PM Modi visits Google campus, shown key projects

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Silicon Valley: Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday visited the Google campus where he was given a tour of some of the latest products and forward-looking researches being done by the search engine giant.

Modi asked that Khagaul to be pinpointed on Google Earth when he was given a glimpse of the unique tool. Khagaul near Patna is where the great ancient astronomer Aryabhatta had an observatory.

"Projects for progress," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Vikas Swarup said of the various projects which were shown to Modi by Google CEO Sunder Pichai.

Pichai explained navigational, safety and other uses of Street View and Google Earth to Prime Minister Modi.

"It is a visit to Google Guru," Modi said as he reached its campus from nearby Facebook headquarters.

Modi was given a tour of four critical projects and their value for the 'Digiatal India' campaign.

Another project that was shown to Modi was Project Iris, smart lens that measure glucose levels.

Later, Modi participated in a hackathon at Google. Many youngsters in their 20s had come from India to participate in it.

Before leaving Google, Modi had a group photo with its top officials.

In his brief remarks, Modi stressed the need to "encourage Hackathon culture" in India so that the youth are inspired to find solutions to the country's problems.

With social media becoming a part of today's lifestyle, Modi said people spend a significant amount of time on it.

"This is just the beginning," Modi said, adding that in the years to come he expects this to bring qualitative change in life of people.

Sundar Pichai, Google CEO announced that Google would provide high-speed Internet services at 100 Indian railway stations and would expand this to another 400 by next year.

Social media, he said, has become a strong and new power of democracy.

He urged Google employees to help him meet the challenges being faced by India including poverty.

- PTI