

Murthy Trashes AI as Hype; asks IT Top Guns to Make 'Sacrifices'

PTI

Mumbai: Corporate thought-leader and Infosys cofounder NR Narayana Murthy has flayed the high wage hikes that senior managements have been apportioning to themselves when the software industry is in trying times and has advised them to make "sacrifices" to maintain the common man's faith in capitalism.



"There is this whole thing about automation and artificial intelligence. That is much more hype than the reality, at least in the software services"

NR NARAYANA MURTHY
Cofounder, Infosys

Conceding that times are difficult for the IT services sector, Murthy dismissed the commonly-attributed threats of artificial intelligence and automation as "more hype than reality". Terming the trend of no hikes for juniors and freshers as "worrisome," Murthy rued that the senior-level people have been taking handsome hikes.

"I think that is not the way to make capitalism acceptable to the larger masses in a country that has huge poverty," he said, speaking at IIT-Bombay over the weekend. "If we believe in capitalism, if we believe that is the best solution for the country to move forward, then the leaders of capitalism will have to demonstrate self-restraints in apportioning to themselves the part of the benefits that come out of running companies," Murthy, who most-

ly flies the economy class, added. Murthy, a strong proponent of "compassionate capitalism" since his days in the company, did not make any reference to Infosys. It may be noted that over the past few months, Murthy had gone public with his displeasure over senior executive compensation at Infosys.

Speaking before the students at the prestigious institute, Murthy said in the last seven years, the salaries of freshers in the software industry have stayed stagnant while the same for senior-level employees have grown by up to 1,000%. "If all of us make sacrifices, then the youngsters will understand," he said.

He said the IT sector is passing through a trough that is cyclical in nature and may occur once a few years. One of the reasons for this is the investments in IT done by the developed world clients in the past, he said, adding they are waiting to reap the benefits of the same before starting to invest again.

However, change in the tech landscape, where automation and artificial intelligence are said to be making deeper inroads, was dismissed by him.

"There is this whole thing about automation and artificial intelligence. That is much more hype than the reality, at least in the software services," Murthy said.