubation centers have been established to develop the ecosystem for research and development in higher education” PM Modi said.

He mentioned that the biggest long-term challenge was to retain youngsters in pure science field. For this the government has announced several scholarships at various levels. “I want to invite the global community to invest in India as we have the culture of openness and transparency” said the PM. In his address he also said that all the efforts are aimed at making India the most trustworthy center for scientific learning. “I wish you all keep on learning and may science energize the entire Indian and global community” PM concluded.

International Science Film Festival of India (ISFFI) is a major attraction of IISF. This year the ISFFI has received 634 science film entries from 60 countries. “Every year the film festival is growing and now
we also feel the need to give some workshop session and handholding to the upcoming science film makers. There is a huge potential and we can share our experience to nurture them” said Mike Pandey, Filmmaker and ISFFI jury chairman.

Speaking on the occasion Dr Harsh Vardhan, Minister of Science and Technology, Minister of Health and Family Welfare and Minister of Earth Sciences said that these films have a huge variety as they are based on themes like science, technology, awareness related to COVID-19 and India’s efforts to be self-reliant.

Dr Uy Hoang, President, Public Health Film Society, United Kingdom said that science communication was poised to face the challenge of bringing people together and film makers have started addressing this issue and hopefully it was going to be achieved.

“We have a good experience of holding film festival as before this we conducted the 10th edition of National Science Film Festival virtually and for this film festival we are equally enthusiastic” said Dr Nakul Parashar, Director, Vigyan Prasar. Nimish Kapoor, the Coordinator, ISFFI said that all efforts were being made to harness the potential of the medium of films to popularize science. “We will screen more than two hundred films online, during the IISF. The title of the award winning films will be announced on December 25” he informed.

The Department of Science and Technology (DST), in collaboration with other central ministries, has been organising the annual IISF event since 2015. The theme for this year’s festival is ‘Science for Self-Reliant India and Global Welfare’. (India Science Wire)

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