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**NIIT**

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NIT UNIVERSITY



Business Today  
May 29, 2011

COVER STORY Africa



# This Time for Africa

As corporate India slowly wades into Africa, it discovers a continent full of opportunity, peril and the Chinese. By KUSHAN MITRA with RAJIV BHUVA

**T**he runway at Kinshasa's N'Djili airport is not the smoothest in the world, and as the big Boeing glides over the threshold on a sunny April morning, the wreckage from an air crash just the day before is there for all to see. Guarding what remains of the crashed Bombardier CRJ-100ER jet are several blue-helmeted United Nations soldiers. All of them are Indians from the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, some of several thousand Indian troops across the vast expanse of the Democratic Republic of Congo in central Africa.

A decade ago, that would have been that. Thousands of Indian and Pakistani troops working side-by-side earning foreign exchange in a troubled part of the world, an undiscovered continent where tribal wars and poverty still thrived. It is not as if the wars have ended, the Ivory Coast was in the endgame of a brutal civil war in April. But things are changing.

Step out of the Kinshasa airport complex and

Indian visitors are greeted by a huge hoarding bearing the familiar red-and-white signage of Bharti Airtel, India's biggest phone firm. Just that it is in French. And then driving down the Chinese-built highway into the city, there are more signs of Indian business in a country that is 10 hours flying time from Mumbai: Mahindra Scorpios and Tata Motors buses, occasional but not rare.

In shops across the continent, the India story is playing out. Emami's 'Fair and Handsome' fairness cream for men and Dabur hair care products vie for space on shop shelves with drugs by Lupin, Dr Reddy's Laboratories and Ranbaxy. Bajaj-made bikes, NIIT training classes, Lava mobile phones and Godrej soaps are increasingly in demand in several countries in much of the continent. And even Kirloskar pumps, a brand whose name has become a generic term for pumps.

This is the new frontier for global businesses and Indian companies are not going to be left behind in the gold rush to prime their growth and



resources to fire their factories. Indian companies, be they in agriculture, telecom, retail, infrastructure or pharmaceuticals, see Africa as the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. To be sure, companies such as Kirloskar and those from the Tata group have been operating, maybe relatively quietly, for decades and India's connections with the continent go back further still – to the large Indian Diaspora and the political ties from the days of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The size of the African opportunity is astounding, a continent of 53 countries (soon to be 54 when South Sudan comes into existence) and a population of over a billion people. Its gross domestic product, or GDP, counted around \$1.6 trillion in 2008, the latest year for which the World Bank has compiled data, with \$860 billion worth of consumer spending. A June 2010 study, *Lions on the Move*, by the McKinsey Global Institute predicts that Africa's GDP will be around \$2.6 trillion in 2020.

A big chunk of that growth will come from mining natural resources: from the oil wells in Sudan and the copper mines in Congo, to uranium in Niger, coal in Mozambique and ferro-chrome in South Africa (see *Out of Africa*). McKinsey, a consulting firm, points out that almost a quarter of economic activity in the 15 countries that make for 85 per cent of Africa's GDP, is accounted for by resources.



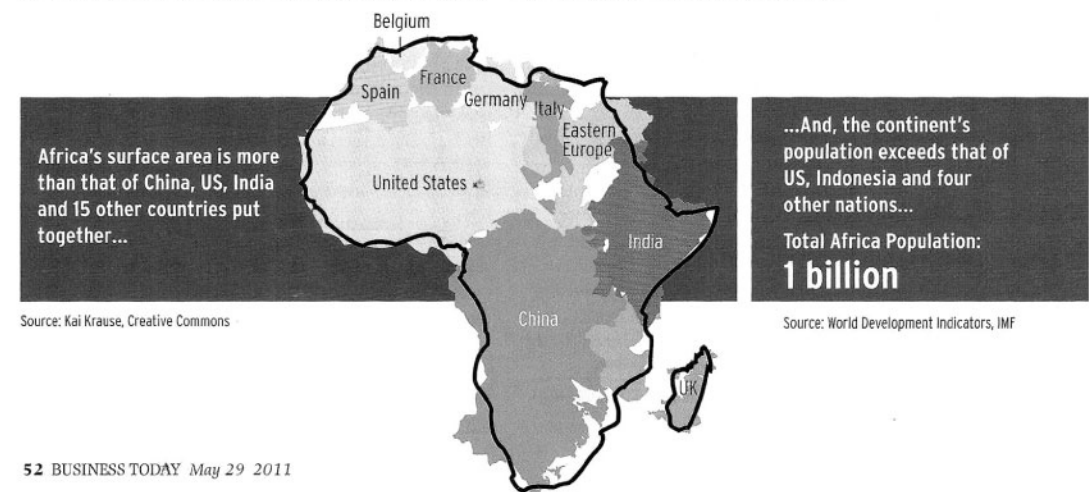
Indian-owned: Workers at Jose Prayaken's

**T**here is little denying the one clear and present threat Indian interests and companies face: the Chinese, who are ahead from Algeria to South Africa, from Somalia to Senegal.

P.J. Botha, Vice-Chairman, African-Asian Society, a Johannesburg-based think-tank, believes that India did not leverage its strong political ties with Africa. "Compared to China, India was hesitant about investing into Africa. While India has opened up over the past decade, the Chinese have a 10-year headstart on India, especially when it comes to cornering

## Africa in Perspective

Africa's size can be mind-boggling. The dark continent is home to a billion people and in terms of land mass, it is second only to Asia. As a market though, it is poor – the continent's GDP is just \$1.6 trillion



Source: Kai Krause, Creative Commons



uniform factory in Maputo, Mozambique

resources," he sums up. The Chinese, he argues, come with their state-owned enterprises, backed by the Chinese treasury. "They are not scared of failing, because there are no shareholders to account to."

The opportunities have attracted the Chinese in hordes over the last decade with some estimates putting their number in Africa on business and work at over a million. Ethiopian Airlines' flights between Beijing, New Delhi and Addis Ababa carry twice as many Chinese as Indians. People talk in whispers of how "neo-colonial" the Chinese are becoming in their ambitions and are funding those in power – a charge that Botha describes as being spread by opposition politicians.

Even so, on the ground, the grumbling is

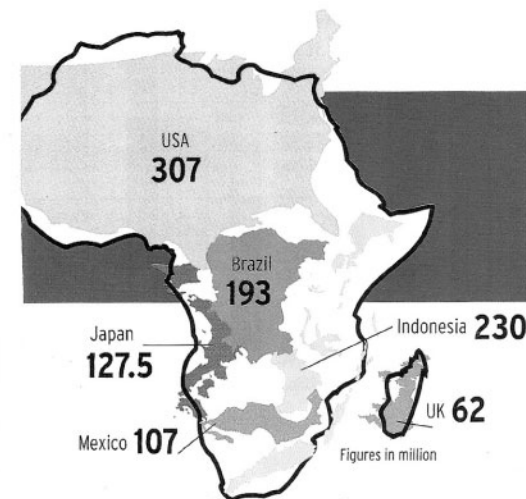
no longer polite or local. An agreement to build roads, railroads, hospitals and universities in DR Congo in a \$6 billion deal allowed the Chinese to operate mines with a potential of 10 million tonnes of copper and 600,000 tonnes of cobalt. The International Monetary Fund, led by French politician Dominique Strauss-Kahn, railed against the deal saying it would increase the central African nation's indebtedness. This further incensed African countries against the 'colonial' mindset of the West. Oldemiro Baloi, Foreign Minister, Mozambique, said almost as much at an April meeting with Indian journalists in Maputo: "It appears that the West is jealous of China and India and they see Africa moving away from their sphere of influence."

But should China and India be even referred to in the same breath? Not quite. Indian High Commissioner to South Africa, Vijender Gupta, has a telling point, "While we have given a \$250 million line of credit to African countries, the Chinese have over \$5 billion to spend, and the fact of the matter is that money talks." In Mozambique, for example, Indian company Jaguar Overseas, part of the O.P. Jindal Group, is constructing its first building in a science and technology park in Manhica with a \$25 million line of credit from the Export-Import Bank of India, or Exim Bank. Back at capital Maputo, a glistening new airport terminal has been financed three times as much by the Chinese Exim bank.

Still, there are some toe-holds Indians have in Africa. ONGC Videsh has invested \$2.5 billion in Sudan oil fields, the future of which seems secure now after an initial scare when Sudan split into two in a referendum

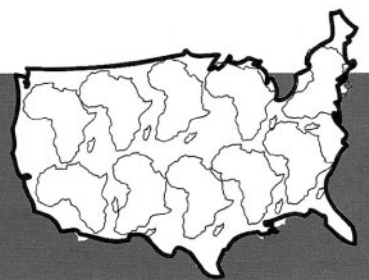


**At 4.9% compound annual growth rate of its GDP, Africa is the world's third fastest growing region**



...But it is one of the poorest regions of the world; its GDP is about one tenth that of the US's

USA \$14.1 trillion  
Africa \$1.6 trillion



Source: World Development Indicators, IMF



**AFRICA TODAY**

- Total population: **1 billion**
- Population under 15: **41%**
- Adult literacy: **62%**
- GDP income per capita is **10th** of world average
- Around **45%** living on \$1 a day
- Mobile phone subscribers: **37%**
- Population in urban areas: **40%**
- Collective GDP (2008): **\$1.6 trillion**
- Combined consumer spending (2008): **\$860 billion**

**AFRICA TOMORROW**

- Total population: **1.4 billion** by mid 2025
- Total population: **2.1 billion** by mid 2050
- 128 million** households with discretionary incomes by 2020
- Consumer spending will be **\$1.4 trillion** by 2020
- Collective GDP will be **\$2.6 trillion** by 2020
- Around **47%** of Africans will be living in cities by 2025

Source: Ernst and Young

## Out of Africa

The continent is resource-rich and presents tremendous scope for growth



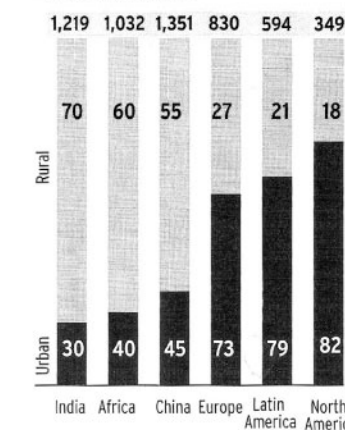
Source: USGS, Minerals Yearbook 2008

earlier in 2011. Besides its coal mines in Mozambique, Tata Steel has a massive ferro-chrome facility near Durban, South Africa. Tata businesses in Africa also include telecom, hotels and others – all of which, at last count, totted up to some \$600 million in revenues for the group. Essar's Firdhose Coovadia, Resident Director, Africa and Middle East, says: "Africa can provide access to raw material and new markets/consumers for some of our existing businesses." Indian power and steel companies such as Coal India, Steel Authority of India, Tata Steel and JSW Steel are importing coal from both South Africa and Mozambique by shiploads to fire thermal power plants and steel blast furnaces.

There are other opportunities in Africa in which Indian businesses are uniquely placed to take advantage of given that they have dealt with them back home in India. Health, for instance. Infant mortality in countries such as Sierra Leone is as high as 123 per 1,000 births and average life expectancy elsewhere, say, in Zimbabwe, is just 45 years. For many then, Africa could be the emerging India market equivalent in pharmaceuticals in the

Africa is almost as urbanised as China and has as many cities of 1 million people as Europe

Rural vs. urban population by region, 2010 (%)  
Total population (million)







next decade as the demand profile there transitions from retrovirals to treat HIV/AIDS and antibiotics, to drugs to treat diabetes or cardiac disorders. Paul Anley, Founder and CEO of Pharma Dynamics, majority controlled by Lupin since September 2008, estimates the market for generic drugs – the Indian pharmaceutical industry's mainstay – in South Africa alone at \$4.5 billion today, up from \$1.4 billion in 2001.

Indians are stepping into infrastructure businesses they have excelled in. Wired phones and Internet connections are few and far between in sub-Saharan Africa and, although the continent has some 600 million mobile phones, companies such as Bharti Airtel are driving in full thrust in the 16 African countries they operate in. In early 2010, when it was buying Zain's operations there, Manoj Kohli, now head of Bharti Airtel's African operations, told *Business Today* of the massive opportunities in Africa. "Tele-density in large parts of Africa is below 25 per cent, there is a lack of landline telephones and mobile calling rates are incredibly high." The idea, he said, was to take Bharti Airtel's operating model in India of outsourcing everything – from network to towers management, from billing to customer service – on a pay-on-use basis to Africa. The model has helped it make operat-

ing profits of 30 per cent on customer billings of as low as ₹100 a month in India. In contrast, in some parts of Africa, phone users pay \$18, or at least ₹800, a month.

Then, there are infrastructure projects that are increasingly not headed the way of Chinese companies. R.B.S. Singh, head of engineering firm L&T's African operations, believes that the infrastructure build-out required for Africa will be so big that the Chinese cannot swallow it all. "It is not just the Chinese who are coming here, the Brazilians, French and British are also vying for contracts, and we are interested as well."

Air travel in all but a few African countries is conducted on older aircraft that have retired from Western skies. Often travellers between different countries in west and even central Africa have to route their tickets through Paris. Transport and telecom account for about one-tenth of Africa's GDP and are growing at nearly eight per cent annually, according to McKinsey, but they will have to grow faster for many years to meet the demand. Likewise with wholesale and retail, agriculture, manufacturing, banking and utilities. (See *Land of Opportunity* on pg 62.)

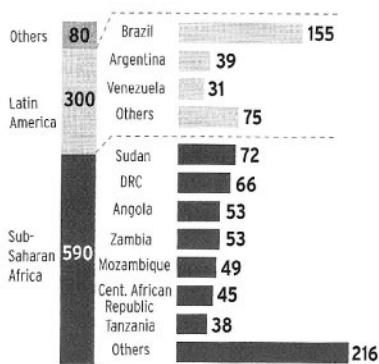
"Africa today is where India was 40 years ago. In the coming decade, Africa will drive growth for the global markets," says Sai Ramakrishna Karuturi, the chairman of the



**In Liberia 94.8 per cent of the population lives within \$2 per day; in Burundi, 93.5 per cent**

#### Africa possesses about 60 per cent of the potentially available cropland in the world

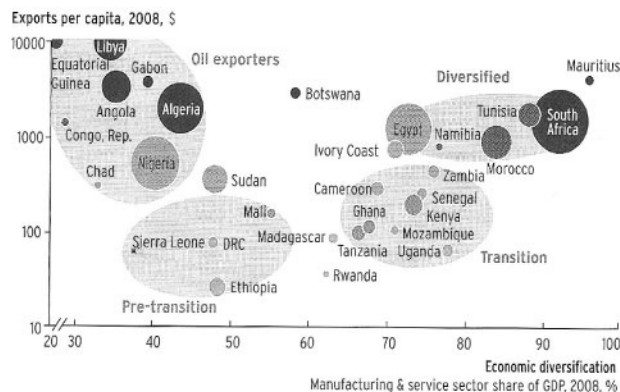
Additional available cropland, 2009\*  
Million hectares



\*Cropland defined as land producing output greater than 40% of maximum yield under rain-fed conditions, excluding forest areas.

#### Diversified economies, oil exporters will lead Africa's growth

Size of bubble proportional to GDP  
GDP per capita  
\$500 \$1,000-2,000 \$2,000-5,000 \$5,000



**The fertility rate in Niger (7.1) is the highest in the world. Africa's population will double to 2 billion by 2050**

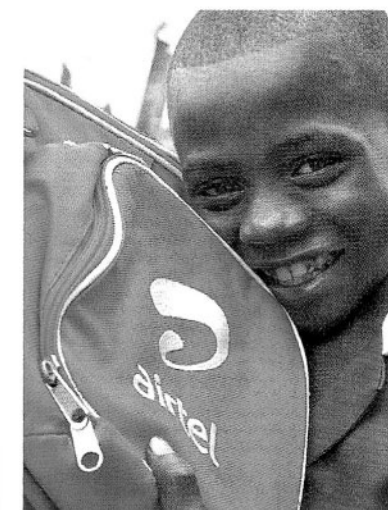
Bangalore-based Karuturi Group, the world's largest exporter of cut roses, who has made Ethiopia his first home – he spends two weeks a month there. Ethiopia today accounts for 90 per cent of the group's business (₹450 crore in April-December 2010), up from 15 per cent five years ago. But a bigger opportunity beckons: McKinsey estimates Africa has 60 per cent of the world's uncultivated arable land, making it ripe for a green revolution of the kind that changed Brazil and large parts of Asia. Karuturi seems to have its plans lined up. It expects to have 100,000 hectares of land under cultivation in Ethiopia by the end of 2011 growing paddy, palm and sugarcane, with another 665,000 hectares under lease from the Ethiopian government. In all, that is farmland roughly 12 times the size of the city of Mumbai.

Market entry strategies, though, are easier discussed in a cigar lounge than executed. It can be a long wait. "It takes time to develop a company in Africa. One cannot come into Africa and expect to be big overnight, which is why we have been working here for so long," says Raman Dhawan, Managing Director, Tata Africa Holdings, the holding company for African interests of the Indian conglomerate. In the continent since 1977, mostly based in Johannesburg, he has watched apartheid, military juntas, civil wars and democratic

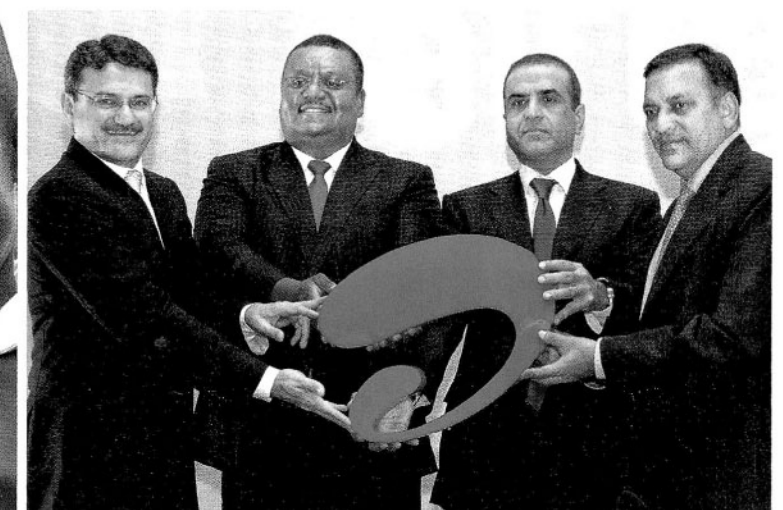
elections run past as the Tatas shipped steel, software services and, yes, the ubiquitous Tata truck to Africa.

At around 600,000 vehicles a year, the South African car market is much smaller than India's, but Tata Motors and Mahindra & Mahindra have found success. Even Congo and Mozambique, much behind South Africa in development, have hit the spot for Indian car firms. This is despite the fact that Chinese cars are often cheaper – sometimes even more than used Japanese and European cars. "If you look at the manner in which the Chinese compete, competition is primarily on the price front. Chinese brands rose to prominence after 2000, wherein they literally priced everybody out of the market. But the 2008 downturn has exposed their shortcomings. Several manufacturers have folded up and are not even offering after sales service anymore," says Pravin Shah, Chief Executive, International Operations, Mahindra Automotive, which sold 3,500 vehicles in Africa last year.

Elsewhere, at Godrej Consumer Products, the African business already accounts for around 11 per cent and is expanding rapidly. "The velocity of growth is already in double digits and the African business will outpace that growth," says Shashank Sinha, President, International Operations. Since 2006, the company has made three acquisitions in Africa, spanning hair and personal



**Brand building:** Airtel handed out schoolbags in Ghana



**Full support:** The Airtel brass launch its new logo in Zambia. (From left) Manoj Kohli, Fayaz King of Airtel Zambia, Sunil Mittal and Akhil Gupta





Per capita  
gross  
domestic  
product  
is as low as  
\$160 in  
the Democratic  
Republic of Congo

care products, and is charting distribution beyond South Africa and Nigeria into western, eastern and southern parts of the continent.

Even in DR Congo, a country with a per capita income of \$160, Nokia and Samsung, rather than cheap Chinese brands, dominate the phone handset market. Ironically, some Indian brands that get their devices made in Guangzhou or Shenzhen are tasting success as African customers gravitate away from Chinese brands. The founder and director of Noida-based Lava Mobiles, S.N. Rai, says of Chinese brands: "They have little brand recognition, no customised applications and next to no after-sales service. Brand is very vital over here, because I feel the African market will evolve."

As that evolution takes place, the case of Bajaj Auto, which sells its bikes and three-wheelers across Africa with the help of a Dubai-based distributor, is instructive. On the streets of Maputo, Bajaj RE three-wheelers are the local 'taxis' and on streets across Western Africa youth aspire for stylish motorcycles like the Bajaj Pulsar. To crack the 'bike-taxi' market – as in Goa and Bangkok, they use bikes as taxis in Lagos – the Pune company offered the bike-taxi operators a few weeks trial of Bajaj bikes. "They were amazed at the fact that our bikes didn't need a weekly oil change like the Chinese bikes and next to no weekly service or spares," a senior

Bajaj group executive said recently, requesting anonymity.

But, this is not to say that Indian brands can expect smooth sailing. Case in point: Bharti Airtel's struggle to turnaround its Africa operations. The African unit narrowed its losses in the January-March quarter to ₹87.8 crore from ₹2,160 crore in the preceding three months. But the effort to get the business to turn in millions in profits will take at least a few more quarters of hard work, as Chairman Sunil Mittal, who has been personally sucked into the transition, is discovering.

Part of that stretch comes from the paucity of talent in the continent. Bharti Airtel has had to parachute so many of its senior managers into Africa that gripes are often voiced at its Indian unit that the "generals are missing here". The talent crunch is good news for people like Vipul Prakash. The chief executive of recruitment firm Elixir has seen demand for professionals in African countries skyrocket over the past few years. "We have placed around 400 Indians mainly at middle management levels over the past few years," he says. "We are placing people from Sri Lanka and the Philippines as well."

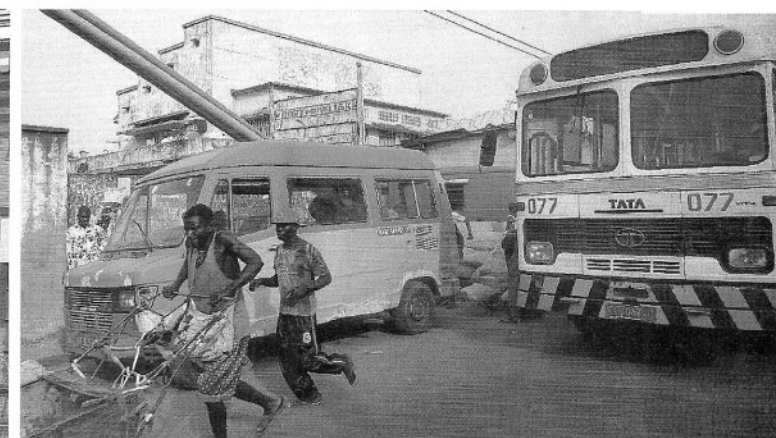
Others like training firm NIIT are addressing this by setting up centres in six African countries with plans to expand further. NIIT has been taken aback by the demand. "In Nigeria, we had a scholarship exam, and the turnout was so large we filled up an entire



Crowd puller: An NIIT scholarship programme in Nigeria had so many applicants the company had to rent a stadium



Toehold: Mahindra's offices at Centurion, South Africa



Déjà vu: A Tata bus wriggles through chaotic traffic in Kinshasa, DR Congo



By 2020,  
128 million  
households in  
Africa will have  
more than \$5,000  
annual income

football stadium," says P. Rajendran, Chief Operating Officer. The news travelled west to neighbouring Togo. Rajendran was taken aback when in Delhi at a CII-Exim Bank meet on Africa late in March, Prime Minister Gilbert Fossoun Hounbo held him in a bear hug and said, "I want you in my country." For good reason: unemployment is high in Africa, which has 500 million people of working age (defined as between 15 and 64 by McKinsey).

Despite all such Indian investment pouring into Africa – a CII official expects it to top \$25 billion in five years – few companies have actually taken advantage of India's single-biggest advantage in Africa: the Indian Diaspora there with roots dating back to 1860. Across the continent, Indians hold important positions in African society. Like Rashid Patel, a Gujarati from Baroda who moved to DR Congo with his young wife almost 40 years ago, and survived the purge against Indians initiated by dictator Mobutu Sese-Seko.

"After years of turmoil, there is peace now and all the children are going to school instead of carrying guns," he says at the wheel of his Scorpio, navigating the chaotic streets of Kinshasa. And business has never been better. Like many Indians in Africa, Patel runs several businesses, including ground handling services at N'Djili airport. New Delhi, looking for support on the ground, has made him honorary consul in Lubumbashi, DR Congo's second-largest city. It helps that such Indians have the confidence of the new ruling classes.

And, because they speak the local language and employ locals, their relations with the local population are excellent. "I believe that I am a result of the Indian entrepreneurial spirit; wherever there is money to be made, we will end up there," says Patel, chuckling.

Further south in Mozambique, Jose Prayaken, a former Exim Bank employee in charge of southern Africa, represents a class of businessmen with mid-size empires. Prayaken's Mozambique Holdings makes police and military uniforms, collects road tolls, sells Mahindra and Ashok Leyland vehicles and is trying to establish a power plant. This Indian hailing from central Kerala works so closely with the local government that he is often a part of the official entourage on diplomatic trips. "Several of the Indian companies have waited too long to come to Africa, but it is better late than never," Prayaken says.

With Africa's consumers expected to spend over \$1.4 trillion by 2020, Indian firms cannot afford to miss what is often called the last frontier in global business. No matter the continent suffers from a litany of problems and several of these are urban legends – corruption, crime, epidemics, dictatorships, tribal wars and piracy – a dogged push by companies, backed by a sustained Indian diplomatic initiative and the local Indian presence there, will help further Indian interests in Africa. China might be winning the battle but the war for Africa is far from over. ♦

ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY E. KUMAR SHARMA AND K.R. BALASUBRAMANYAM



India Today (Aspire)  
National  
May, 2011

Guest Column

# TECH TREK TO SUCCESS

Imaginative and technical, the field of engineering continues to attract the best brains of the country



**RAJEEV SHOREY**  
President,  
NIIT University, India

Albert Einstein once, in a tribute to engineering, famously said, "Scientists investigate that which already is; Engineers create that which has never been." Despite the vast number of career options available today, engineering continues to remain a favourite with students. This is because this field offers plenty of opportunities in a varied range of disciplines, and engineers are required in almost every organisation.

Engineering has evolved over the years to offer many more branches to students. Apart from the traditional branches—civil, mechanical and electrical, students can now choose from computer science, information and communication technology, electronics and communication, aeronautical, automobile, ceramics, instrumentation, chemical, biomedical engineering, environmental, textile, marine, production and sound engineering to name a few.

It may be a good idea for an engineering aspirant to pursue a core field, such as electrical, electronics and communication, computer science,

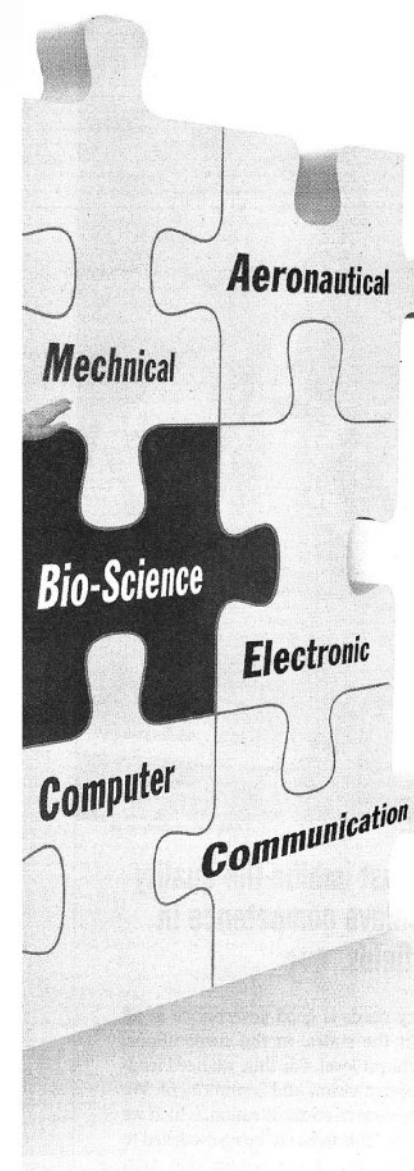
civil, mechanical during graduation. This way the student will have more job opportunities after graduation, and can later choose a specialisation.

Considering India's robust growth rate, engineering students can look forward to increasing opportunities. Increased penetration of technology will lead to new employment avenues in outsourcing (KPO, LPO), legal, aviation, automotive, healthcare, supply chain, logistics, among others.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) will increasingly catalyse inclusive growth. Broadband wireless access is undergoing a sea change, creating the infrastructure for the delivery of new, data-intensive services. This is one reason that during the last few years, electronics and communication, computer science and information technology have been popular.

The IT industry is back in reckoning after a brief period of slowdown. According to latest industry reports, Indian IT-BPO (excluding hardware) industry is expected to grow by 19 per cent to reach US\$ 76 billion in the fiscal year 2011. This industry will add 2.26 lakh personnel this year, to take the total workforce strength to 22.3 lakh.

Owing to a rapid growth in Information Technology, the field has become a quintessential aspect of our life. As a result, there subsists a huge demand for computer engineering professionals for the development of



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hardware components, new communication systems, software – both system and application software.

Branches such as environmental engineering, food and healthcare engineering may offer consistent job opportunities as these Industry fields are more immune to global slow-down. While doing a specialisation discipline (such as aeronautical, automotive, petroleum and ceramics among others), students should focus on building solid deep foundation in the subject.

their research and development facilities in India, leading to a huge demand for trained research or technical professionals in the corporate sector. The severe shortage of highly-skilled technical professionals is being acutely felt across all industry sectors, making M.Techs and Ph.Ds a favoured lot.

Today, working people in the private or public sector can acquire a bachelor's engineering degree through distance education. Quite a few institutions in India are now

A career in any stream of engineering helps nurture an analytical and curious mind and provides excellent job opportunities.

After completing graduation, a student can apply for a job, or opt for post graduation in his or her field of specialisation and then pursue a Ph.D. if the student is interested in a research career. Successful completion of a B. Tech in computer science and engineering equips students for great careers in software engineering.

A variety of focus areas allow each student to customise their learning to target a wide variety of career options. This includes research in computer science, applying computational techniques to solve problems in other basic and applied science (physics, chemistry, biosciences and electrical engineering to name a few), developing scientific and mathematical software, system software development such as device drivers and operating systems, commercial software development, embedded systems, mobile application development, industrial process control, bioinformatics, IT and mathematics applications in finance and IT-assisted education.

There is a popular but incorrect perception that there are not too many corporate openings for those pursuing research. However, India is increasingly emerging as a research and development hub with a large number of companies setting up

offering graduate degrees through distance education. Thanks to the rapid growth of information communication technology, it is now possible for students to get to hear and learn from thought and opinion leaders across the world.

Engineering is a field that requires practical application of theoretical knowledge. Thus, a strong grasp of core subjects such as mathematics, physics, chemistry and bioscience is important in order to innovate and think out of the box.

Learning is not merely about finishing courses and getting grades or gaining disciplinary knowledge but it is 'learning to learn', learning how to solve unstructured, open-ended problems that have no unique and pre-determined solutions. People with a research bent of mind and curious disposition make good engineering professionals.

In summary, a career in engineering from a good institution helps nurture an analytical and curious mind. It provides excellent job opportunities and opens the doors to a career in research and development. The engineering profession is rich and truly rewarding and ensures long-term stability and a great return on investment.





Hindustan Times, New Delhi  
May 4, 2011

## Single form to help simplify MBA admissions



HT Correspondent

■ htreporters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** For students who want to do a Masters in Business Administration (MBA), the application process just got easier. HT Campus.com has launched MBA common application form, a single application form to apply to multiple MBA colleges.

Hindustan Times' education portal, HTCampus.com, has tied up with many MBA colleges across the country to simplify the application procedure for MBA aspirants through the concept of a common application form.

Through this platform, students can avoid the process of filling in multiple, costly physical admission forms, and just make valid applications to multiple colleges with only one

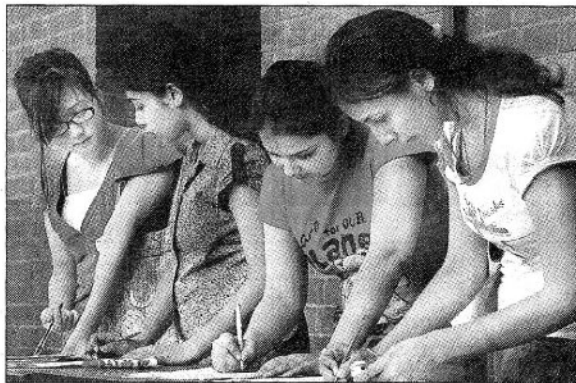
online form, accepted by popular colleges such as IIPM, WLC, NIIT University, Skyline Business School and Centum.

"We're starting with MBA common application, but will soon extend this to many other fields including engineering and graduate courses," said Amit Garg, Business Head, HT-Internet.

"We're certain that this platform will provide huge benefits to students and colleges alike. Students often cut down on the number of colleges they apply to because of the costs and hassles involved in procuring applications directly from multiple colleges," Garg added.

"With our online system and tie-up with colleges, the common application simplifies the process greatly," he said.

The service requires students to login to HTCampus.com, fill an online application form, select colleges they want to apply to and make a nominal payment. Students can also track the status of their application and colleges can communicate directly with students through this system.



■ HTCampus.com, has tied up with many MBA colleges.



Hindu Business Line, New Delhi  
May 27, 2011

## OPINION His passion: Teach, teach, teach

T C A Srinivasa Raghavan  
Chitra Narayanan

**M**r Rajendra Pawar, the current latest chairman of Nasscom (National Association of Software and Services Companies), has a lean and efficient look.

After all, if you have your fingers in so many policy pies, efficiency — like greatness is forced upon you.

Leanness, however, has to be acquired, which is perhaps why when we invited him to lunch at the spanking new Leela Hotel — it squats like a lotus in a grimy pond of shoddy government 'quarters' — he chose a fresh lime soda, tomato soup (albeit with cous-cous) and a seafood ravioli pasta.

### TABLE TALK

He could have chosen the Qube's speciality pizza, wood-fired and what-not. It costs 'only' Rs 9,999 because it has Canadian lobster, thyme scented mascarpone, Iranian beluga caviar and frozen blue goose vodka chaser.

Sadly, no such luck. The NIIT Group Chairman and Co-Founder, who recently turned 60 and was awarded a Padma Bhushan for pioneering IT education in the country, does not see himself yet as a backbencher with an advisory role in his company.

"Absolutely not. Not now when we are in the midst of transformation at NIIT Technologies as well as NIIT Ltd and in high growth phase for both companies," he says.

What sort of transformation, we ask?

### BUSINESS REJIG

"In 2006, instead of being a tech-driven company we decided to make NIIT Technologies a domain-driven one. We took a hard decision to opt out of many businesses and go only for select chosen verticals. We got out of almost 45 per cent of the business then. Today, 87 per cent of the businesses we do are in chosen verticals," he says.

Similarly, NIIT, the learning business, is now venturing into newer areas such as cloud campuses. Old is not gold any longer.

With recent events at Infy on our minds, we segue onto the no-no question. "Is there a succession plan at NIIT? Who will take on the mantle after him, co-founders Vijay Thadani, P. Rajendran and NIIT Tech CEO Arvind Thakur?"

"That's not an issue. We have very good leaders coming up," he says quickly. "But one should never underestimate the complexities of succession," he adds. We nod in complete understanding.

### PET PROJECT

We eat while he talks about his pet project — the new NIIT University at Neemrana in Rajasthan — and which is about as designer a label you can get. The picturesque university on the Aravalis dovetails neatly into another of his pet ideas — that of making the Delhi-Jaipur highway into a knowledge corridor the likes of MIT's Route 128.

The University itself, created as a post-industrial knowledge era campus, will be work in progress for the next 100 years, he insists. Talk about the long view.

Right now, though, it offers courses in computer science and informatics but going forward will have liberal arts courses, too.

"Behavioural sciences will be a big thing for India," predicts Mr Pawar and adds how both his daughters Urvashi and Unnati have chosen psychology.

His son Uday, an IIT-trained engineer, has moved to Bollywood. "He worked on Sudhir Mishra's *Yeh Saali Zindagi* — very good film," he says, in a proud-dad voice.

### PAWAR, PANWAR AND PARMAR

How come you are called Pawar if you are from Jammu, we ask. We get a short lecture on the origins of Pawars.

"Pawars are originally Agnikula Rajputs from Madhya Pradesh — a lot of them went to Maharashtra, some went to Uttar Pradesh where they became Panwars, some to Himachal



From pioneering IT education to setting up a picturesque university in the Aravalis, Mr Rajendra Pawar is a well-travelled veteran on the knowledge highway.

where they became Parmars," he explains.

"My ancestors came to Akhnoor. My granddad was the village head. My father joined the army and was in J&K State Forces and with Maharaja Hari Singh, while two of my uncles stayed in the village farming."

That also explains Mr Pawar's closeness to Mr Karan Singh, who is NU's Chancellor and has chosen the university's motto, 'AnadiAnant' (without beginning and without end).

### VITAL VITTAL

We drag the conversation back to Nasscom.

Perhaps influenced by all that food around us, Mr Pawar says "Nasscom is like a well-baked cake with reasonable icing on top. We don't have to re-bake the cake."

But will there be a lot of lobbying with government involved now at Nasscom or is this industry treated more leniently? "The oft quoted joke is that thank god, the government was sleeping when we were building

bow room and people are keen to collaborate," he says.

### THREE PRIORITIES

His three priorities, he says, are to provide visibility to the emerging companies — the SMEs of the IT sector. "We want to remove the covers and give them a platform for growth, advocacy." The second priority is to flag off IT for India. "Many States have created IT departments and have an IT policy now, but we want to drive adoption by accelerating the supply side," he says.

As an anecdotal example, he points how there could be a small IT company in Karnataka that has digitised land records of the State and has experience in this domain. But this may not be known to another State government looking for a similar vendor. "Nasscom now has an e-governance portal where 155 companies have put up their works on governance," he says.

And the third priority is the skills sector — to scale that up significantly, Nasscom is working in tandem with National Skills Development Corporation on that.

### SWEET TOOTH

We ask if Nasscom's Vision 2020 for the IT industry to contribute up to 9 per cent of India's GDP an achievable target?

"Do you know that the \$225 billion size projection for year 2020 for the Indian IT-ITES industry — in that 80 per cent will be from businesses that don't even exist today," says Mr Pawar. He means the less tapped verticals such as healthcare, utilities and new areas like cloud computing.

By now, thanks to the severe air-conditioning, we have almost frozen. The time has also come to order dessert. Our combined girth makes us pause but Mr Pawar is not having that. "I have an ultra-sweet tooth," he says as he orders a *ras-malai* and eats it with gusto.

We give in and order home-made ice-cream, but at the end of the big meal, only Mr Pawar retains the lean and hungry look.





## Outlook Business, National May 14, 2011

### NIIT

"NIIT is people," says P Rajendran, founder and COO, stressing that his company is not just about profits and numbers. It has been so since inception, he claims. "We were the first to introduce many concepts that one takes as the norm nowadays," he says. These include flexible working hours for women, working from home, taking back former employees (a taboo earlier), paternity leave for men and establishing a casual workplace atmosphere.

20

### Why Employees ♥ NIIT

**Lifetime recognition:**  
Conference rooms named after consistent top performers.

**Health and well-being:**  
Employee counselling, yoga@office, gym facilities for employees and families.

**Global leadership programme:** High performers work on live projects.



BHUPINDER SINGH

The use of terms like 'sir' or 'ma'am' was banned and everyone is on a first-name basis. This was done to remove hierarchies, unquestioning attitudes and other such constraints that plagued most Indian establishments. "When you call someone by their first name, it instantly cuts away fluff and brings one straight to the business at hand," says Rajendran.

What is also remarkable about the company is its ability to groom people for leadership. "Eighty per cent of NIIT's leaders are home grown," says Asim Talukdar, Senior VP, NIIT. Some even joined as faculty at the centre level and now head separate business units," he says. For instance, Bharati Bashyam joined the company 18 years ago as a counsellor at an NIIT centre. She is now the deputy GM for the company's contact centre. Bashyam rose to her current designation after working through functions like sales, online learning services, customer relationship management and education. The company is now trying to put in place a mobility facilitation centre. "Managers will have to ensure that people under them move after two years. If that has still not happened in four years, then these people will be mandatorily moved to other functions," says Rajendran. It's all part of making NIIT a more agile company, and grooming leaders from within its ranks.

—Taneesha Kulshrestha



## The Tribune, New Delhi May 11, 2011

# India's best employers

FMCG major Hindustan Unilever, telecom player Bharti Airtel and state-owned NTPC were adjudged among the best employers in India by leading global human resources management company Aon Hewitt.

Aon Hewitt in its seventh 'Best Employer in India Study 2011', done in partnership with magazine *Outlook Business*, has listed the country's 25 companies that provide the best working environment for employees.

Hindustan Unilever is put on top of the list as the best employer, followed by Aditya Birla Group, LG Electronics India, Godrej Consumer Products, Bharti Airtel, NTPC, Becton Dickinson India, Aircel, Wipro and Marriott Hotels India.

According to the study, despite wide variance in industries and company profiles, the firms share



some common winning traits such as — alignment of people practices to the overall business strategy of the firm and an environment which creates a positive employment experience.

"Best Employers in India represent organisations that

have done an outstanding job of aligning people strategy with articulated business strategy. "The best have been able to offer a compelling career proposition to their employees in a high performing work envi-

ronment that differentiates needs, expectations and drivers of different employee segments," Aon Hewitt India Project Director Rakesh Malik said.

These companies are achieving superior business results, through better execution of people programs, more investment in high quality staff with higher average salary and more rounded skills development.

The top employers include companies from various sectors such as banking, manufacturing, IT & ITes, telecom, hospitality, FMCG and consumer durable, with staff ranging from less than 1,000 to over 7,000 employees.

Other companies that figure on the list include Kotak Mahindra Bank, Scope International, Dr Reddy's Laboratories, Whirlpool of

### CAREERCATURE

Sandeep Joshi



You have seen 22 IPL matches and everytime the team that you betted on won. Do you think this is your achievement for appraisal?

India, Maruti Suzuki India, Canon India, Ford Group, Tata Teleservices, Mindtree, NIIT, Tata Steel, Jubilant Foodworks, Cognizant Technology Solutions, First-Source Solutions and Aegis. The companies were judged on the various criterion including — organisation score on a combination of the overall engagement and alignment scores, scores on leadership, diversity and development. — PTI





Hindustan Times, Jaipur  
May 3, 2011

EACH ONE, TEACH ONE

## Execs, homemakers do their bit

Vimal Chander Joshi

vimal.joshi@hindustantimes.com

**GURGAON:** Youths from villages are learning useful skills such as computers and communicating in English, thanks to generous residents of the Millennium City who have committed a few hours of their busy week to teach them.

Many youths from the economically weaker section of society have also found jobs. Dinesh Kumar, 19, a salesperson at Tata Chroma in Palam Vihar, learned a lot from the volunteers and he still seeks help whenever required.

"I didn't know how to appear for an interview, but now I am confident to compete with well-educated people," said Kumar.

Some of the volunteers are corporate employees while some are homemakers. Vandana Baliga, 46, a resident of Sector 46, teaches English to a group of 11 children in Jharsa village. An NGO also runs a small



An executive takes lessons for village youth.

HT PHOTO

informal school at the village where teenagers are trained for jobs.

"Earlier, I was apprehensive about the response I would get from the children. Then I saw them reciprocating, which was quite exhilarating. You feel satisfied when you help them learn new skills," she said.

Alka Goel, 42, a senior manager working with an electronics firm, used to take out time till recently to teach the underprivileged

during weekends.

"I mentor employees in the company where I work, and in the same way I shared my knowledge with the village children and tell them about the power of being positive," said Goel.

NIIT Foundation is one of the organisations that runs a school and draws volunteers from all walks of life. "We have people from the hospitality sector and even the military. Some students also help us," said Rinky Sharma.

The Times of India, Chandigarh  
May 2, 2011

### TRAINING PROGRAMME

NIIT Uniqua-Centre for Process Excellence, a joint venture of NIIT and Genpact, has launched a specialised technical and soft skills training programme for the police personnel of UP. The objective of the training programme is to offer technical and soft skill training to police personnel, which will help them efficiently handle calls made to the emergency number (100).

The training capsule will include training on call opening, call handling, taking down required information, providing a complaint number to the caller, giving emergency assistance through basic advice on phone and alert the local PCR van at the time of emergency. NIIT Uniqua will train 25 Agra police personnel over a one-month period. These people will also be trained on soft skills and etiquette.

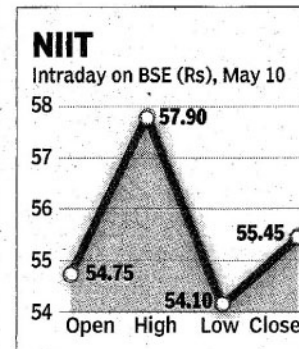


Financial Express, Pune  
May 11, 2011

Economic Times, Bangalore  
May 11, 2011

## NIIT profit surges 53% on new delivery models

All round improvement in business and creation of a new delivery model to increase enrollments made IT training solutions provider NIIT post a 53% increase in its profit after tax (PAT) for the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2011 at ₹37.8 crore compared with ₹24.7 crore posted in the year ago period. Global system wide revenues at ₹516.8 crore, rose 9% from ₹475.6 crore in the corresponding quarter of last year. Sequentially, the PAT increased from ₹12.9 crore in the trailing quarter while revenues increased 24% from ₹414.7 crore from December 31, 2010. On the individual learning-business, the company is creating a one-NIIT programme as part of which all of its centres will offer all products besides creating a new delivery model to increase enrollments. The firm's individual learning solutions (IT) recorded a 19% increase this quarter. On the school segment side, NIIT has exited many government schools which became capital intensive and is now focussing on the private school segment. For the full year ended March 31, 2011, NIIT's PAT rose 31% to ₹92.2 crore from ₹70.2 crore in the previous year while revenues jumped 6% to ₹1,907 crore from Rs 1,796 crore. NIIT gets 47% revenues from India and 25% from the US and Europe.



NIIT Q4 Net Up  
53% at ₹37.8 Cr,  
Declares 75%  
Dividend



OUR BUREAU  
NEW DELHI

IT training company NIIT on Tuesday posted net profit of ₹37.8 crore, up by 53% year-on-year basis, for the quarter ended on March 31, 2011. The company also declared 75% dividend amounting to ₹1.50 per share.

"All round improvements in business led to increased revenue of 10% and a 53% increase in PAT (profit after tax) during the quarter," said Vijay K Thadani, Chief Executive Officer, NIIT.

The company recorded consolidated net revenues of ₹323.7 crore during the quarter, up 10% compared to ₹295 crore posted last year for the same period.

For the year ended on March 31, 2011, NIIT posted net profit of ₹92.2 crore, up by 31% compared to ₹70.2 crore reported for Financial year 2010. Individual Learning Solutions (IT) recorded a 19% increase in IT Career enrollments on net revenues of ₹122.1 crore for the reported and placements of NIIT students grew by 43% in the same quarter.

ILS (IT) net revenues for the year grew 10%, backed by growth of 66% in job-oriented diploma programs and 23% growth in the China Business.

Corporate Learning Solutions offering of the company recorded net revenues of ₹152.6 crore during Q4, coupled with an order intake of \$40 million and a closing order book of \$98 million.

School Learning Solutions of NIIT recorded net revenues of ₹37.4 crore during Q4. Thadani said that NIIT signed up 196 private schools during the quarter, growing by 94% over the same period last year. The company de-emphasised its focus on government school business citing it as a capital intensive business.

"India has 1.2 million approximately of which 300 thousand are private school. Therefore private school market is big opportunity for us," Thadani said.

During the year 581 private schools were added, growing by 76% over last year.

"Government school sector is also large but it is very capital intensive. Terms of engagement of government schools with private agencies varies from state to state and sometimes these become very capital intensive," Thadani added.

India continued to be the lead contributor in annual revenue of company, followed by US, European Union.



Hindu Business Line, Hyderabad  
May 11, 2011

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

# NIIT net up 53% in Q4

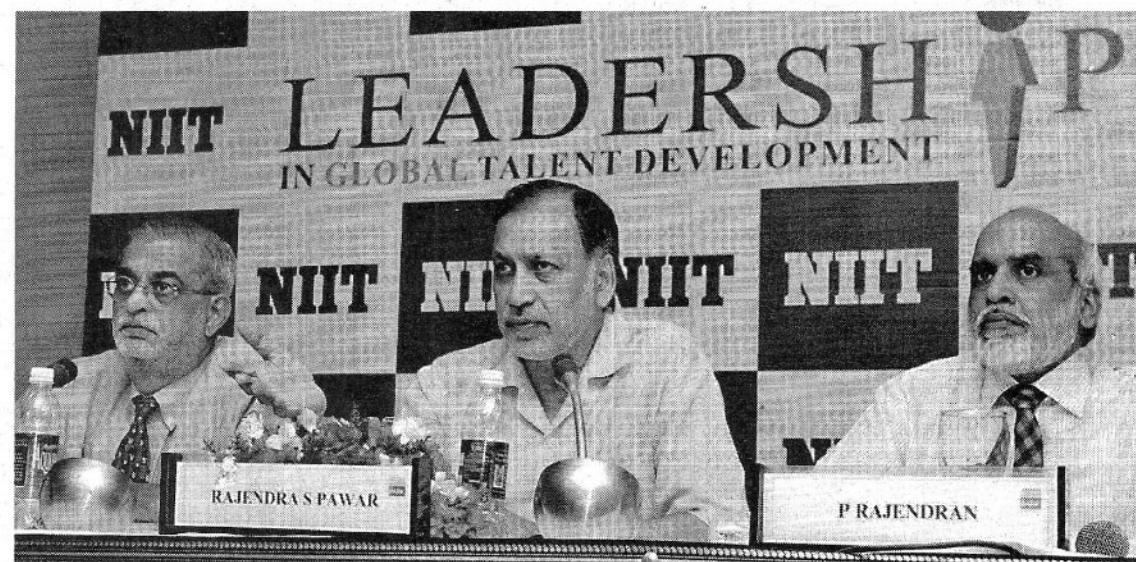
Cites all-round biz improvement, impact of extraordinary income

Our Bureau

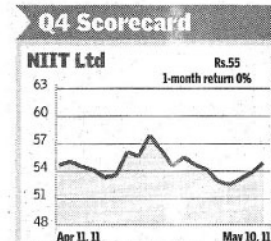
New Delhi, May 10

NIIT Ltd on Tuesday posted a 53 per cent rise in consolidated net profit for the fourth quarter ended March 2011. NIIT attributed the net profit growth to "all-round improvement across businesses" and impact of extraordinary income accrued during the quarter.

While NIIT does not give an annual guidance, its Chief Executive Officer, Mr Vijay Thadani, said the company expects its healthy order



Mr Rajendra S. Pawar, Chairman, NIIT, flanked by Mr Vijay K. Thadani (left), Chief Executive Officer, and Mr P. Rajendran, Co-founder and Chief Operating Officer, addressing a press conference in the Capital on Tuesday.



	Quarter ended		%
	March 31		growth
	2010	2011	YoY
Net revenues	295	323.7	10
Profit after tax	24.7	37.8	53

book to translate into an accelerated growth for various businesses, including individual, corporate and school learning solutions.

### FLAT MARGINS

"Our margins have been nearly flat for fiscal 2011. But we expect the operating margins to improve in the

coming quarters, as the process we had undertaken for reorganisation and re-prioritisation of our business, is complete," Mr Thadani said.

Profit after tax (net profit) stood at nearly Rs 38 crore for the fourth quarter of fiscal 2011 compared with Rs 25 crore a year ago. Net revenue at Rs 324 crore is 10 per cent higher than the same period previous year. The Earnings Before Interest, Tax, Depreciation and Amortisation (EBITDA) stood at Rs 40.5 crore, translating into EBITDA margin of 13 per cent.

During the quarter, there was an impact of extraordinary income (Rs 14 crore) on account of divestment of 'non operating assets' — essentially a project (facility) that the company had initially proposed at Greater Noida. It subsequently decided in favour of consolidating operations in Gurgaon, instead.

### STRONG SHOWING

NIIT's Individual Learning Solutions (IT) clinched 19 per cent increase in IT career enrolments on net revenues of Rs 122 crore.

Placements grew 43 per cent in the fourth quarter, reflecting strong industry absorption. New businesses led by Finance & Management Training recorded 28 per cent growth in revenue during the March quarter.

Corporate Learning Solutions — focusing on online learning products and managed training services — posted net revenues of Rs 153 crore in the fourth quarter, coupled with order intake of \$40 million and a closing order book of \$98 million.

Amongst other businesses,

School Learning Solutions recorded net revenues of over Rs 37 crore during the March quarter. It signed up 196 private schools in Q4, 94 per cent higher than the same period last year.

### TO PAY 75% DIVIDEND

For the full year, NIIT's net profit touched about Rs 92 crore, 31 per cent higher than the previous fiscal. The annual net revenue touched about Rs 1,248 crore, 4 per cent higher than fiscal 2010. The Board has also proposed a dividend of 75 per cent, amounting to Rs 1.50 a share.



The Times of India, New Delhi  
June 6, 2011

# FUTURE DYNAMICS



BY G RAGHAVAN

Chief Executive, Career Building Solutions, NIIT Limited

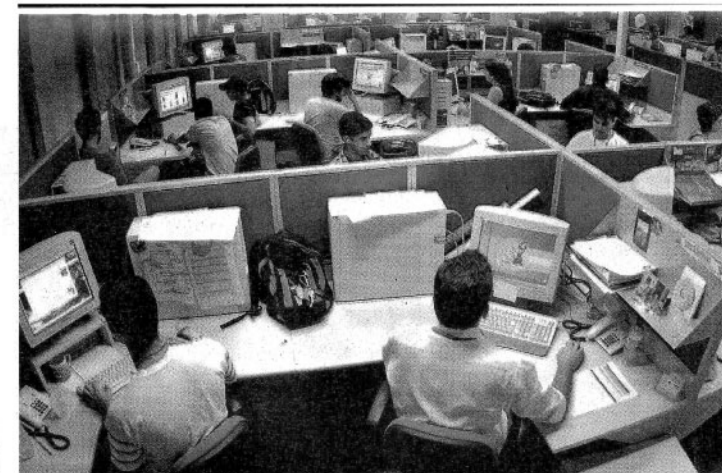
Many moons ago, when some of us were younger, a Bachelor's degree was something coveted — a milestone you aspired to achieve. Completing an MA meant that you were already a 'specialist,' an erudite person with in the field. That criterion, however, no longer holds significance. Today, when students aggregate almost 100% in their board exams, when thousands of students go for BA and MA programmes across India, and when competition for jobs is scorching hot, degrees alone cannot suffice. They have lost some of their value and shine in a stand-alone mode and need to be bolstered by that something extra that employers are looking for. The fact is, that Bachelor's and Master's degrees are now considered a given, especially by hiring companies, who clearly want something above and beyond the academic.

In the age of two-minute noodles, where instant results

and quick delivery are becoming a norm, organisations also expect to hire students who are fully ready for the world of work, and can seamlessly and rapidly go through the transition from the classroom into the workplace. Somewhere along the way, the focus has shifted from degrees to real-life skills that can enable young people to become productive in the work environment from 'Hour 1, Day 1.'

Besides theoretical knowledge, companies are looking for students who are well-rounded, have multiple skills, and have received special training in specific areas that enable them to fit into their respective environments.

This need has led to the mushrooming of 'finishing schools,' some good and others not-so-good that promise to equip learners with skills tuned to the 21st Century workplace. Institutions such as NIIT offer students training in cutting-edge software and IT productivity tools vital to the



modern office. At the same time, they also prepare young people to become better communicators — lucidly sharing ideas, opinions, feedback and contributing to an interactive work environment.

### PREFERRED CHOICE

In many cases, when learners are keen to join specific industries such as banking, insurance, financial services, healthcare, BPO or retail, even these soft skills are not enough. In order to gain an edge and compete more effectively with peers in these industry verticals, students require special 'domain' skills that help them become better



### AT A GLANCE

Rapid changes in technology and the demand for skills make it necessary that young people acquire more than eight years of elementary education to acquire necessary skills to compete successfully in the labour market. Moreover, secondary education serves as a bridge between elementary and higher education.

Source: 11th Five-Year Plan

Hindu Business Line, New Delhi

June 4, 2011

NIIT gets nod to buy Evolv

Press Trust of India

New Delhi, June 3

IT training company NIIT today said that the company's board of directors has given the nod to acquire the balance 40 per cent stake in Noida-based English language and soft skill training company Evolv.

"NIIT had around 60 per cent stake in the company. The board of directors today approved to acquire 40 per cent stake in Evolv for its complete acquisition by the company," the NIIT spokesperson, Mr Prateek Chatterjee, told PTI.

The company, however, did not disclose the size of the deal.

Mr Chatterjee added that NIIT is transitioning from an IT training company to a talent development company. Hence, the deal strategically fits the company future road map.

Financial Express,

New Delhi

June 4, 2011

NIIT to acquire soft skill training company Evolv

NIIT on Friday said it's board of directors has given the nod to acquire the balance 40% stake in Noida-based English language and soft skill training company Evolv. "NIIT had around 60% stake in the company. The board of directors has approved to acquire 40% stake in Evolv for its complete acquisition by the company," NIIT spokesperson Prateek Chatterjee said. The company, however, did not disclose the size of the deal. Chatterjee added that NIIT is transitioning from an IT training company to a talent development company. Hence, the deal strategically fits the company future road map.

ter accountants, better healthcare personnel and better retail professionals.

Here too, getting help from the right training schools is imperative. Students must choose the best and most trusted educational institutions that can enable them to strengthen their foundation and build a repository of relevant skill-sets that improve their employability, in other words make them industry-ready and job-ready. Typically, such training is available to learners through short-term programmes and certification courses, ranging from three to six months or more.

Organisations expect to hire students who are fully ready for the world of work, and can seamlessly and rapidly move from the classroom into the workplace.

Such training is also important for people already working in organisations, who are keen to move up the performance curve and improve their prospects of career growth. Continuous learning and re-skilling is possible owing to the wide variety of courses available for, and targeted specifically at working professionals. It is now possible for people to upgrade their soft and hard skills, by attending such programmes, many times without having to leave their jobs or having to relocate — by attending to programmes that get offered in a synchronous learning mode — read "using an education delivery using VSAT and learning management systems," as offered by NIIT Imperia for management programmes.

By all accounts, students should focus not only on the acquisition of degrees but skills that make them a preferred resource for employers.



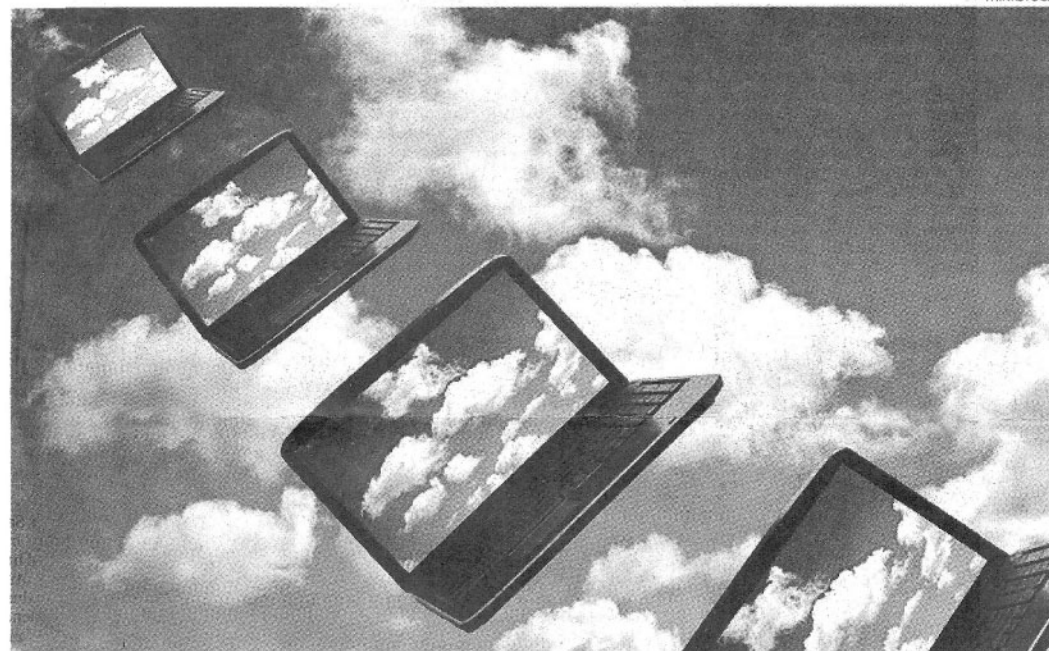


Business Standard, New Delhi  
June 27, 2011

# THE BIG BLUE SKY, CLOUD COMPUTING AND YOU

The application is fast catching on with internet users in India

THINKSTOCK



PRIYANKA JOSHI

Ask a Yahoo Mail or Gmail user if they enjoy cloud services, and chances are that you will hear a puzzled reply: "What cloud? I just use Yahoo/Gmail." Shridhar Venkat, a retired chartered accountant, is one among millions of cloud services consumers who use tools like photo sharing on Facebook and Picasa, but are unaware of what cloud computing is all about. "I use YouTube to listen to old film songs and since my PC does not have an Office software suite, I rely heavily on Google Docs for any online paperwork."

But Venkat is a beneficiary of cloud services in many ways. It has not only helped him lower his expenses—he did not have to invest in MS Office—while doing all his paperwork, presenta-

tions and spreadsheets, but keep himself updated with his daughter living abroad.

Cloud computing is a facility where you do not have to rely on the resources of a local computer, but use the computing resources and services on the internet. There is no one centralised location or organisation that controls them and nothing is required to utilise them besides a web browser and an internet connection.

Most of us have been using cloud services longer than enterprises. Consumer cloud applications like YouTube, Gmail, Yahoo, photo services like Flickr and Picasa, documents storage sites like Dropbox, peer-to-peer file-sharing protocol like BitTorrent, and peer-to-peer application like Skype that enables telephone calls over the internet, are just a few examples of how cloud computing usage has become part of our lives.

Even software giants like Microsoft realised the threat from cloud computing and have joined the bandwagon. Microsoft has launched their online office system, SkyDrive to compete with Google. The biggest advantage of SkyDrive, according to Microsoft, is that it can seamlessly connect with Microsoft Office 2010—allows users to use MSOffice 2010 to create and edit a file and save it using the SkyDrive platform.

Even social networking sites like Facebook that allow consumers to use their storage, processing power and software from any location is an example of "public cloud," open to anyone with access to the internet.

India's 80 million internet user base is grow-

ing at 20 per cent annually. Research firm Zinnov estimates that the cloud computing market in India is expected to reach \$1.08 billion by 2015—this translates into a ten-fold increase from the existing \$110 million market.

Travellers purchasing tickets and arranging travel accommodations online were also taking advantage of the benefits of cloud computing. Manasvi Bhat, a 45-year-old school teacher, believes she is computer-savvy. "I am responsible for booking annual picnic tickets (railway) for my class, arranging the hotel stay and it's all done online. I have helped other teacher's book arrange travel tickets too." Although Bhat had heard about cloud computing, she was surprised to know booking tickets online was facilitated by cloud applications.

Leading IT trainer NIIT Limited joined the stream with its GNIIT programme that leverages cloud learning methodology. "NIIT Cloud Campus empowers the student to learn on his own terms, at his own pace, wherever and whenever he wants it. Students enjoy higher mobility as they can easily access educational services using a netbook or a mobile device that connects them to NIIT's cloud campus network," informs the company.

Recently, BlackBerry-manufacturer Research In Motion (RIM) announced it was teaming up with Microsoft for cloud-based storage. The new service, termed BlackBerry Office 365, will fully integrate with Microsoft's forthcoming Office 365, where users will have full and free access to each others' facilities.

Features will include calendar, contacts and video services, among others, that would be accessible from BlackBerry devices. On its official blog post, Microsoft described the agreement as being "a good deal for customers" and one that promises to deliver the "best productivity experience across the PC, phone and browser".

Earlier this month, Apple CEO Steve Jobs announced a new service called iTunes Match which, hosted via iCloud, almost makes Amazon and Google's cloud music applications look like child's play. In a nutshell, the iCloud allows you to buy music via any device offering iTunes, store up to 20,000 songs in iCloud and access these songs from any device connected to iTunes—iPad, iPhone, iPod or PC. While there is a free beta version available, for the full version there is an annual fee of \$25. Technology giants like Apple are making sure cloud computing apps are here to stay.

**COMPANIES LIKE MICROSOFT, APPLE are also joining the cloud computing bandwagon**

The worry-some bit is that cloud hosting is still not considered secure enough against the threats from hackers and other unscrupulous people online.

Since the cloud model is largely software-based (a virtual machine), analysts are concerned that it can be broken into with the use of bugs and viruses.

The problems of cloud computing came under limelight when Sony admitted that hackers broke into the 100 million Sony's Playstation users database and accessed personal information stored with the company.

Financial Chronicle, New Delhi  
June 30, 2011

## NIIT to revamp IT training delivery model

S SHYAMALA

Chennai

SKILLS training major NIIT is undertaking a major overhaul this year. A vital step in the direction is a complete digital transformation of its training delivery model. The company is aiming to get rid of the blackboard-classroom type of teaching over the next few years.

"Student preferences are changing; they are much more evolved in terms of technology. Nobody wants to do a general IT course anymore. Candidates are highly informed, very particular and looking for training in specific technologies and skills. We had to revamp our delivery model to match up to student expectations," said G Raghavan, chief executive of career building solutions, NIIT.

"We have already introduced the concept of complete digital learning in our three-year GNIIT course. All students are given laptops that come with pre-loaded content. We are consolidating our IT infrastructure, virtualising assets and putting content on the cloud to transform our delivery model. However, the main reason behind the exercise is improving profit margin. For the financial year ending March 31, 2011, NIIT (standalone) reported Rs 670-crore revenue (Rs 645 crore for the previous year) with Rs 50-crore net profit (Rs 31 crore for 2009-10). Virtualising and consolidating IT assets would result in direct bottom-line growth and long-term savings for the firm.



Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad  
June 22, 2011

## Campus on the 'Cloud'

DC CORRESPONDENT

While the "technosphere" is still getting acquainted with the new concept of "Cloud Computing", the advancement has already insinuated itself into a variety of sectors, including the educational sector. Now, with NIIT offering what it calls "Cloud Campus," the students have never had it this good.

"It makes learning so much more easier. This is such a boon, especially since we are all pursuing dual qualifications, cloud computing has reduced the time we need for studying," claims Shilpa T., a student.

In the most basic terms, cloud computing refers to software and services that run over the Internet. The "cloud" is the Internet.

Shabarish, another GNIIT student says, "It feels great to work on such advanced technology."

Deepika Sharma echoes, "The best thing about cloud learning is that we have updated material on anything within seconds and we don't have to go out there and buy a new textbook."

NIIT's flagship "Cloud Campus" is proving to be beneficial for faculty, empowering teachers to constantly monitor students' activities. However, cloud learning comes with its share of baggage. Institutions need massive infrastructure while having crucial information online brings a set of fears. Prakash Chandra Tiwari, the Center Business Head, NIIT Secunderabad, however, assures, "Everything is backed up and completely secure." Addressing fears that cloud learning may affect crucial skills such as note-taking, Geetha M., the Regional Delivery and Information Systems head, asserts, "Cloud learning is not a substitute for classroom learning."



Shabarish

Deepika

The Times of India, Chandigarh  
June 22, 2011

## TRAINING INSTITUTE

NIIT limited has recently announced the launch of its first NIIT One World centre in Coimbatore. NIIT One World is a training institute that will provide training to students and professionals across multiple domains, such as information technology including ERP systems, banking and finance, management and business process outsourcing. Career aspirants wanting to augment their formal education with career-oriented training, can come to NIIT One World centre and seek counselling across multiple domains and sectors.

This will enable them to take an informed career decision from various available options. NIIT One World centres will be equipped with state-of-the-art labs and infrastructure that enable hands-on practice, collaborative learning and comprehensive job-readiness.



Trinity Mirror, Chennai  
June 20, 2011

## NIIT makes students ready for Cloud Computing

Chennai, June 20: NIIT Limited, leading Global Talent Development Corporation and Asia's largest IT trainer, announced the launch of new-age GNIIT programme that can be pursued anywhere anytime, by leveraging the unique cloud learning methodology.

The pioneering NIIT Cloud Campus™ empowers the student to learn on his own terms, at his own pace, wherever and whenever he wants it. Students enjoy higher mobility as they can easily access educational services using a Netbook or a Mobile device that connects them to NIIT's Cloud Campus™ network. These services will be managed by NIIT cen-

trally using the power of Cloud Computing.

One of the most important initiatives of NIIT in recent times, the new GNIIT syllabus is based on a revolutionary educational paradigm called collaborative learning which takes students' beyond the traditional classroom based student-teacher relationship. Students enrolling for the programme will be provided with technically robust netbook, a well designed digital courseware and a fully paid data card.

Furthermore, the technology backed learning environment of NIIT's Cloud Learning Methodology supports group learning through interactive features like 24x7 lab and

e-library access, instant tech updates, interaction with faculty and peers and access to online video streams. Thus the learning process is not just limited to textbooks but is enhanced through group learning.

G Raghavan, Chief Executive, Career Building Solutions, NIIT Limited said, "The new-age GNIIT program will help create a pool of trained professionals for today's globalized knowledge economy."

The use of cloud platform will ensure that student's can procure the avant-garde training from any corner of the globe and equip themselves with skill sets that employers' value, thus helping them chart exciting careers in information technology."



Hindu Business Line, Hyderabad  
June 23, 2011

## 'NIIT One World' centre launched in Coimbatore

Our Bureau

Coimbatore, June 22

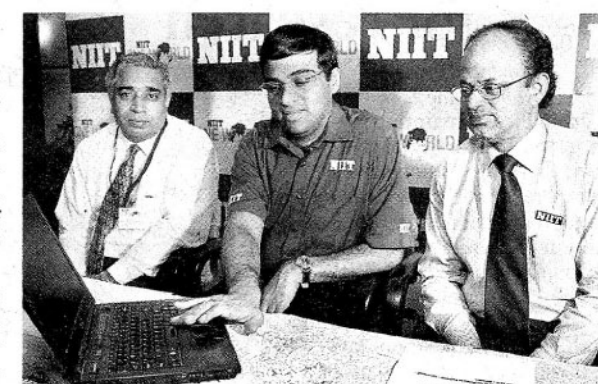
NIIT has launched its first 'NIIT One World' centre in Coimbatore.

The centre was inaugurated by Mr G. Raghavan, Chief Executive - Career Building Solutions, NIIT, in the presence of world chess champion, Mr Viswanathan Anand.

Later speaking to presspersons, Mr Raghavan said the concept of launching such centres aimed to synchronise NIIT's cross domain training expertise under one roof.

(NIIT offers training in Information Technology including ERP training, training in BFSI (Banking, Financial Services and Insurance) vertical for those seeking a career in banking, business process outsourcing service training (in voice and accent), besides offering management and executive training programmes).

NIIT is planning to upgrade many of its existing facility into the NIIT One World Centre



**Informed decisions:** Mr S. Venkatesh (left), President, Institute of Finance, Banking and Insurance; Viswanathan Anand, World Chess Champion and NIIT's brand ambassador; and Mr G. Raghavan, Chief Executive, Career Building Solutions, NIIT Ltd at a press conference following the launch of 'NIIT One World' in Coimbatore on Wednesday. — S. Siva Saravanan

soon. In the first, the talent development corporation is planning to have 100 such centres in the next 12 months.

"At least eight of these would be new, while the rest would be upgradation of existing cen-

tres," he said.

The corporation would invest around Rs 15-22 crore in the next 10-15 months in setting up the eight new (dedicated) NIIT One World Centres, he added.

Trinity Mirror, Chennai  
June 23, 2011

## Anand's advice to students

Coimbatore, June 23: World Chess Champion Vishwanathan Anand today said training and good trainer were most important for students to succeed in their education.

Anand, who was here to launch "NIIT one world" centre here, told reporters that students should evaluate all the choices before taking a decision.

He said winning and becoming champion in one's career start with training that is appropriate and "world class." "Therefore, making the right choice is all the more critical for today's youth", he opined.

He recalled that the textile city of Coimbatore promoted him No 1 in the country during 1983 in Chess. Again the city

made him the Asian Junior Champion in 1984. In 1986 he became a grand master here, he recalled. Answering a question, Anand said chess was popular only in Southern India. It is yet to gain popularity in the North of this country.

NIIT, Career Building Solutions, Chief Executive, G Raghavan said "NIIT one world",

would be the first-of-its-kind training institute that will serve as a one-step destination for providing quality training to students and professionals across multiple domains, like information technology, including ERP systems, Banking and Finance, Management and Business Process outsourcing.





Trinity Mirror, Chennai  
June 22, 2011

## NIIT One World centre launched in Kovai

Coimbatore, June 22: NIIT Limited has launched its first NIIT One World Centre in Coimbatore. NIIT One World is the first-of-its-kind training institute that will serve as a one-stop destination for providing quality training to students and professionals across multiple domains, such as Information Technology including ERP systems, Banking and Finance, Management and Business Process Outsourcing.

The centre was launched in the presence of World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand, by G. Raghavan, Chief Executive- Career Building Solutions, NIIT Ltd. The event was also graced by Dr. E. Balagurusamy, former Vice Chancellor of Anna University, Chennai and former Member of Union Public Service Commission.

The NIIT One World Centre at Coimbatore is the first of many centres that NIIT will establish in the coming years.

NIIT One World aims to synchronize NIIT's cross domain training expertise with a proven training experience of three decades. Career aspirants wanting to augment their formal education with career-oriented training, will no longer need to go to various centres to seek professional advice to select programs mapped to their aptitude. All they will need to do now is come to NIIT One World Centre and seek counseling across multiple domains and sectors. This will enable them to take a more informed decision on their career from various options available.

Remarking on the launch of NIIT One World centre World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand said, "Winning and becoming a champion in one's career starts with training that is appropriate and world class. Therefore making the right choice is all the more critical for today's youth. NIIT has just made it convenient for career aspirants by bringing many options under one roof and facilitating counseling to enable them to take the right decision. In this context, I congratulate NIIT on the launch of the first NIIT One World centre at Coimbatore."

Coimbatore is a major education hub with a well established and reputed list of industries in and around the city. Therefore, Coimbatore was chosen to launch the flagship centre for this new initiative. This will give the large and bright student community in the area an opportunity to acquire necessary skill sets to become global professionals.

Speaking at this significant launch, G Raghavan, Chief Executive, Career Building Solutions, NIIT Limited, said, "In its three decade journey, NIIT has evolved from providing IT training to now offering solutions across various verticals such as Banking and Finance, Management Education, Business Process Outsourcing and ERP training. NIIT One World will bring all the cutting-edge career building solutions from NIIT under one roof. This will enable the youth to evaluate various career options at one go, and choose the course most suitable to her or him."



Financial Chronicle, New Delhi  
June 24, 2011

# NIIT to reorganise assets to improve its profitability

S SHYAMALA  
Chennai

NIIT HAS started the process of reorganising its assets in order to improve profitability. The company launched its NIIT One World initiative in Coimbatore this week as the first step towards the drive.

"Our One World centres will act as one-stop career building locations for students and professionals across multiple sectors including IT, BPO and banking. We plan to set up at least seven such new centres across metros and tier II cities over the next 12 to 15 months with a projected investment of about Rs 10 crore to Rs 16 crore," G Raghavan, chief executive officer of career building solutions, NIIT, told Financial Chronicle.

Earlier, each unit, for instance, the joint venture with ICICI called the Institute of Finance, Banking and Insurance (IFBI), grew on its own and set up its own centres. The model had merit in the past and

**"WE plan to set up new centres with investment of about Rs 10-16 crore"**

G Raghavan  
CEO of career building solutions, NIIT

individual units got dedicated attention, Raghavan said. The company has now reached a stage where it should leverage its distributed assets to offer the whole spectrum of courses across all its centres, he added.

"This way candidates wouldn't be confused as to where to go for a particular course. Otherwise, after roaming between the first, second and third centre, they tend to go home," Raghavan quipped.

The drive includes a

complete overhaul of how the organisation works in terms of changing the mindset of employees and training them. NIIT directly employs about 2,000 people through its own centres and close to another 2,000 employees through its franchisees.

"Through the initiative, we plan to employ overall 16 to 20 people in a centre, which is lesser than the number in our earlier model. This also increases our ability to increase enrollments. The reason being, we can honestly counsel candidates on their choices, as NIIT wouldn't have any vested interests in pushing a particular course. After all, we will have a whole gamut of courses under one roof," he said.

For the financial year ending March 31, NIIT (standalone) reported Rs 670-crore revenue (Rs 645 crore for the previous year) with Rs 50 crore net profit (Rs 31 crore for 2009-10).

shyamalaseetharaman@mydigitalfc.com





Sentinel, Guwahati  
June 19, 2011

## NIIT launches GNIIT 'Cloud campus'

From our Correspondent  
DIMAPUR, June 18:  
NIIT launched its revolutionary digital GNIIT "Cloud campus" at its Dimapur centre, the second city in the Northeast after Shillong, on Saturday. Regional product manager, NIIT Kolkata, Pradipta Bhattacharya, in his power point presentation at the launching programme, pointed out that the younger generation has shifted their "address" from the television and radio to internet or social networking.

Explaining on the concept of "Cloud campus" Bhattacharya said that the term is derived from cloud computing (cloud and collaborative learning model) – a blended or hybrid learning model to make learning more



"informative, effective and motivating." He said a cloud is a set of connected servers on which one can install and run services, store and retrieve data. "Cloud campus" is also learning on the move – access learning anytime, anywhere" he added.

A revolutionary combination of real-time and online learning, the learning edge includes personal netbook and data card, digital courseware and digital library, link to courses, experts answers, RSS feeds and professional practice zone. On the occasion, past and present students of NIIT Dimapur also spoke on the advantages of taking NIIT courses. Earlier, centre head, NIIT Dimapur, Ajay Sethi delivered the welcome address.

Indian Express, Chennai  
June 20, 2011

### NIIT offers India's first cloud campus

NIIT, a leading global talent development corporation and Asia's largest IT trainer, announced the launch of e-age GNIIT programme that can be pursued anywhere anytime, by leveraging the unique cloud learning methodology. The pioneering NIIT cloud campus empowers the student to learn on his own terms and at his own pace. Students enjoy higher mobility as they can easily access educational services using a netbook or a mobile device that connects them to NIIT's Cloud Campus network. For details, contact: Govind 9176634530 / 9444343515 ■



Hindu Business Line, New Delhi  
June 15, 2011

### NIIT unveils 'Cloud Campus'

New Delhi, June 14

IT education company NIIT Ltd has announced the launch of a new GNIIT programme that can be pursued "anywhere anytime" by leveraging the cloud learning methodology. The NIIT 'Cloud Campus' will allow the students to learn at their own pace, "wherever and whenever they want", a statement said. Students can access educational services using Netbook or a mobile device that connects them to NIIT's 'Cloud Campus' network. The services will be managed by NIIT centrally using the power of Cloud Computing. "The new GNIIT syllabus is based on an educational paradigm called collaborative learning which takes students beyond the traditional classroom based student-teacher relationship. Students enrolling for the programme will be provided with Netbook, a digital courseware and a fully paid data card," the statement said. — Our Bureau

Hindustan Times, Jaipur  
June 10, 2011

## NIIT LAUNCHES CLOUD COMPUTING POWER

JODHPUR: For the first time in the state, a new course 'Cloud Computing Power' has been introduced at Jodhpur's NIIT centre. The new digital GNIIT course was introduced on Thursday. The course is of three years' duration.

Students opting for the course will be provided with a Net book and Internet connectivity. They will also be able to carry their course books in the e-format.

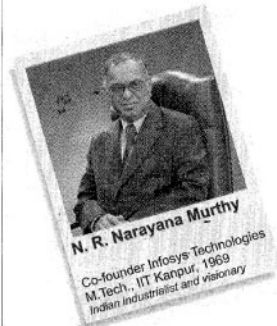
Vishwas Kshirsagar, the regional head of the National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT), said the students enrolled for the course would be able to experience new technology first hand. It will also help them to develop employment skills at the same time.

Director of Jodhpur's NIIT centre, Mukesh Bansal, said the registration for the course starts from Thursday.

HTC

Education Times  
June 5, 2011

## IITs - the incubators for global leaders



**N. R. Narayana Murthy**  
Co-founder Infosys Technologies  
M.Tech., IIT Kanpur, 1969  
Indian industrialist and visionary

Murthy served as the founder CEO of Infosys for 21 years. At Infosys he articulated, designed and implemented the Global Delivery Model which has become the foundation for the huge success in IT services outsourcing from India.

He served as chairman of the National Association of Software and Service Companies from 1992 to 1994.

In August 2004, TIME listed him under "Global Tech Influentials" as one of the ten leaders who are helping shape the future of technology. In November 2006, TIME again voted him as one of the Asians who have brought about revolutionary changes in Asia in the last 60 years.

Murthy started a new venture capital fund called Catamaran Venture Fund with the money he got by selling Infosys shares.

Murthy serves as an independent director on the boards of HSBC, DBS Bank and Unilever. He is a member of the Advisory Boards and Councils of the Stanford, the Corporate Governance Initiative at the Harvard Business School, the Indian School of Business, Cornell University committee on academic affairs.

He is a member of the Board of Directors of INSEAD, the Board of Overseers of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Singapore Management University, Asian Institute of Management (AIM), the Board of Members of School of Management at Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Asia Business Council and Business Advisory Council of Great Lakes Institute of Management and International Institute of Information Technology - Bangalore.

**2008** Padma Vibhushan President of India  
**2009** Padma Shri President of India  
The Economist ranked him 8th among the top 15 most admired global leaders (2005). He was ranked 28th among the world's most-respected business leaders by the Financial Times (2005). He topped the Economic Times Corporate Dossier list of India's most powerful CEOs for two consecutive years 2004 and 2005.



**Rajat Gupta**

Ex-Sr. Vice Chairman, Citigroup.  
B.Tech. Mechanical Engineering,  
IIT Delhi, 1971

Senior Advisor-New Silk Route, On the advisory boards of IIT, MIT Sloan and INSEAD.

Prominent Indian-American businessman who has been a corporate officer, board director and strategic advisor to a variety of notable public- and private-sector Gupta served for nearly a decade as managing director (chief executive officer) of McKinsey & Company over a 34-year career at the management consultancy. After retiring from McKinsey in 2007, Gupta served on the board of directors or advisors often as chairman of the board.

Goldman Sachs, Procter and Gamble

International Chamber of Commerce, special advisor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Harvard, ISB, IIT, MIT Sloan, Kellogg School of Management

The Gates Foundation, American India Foundation

He is the co-founder of four organizations: the Indian School of Business, the American India Foundation, New Silk Route and Scandent.



**Kanwal Rekhi**  
Indian-American engineer,  
businessman & philanthropist, B.Tech. Electrical Engineering, IIT Mumbai, 1967

Forbes Magazine writes that his startup has pioneered Ethernet networking technology and led to the commercial growth of the TCP/IP protocol, one of the basic building blocks of the Internet.

In 1967 Rekhi graduated as an electrical engineer from the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, India and in 1969 he received a Master of Science degree from Michigan Technological University. After graduating and moving to San Jose, at the age of thirty-six he cofounded and served as CEO of Ecceplan, a high tech company. Forbes Magazine writes that Ecceplan pioneered Ethernet networking technology, one of the basic building blocks of the Internet.

He gave US \$3 million to IIT Bombay to help set up a new School of Information Technology, named KReSIT (Kanwal Rekhi School of Information Technology), which opened in 1999. Kanwal has been a major donor to Michigan Tech, including a gift of \$5 million for new computer science facilities.

Kanwal Rekhi is a past Chairman and trustee of TIE, The Indus Entrepreneurs, a nonprofit support network to provide advice, contacts, and funding to Indian Americans hoping to start businesses. He is currently a board member of Pan IIT USA, Inc. the alumni organization of the Indian Institutes of Technology.



**Chetan Bhagat**

Indian Author, columnist, speaker  
B.Tech. Mechanical Engineering,  
IIT Delhi, 1965

## Author of Bestselling Novels

Bhagat is the author of four bestseller novels, Five Point Someone (2004), One Night @ the Call Center (2005), The 3 Mistakes of My Life (2008) & 2 States (2009). All four books have remained bestsellers since their release and two have inspired Bollywood films (including the film 3 Idiots). In 2008, The New York Times called Bhagat "the biggest selling English language novelist in India's history."

He did an MBA from IIM-Ahmedabad in 1967, where he was named "The Best Outgoing Student". After graduation he worked as an investment banker in Hong Kong. He had been working in Hong Kong for 11 years before shifting to Mumbai to pursue his passion for writing.

Time magazine named him as one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World. Bhagat also favoured the forming of a system similar to the Lokpal as early as January 2011 through his articles.



**Jairam Ramesh**

Union Environment Minister  
B.Tech. Mechanical Engineering,  
IIT Mumbai, 1975

## Minister, Journalist, Man with a Cause

Jairam Ramesh has been an elected member of the Indian Parliament representing Andhra Pradesh in the Rajya Sabha since June 2004. He has been the Indian Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment and Forests since May 2009. He was also a member of the first National Advisory Council, 2006-2008. From January 2008 to February 2009, he was the Minister of State for Commerce and Industry and from April 2008 to February 2009 was also the Minister of State for Power in the Congress Party-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government.

He is a founding member of the Indian School of Business in Hyderabad and is a member of the International Council of the New York-based Asia Society.

In 1978, Jairam Ramesh joined the World Bank for a short assignment. He worked in the Planning Commission, Ministry of Industry and other economic departments of the Central Government. Ramesh participated in India's economic reforms in 1991 and 1997. He was advisor to the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission in 1992-94.

He was chief negotiator for India at the 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Copenhagen, Denmark, between 7 to 18 December 2009.



**Rajendra S. Pawar**

Chairman NIIT  
B.Tech. Electrical Engineering,  
IIT Delhi, 1972

Rajendra S. Pawar is the chairman of NIIT, which he co-founded along with his batch-mate Vijay K. Thadani and with the active support of Shiv Nadar. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan by the Government of India in 2011.

NIIT pioneered the computer education market in India, creating a completely new industry segment and taking it to consolidation and maturity. Pawar has played a leadership role in nurturing NIIT and building it into a leading Global Talent Development Corporation.

He is a member of the National Task Force on Information Technology and Software Development. He heads the Quality Committees of various industry bodies.

He has been a Founder Member of NASSCOM (the National Association of Software & Service Companies). He is currently a member of the International Business Council of the World Economic Forum.

Global Business Intelligence firm, Ernst & Young conferred on Pawar its prestigious Master Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 1999.

Known for promoting industry-academia alliances, Pawar has been working closely with the country's well-known educational institutions. He is on the Board of Governors of India's premier engineering institution, IIT Delhi; country's first global business school, the Indian School of Business; and the Scindia School.



**Arun Sarin**  
Ex-CEO Vodafone plc.  
B.Tech. Metallurgical Engineering, IIT Kharagpur, 1975

In 1978 he gained a MS in Engineering and an MBA from the Haas School of Business at the University of California, Berkeley.

Under his leadership, Vodafone successfully bid US\$11.1 billion for 67% stake in the Indian mobile operator, Hutch. Now rebranded as Vodafone, Sarin wants to bring it from the #3 operator in India to #1 or #2. He is also focussing the company on total communications services including broadband, internet and wireless data.

He recently retired as CEO of Vodafone. He serves on the board of directors of Cisco Systems and Safeway, Inc. He received an honorary knighthood from the Queen at Buckingham Palace on March 10, 2010.

Sarin has also served as a director of The Gap, Inc., The Charles Schwab Corporation and Cisco Systems, Inc. in the United States, and had been appointed as a non-executive director of the Court of the Bank of England.



**Ajit Jain**  
Currently heads several ventures  
businesses for Jarkhara Hardware  
B.Tech., IIT Kharagpur, 1972

Jain worked for IBM in India from 1973 to 1976, then moved to the United States, where he earned an MBA from Harvard Business School in 1978. He joined McKinsey & Co., but returned to India in the early 1980s. After a month long courtship, he married Tinku Jain, a girl chosen by his parents. Then he went back to the United States to work for McKinsey. According to Robert P. Miles' book The Warren Buffett CEO: Secrets from the Berkshire Hathaway Managers Jain said he would not have returned to America, but his wife wanted to move there. In 1986 he left McKinsey to work on insurance operations for Buffett. At the time, he said he knew little about the insurance business.



**Victor Menozes**  
Ex-Senior Vice Chairman, Citigroup  
B.Tech. Electrical Engineering,  
IIT Mumbai, 1970

Victor Menozes received his degree in electrical engineering from the IIT, Mumbai in 1970. He received an M.B.A. degree from the MIT Sloan School of Management in 1972.

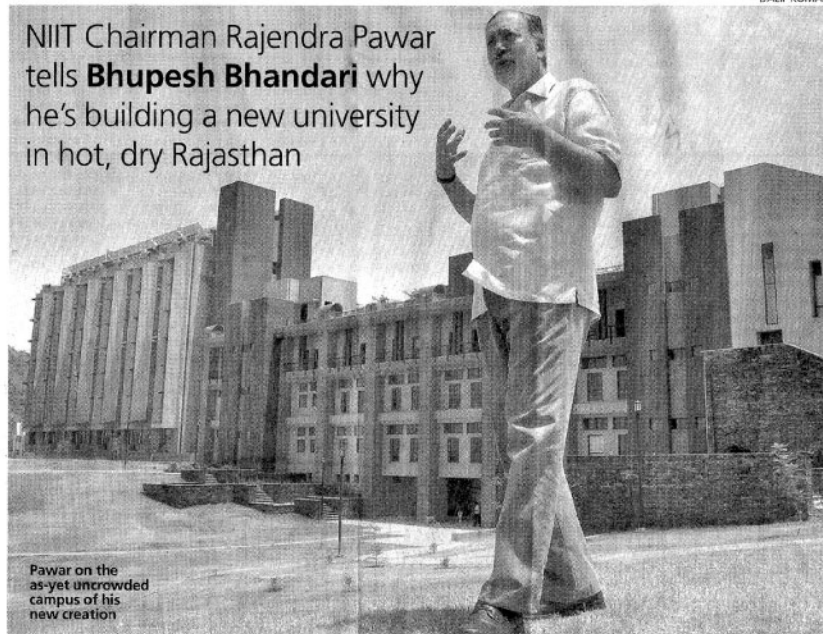
In 1972, he joined Citicorp in Corporate Banking, had been Chairman and CEO of Citibank and headed Citigroup's Emerging Markets business and retired from Citigroup as Senior Vice Chairman after a 32-year global career there.

Menozes was recently named Chairman of the Board of Governors of the National Center for Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Menozes is also a member of the Advisory Board of INSEAD. He is Senior Advisor of New Silk Route, an international private equity firm and Chairs the American India Foundation. He also has a convention centre named after him at the IIT, Bombay known as the Victor Menozes Convention Centre (VMCC), inaugurated on January 8, 2011.

Business Standard, New Delhi  
June 11, 2011High degrees  
in the desert

DALIP KUMAR

NIIT Chairman Rajendra Pawar tells **Bhupesh Bhandari** why he's building a new university in hot, dry Rajasthan



Pawar on the as-yet uncrowded campus of his new creation

The hundred acres of land, on the road from Delhi to Jaipur, were marked in government records as *banjar* (barren) and *beehad* (inhospitable). Yet, the uneven patch has been fenced and parts of it landscaped in the last two years. Dams have been built on the adjoining hills to keep flash floods, which happen during the monsoon rains, from entering the campus. An old *jaal pilu* tree, devastated for fodder and firewood by villagers and nomads, has been resurrected; a road meant to run over the old tree now gently curves around it. Some buildings have been constructed, and work is going on at a few others. The temperature can touch 49 degrees in the summer, snakes and scorpions abound in the campus. This is where Rajendra Pawar, the chairman of NIIT, wants to give shape to his dream project, the NIIT University.

There are 122 students studying engineering and business administration at the university. The students say that what drew them to the new university was the NIIT brand; it also doesn't seem to be their first choice. Pawar knows that building the brand equity of an educational institution takes time—a problem that also crops up when he goes out to recruit faculty. But he has a 10-year construction plan for the University, at the end of which, he hopes, there will be 5,000 students on campus. Midway, he hopes the university will have proven that it can sustain itself financially through fees, grants, incubators and sale of intellectual property.

Meanwhile, Pawar is going all out to make NIIT University a green campus. A 1.6-km tunnel transports wind 12 feet below the earth's surface, where the temperature at all times is 24 degrees, across humidifiers and water curtains into all classrooms, offices and hostels. Another duct, fitted near the ceiling, sucks out all hot air in the room. Ninety-seven per cent of the water (struck at a depth of 300 ft) is recycled. The architecture is conventional Rajasthani, with courtyards and buildings close to each other in order to make the best use of shadows in the blistering heat. A nursery has been set up for local trees, some of which, like the *jaal pilu*, face extinction. Pawar has sought the state's permission to green the neighbouring Aravalli hills.

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Pawar, along with Vijay Thadani and Parappil Rajendran, had started NIIT for IT education in 1981. It set up centres across the country and offered consultancy to companies. Out of consultancy was born the software division of NIIT. Pawar's recent success. In the 1990s, the software division stayed away from the high-volume and low-margin sectors like body-shopping and Y2K. That's why it never had the scale of companies like TCS, Wipro and Infosys. After the dot-com bust of 2001, Pawar took some strategic decisions: One, software was spun off into a separate company, NIIT Technologies; and two, instead of horizontal, he chose to focus on verticals. Almost 55 per cent of the business came from three verticals—travel & transport, BFSI and a mix of manufacturing and supply chain. These became the three chosen verticals. The contribution of the other verticals has come down from 45 per cent to 12-15 per cent now. "The strategic choice had an element that was shrinking—that was a drag. Not any longer," says Pawar. "Our [profit] margins are Tier 1 margins."

In fact, the operating profit margins of

NIIT Technologies at 20-23 per cent are better than IT education under NIIT (10-13 per cent). Also, NIIT Technologies is growing at a faster clip, and the two companies are running neck and neck. While NIIT reported consolidated income of ₹1,248 crore (and operating profit of ₹67.20 crore) in 2010-11, NIIT Technologies closed the year with ₹1,232 crore (operating profit of ₹240 crore). The reason, says Pawar, is that IT education still has a large contribution from emerging markets, though he has tried to move it up the value chain with acquisitions in the US.

In IT education, Pawar has also had to battle quality perceptions. "Defects happen in any service sector," says Pawar. "On customer satisfaction, placement and student performance, our matrix has remained very good. It's not an easy business because everyone has a personal experience. There are few institutions in the world that deal with both scale and quality." Hasn't NIIT lost mindshare in the education space to newcomers like Educomp and Career Launcher? "There have been at least four waves of training in the IT industry since 1981. Companies came and went; the only brand that stays rock steady is us," Pawar replies.

Another criticism that NIIT now faces, after the Infosys affair, is succession: who next, after the promoters? While Pawar is the chairman of NIIT as well as NIIT Technologies, Thadani is the CEO of NIIT and Rajendran is its COO, though Arvind Thakur, a professional who joined NIIT in 1985, is the CEO of

NIIT Technologies. "If you watch the way we have projected our leaders for the past four or five years, you will notice that there's a next level that is running these individual businesses as presidents. Every six months, we sit down to look at the top 60 people. This has been happening for the past ten years," says Pawar.

His targets sure are ambitious. "Three million people have benefitted from our training programmes. What next? An idea doing the rounds is 'teach a billion'. I don't know when it'll happen; maybe a decade from now," says Pawar.

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Pawar began to think of a university sometime in the beginning of the last decade. NIIT had diversified into fields other than IT education; its GNIIT programme, which can take up to three years to complete, had turned popular. Its net university was up and running. The next logical step was the NIIT University. "We see ourselves as a global talent developer, rather than just an IT trainer for developing markets," says Pawar.

NIIT University is a non-profit company; so the money, though Pawar refuses to disclose how much, has come from the personal wealth of the founders and not NIIT—it would have been unfair to the shareholders of the company. Over 10 years, the plan is to pump ₹1,000 crore into the university; a tenth of that has already been invested.

At a time when there is growing disil-

lusionment with the quality, and hence the employability, of engineers and MBAs turned out by colleges and universities, how does Pawar plan to make a difference? The university, says Pawar, stands on four core principles: strong links with industry, technology-based education, research-driven mindset and seamless interface between various departments. The emblem of the NIIT University is the seamless Mobius Ring. Karan Singh, the chancellor of the university, has given it a Sanskrit name: Anadi (without end).

Some thought has also gone into designing the courses. The courses chosen for engineering, for instance, focus on emerging trends in a knowledge economy; thus, civil engineering is out. Pawar has got nine of his friends, each a high-profile CEO, to mentor three or four students each. In addition, mid-level managers have been invited to act as coaches to students—they are in constant touch over email. "It helps them to keep in touch with youngsters," says Pawar.

For MBA students, there is a "China immersion" programme where they are taken to China to see management education and industry at work. Pawar has started a two-year MBA (finance and banking) course with ICICI Bank for practicing managers. At the end of the four semesters (two each at the University and ICICI Bank), all the students will get placed with ICICI Bank. More such partnerships, says Pawar, could happen in the future. To make a name, in the arid Aravallis, is anything but easy.





The Times of India, New Delhi  
June 28, 2011

# Doors still open at pvt varsities

## Colleges Have An Edge With Industry-Based Courses

Manash Pratim Gohain  
& Aniruddha Ghosal | TNN

**New Delhi:** If you have missed the bus to Delhi University, it is not the end of the road. A number of seats are still up for grabs at private universities in and around the capital which offer professional courses, along with regular courses in science and humanities.

Myriad options are available in Amity University in Manesar and Noida, NIIT University (NU) at Neemrana, Shiv Nadar University (SNU), Greater Noida and Manav Rachna International University (MRIU) at Faridabad, among others. In fact, the application process for professional and academic courses is already under way in these universities and many others in the NCR.

Many of these varsities offer various industry-based programmes which give students a more holistic understanding of the way in which the industry operates. For instance, Amity University offers Bachelor courses in journalism, mass communication and hotel management. Atul Chauhan, chancellor, Amity University, Uttar Pradesh, said: "Amity offers hi-tech research-based programmes which are career-oriented. We have already received over 1 lakh applications for 240 UG and PG programmes. The admission process in Amity is very competitive with rigorous screening of applications followed by written tests and interviews." The varsity still has seats open in BA and BCom.

Amity has two campuses in the NCR, Noida and Manesar. According to university officials, the last date for sale and submission of completed forms for its undergraduate

### LOOKING BEYOND DU

Undergraduate admissions in private universities

AMITY UNIVERSITY | Manesar (Haryana) and Noida (UP)

Course	Eligibility
BTech biotech (4 years)	PCB (min 55%)*
BSc biotech (3 years)	PCB (min 55%)*
BCom (H)	10+2 (min 55%)
BCA	10+2 with maths
Engineering (8 branches)	PCM (min 60%)*
BA (H) economics with maths	10+2 (min 55%)
BSc fashion technology	10+2*
BA (H) liberal arts	10+2 (min 55%)
BBA (six specializations)	10+2 (min 55%)
BSc molecular biology	10+2 (science)
BSc microbial sciences	10+2 (science)



\*Entrance and interview  
Last date for submission of completed applications is June 30, 2011. Likely to be extended to July 15 for some courses

Eligibility for following courses is 10+2 | Mass com & journalism, BSc IT, BFAI, BA tourism, BSc hospitality, BA fashion designing, BA performing arts, BA psychology, BA performing arts

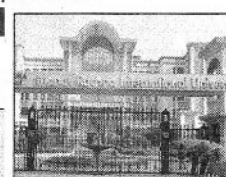
NIIT UNIVERSITY | Neemrana (Rajasthan)

Course	Eligibility
BTech biotechnology (Online entrance test)	Class X 60% & XII (PCM) 60%
BTech comp sc and engg/electronics and comp engg/information and communication tech (Joint entrance examination/AIEEE)	Class X 60% & XII (PCM) 60%

Last date for submission of completed applications is July 8, 2011

Manav Rachna International University | Faridabad

Course	Eligibility
BBA (Entrance)	10+2 with min 55% aggregate in any stream with pass in English
BCA (Entrance)	10+2 with min 55% aggregate in any stream with pass in English



Course | Engineering (Aeronautical\*, Civil\*, Com Sc, IT, Mechanical)

Eligibility | 10+2 (Minimum aggregate 65% for morning shift and 55% including physics, maths and English, for evening shift)

\* (Admission through AIEEE)

Admissions in all courses will be open till seats are vacant

Shiv Nadar University | Greater Noida

Courses | BS (H) mathematics, BS (H) mathematics with economics, BS (H) mathematics with engineering, BS (H) mathematics with management, BS (H) mathematics (financial engineering option)

Last date for submission of completed applications is July 15, 2011

and postgraduate courses is June 30, but is likely to be extended to July 15.

"We are offering nearly 23 undergraduate courses at our Manesar campus, while our Noida campus is offering over 50 courses. Meanwhile, the Lucknow campus is launching eight new programmes including BTech in aerospace engineering," said Chauhan. Amity is offering a wide range of courses, from BTech to management, liberal arts to fashion technology and economics.

Many universities offer courses that are not available at Delhi University. "I didn't make it through any of the top notch colleges in DU. Though I still qualify for English in some colleges, I would rather study law at Amity University. I have been told that the campus life there is just as active as in DU," said Sukanya Mitra, an aspiring law student who is a resident of Ghaziabad.

Another university where the admission process is on is Manav Rachna International University, Faridabad. The university is offering 22 BTech programmes, two management programmes and one computer application course at the undergraduate level. Apart from these, some other programmes on offer are BA (H) in media management, bachelors in physiotherapy, nutrition and dietetics, interior design and animation. Four new programmes — MSc in biotechnology, postgraduate diploma in journalism and mass communication, postgraduate diploma in nutrition and dietetics and BSc in information and technology — have been added to the college's kitty. Shiv Nadar University, Greater Noida, will be recruiting its first batch this year.



CAREERS360  
June, 2011

Special | CORPORATE ENGINEERING COLLEGES

# WHEN COMPANIES SET UP SCHOOLS...

Corporates that recruit large number of engineers are now setting up their own institutions. Are they any good?

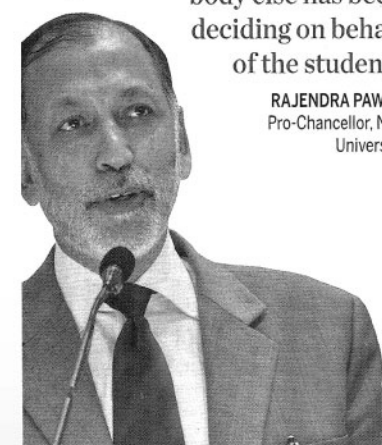
by Nitin Jindal

"In a bygone era, universities produced students and corporations recruited them. As competition intensifies, especially for manpower, many corporates have now begun to set up institutions of their own. Though each of them treat it at arms length and attributes philanthropic motives to the initiatives, the possibilities for forward and backward linkages are exponential. Though old world corporations like Birlas and Tatas have set up educational institutions in the past, two new initiatives stand out with respect to their yet to be realised potential for excellence.

"A campus must be built with students as the focus", the conviction in the tone of Rajendra Pawar, founder Chairman - NIIT Ltd and Pro-Chancellor of NIIT University (NU), communicates what the university stands

"Passion has been inhibited for far too long because everybody else has been deciding on behalf of the student"

RAJENDRA PAWAR  
Pro-Chancellor, NIIT  
University



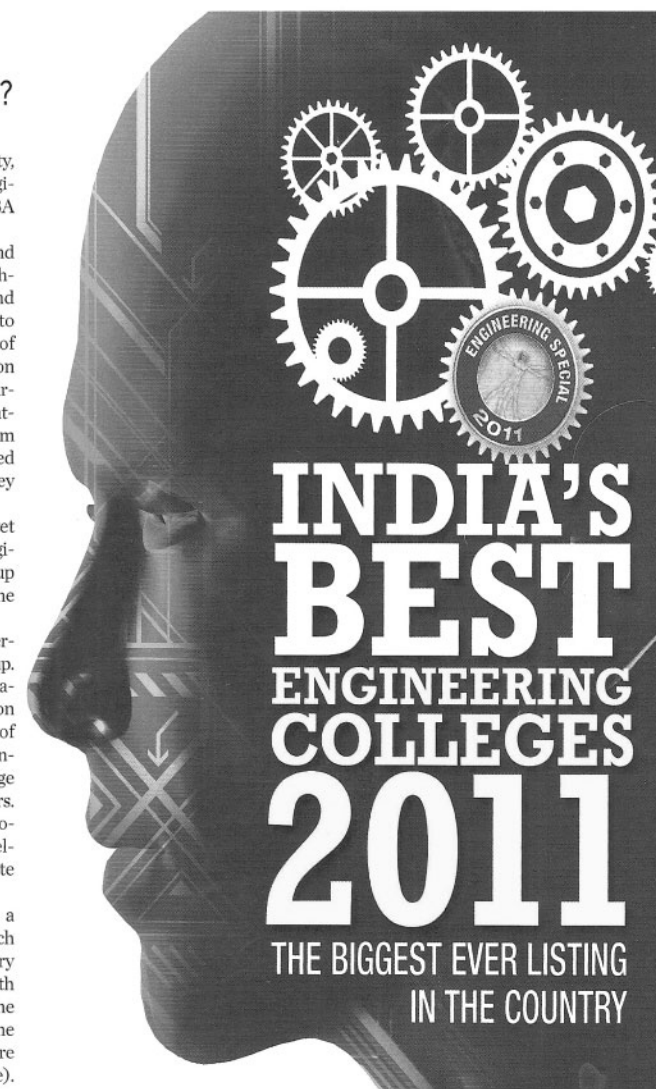
for. Conceptualized as a multiversity, NIIT began its operations with Engineering and has now launched an MBA programme.

The university has been built around four principles: industry-linked, technology-based, research-driven and seamless. The idea is to evolve into a campus which is in the forefront of knowledge creation and dissemination (which is evident by campus structuring). Publications, Placements and Patents, the three Ps that separate men from boys as far as universities are concerned might find fruition in NU provided they get the faculty mix right.

The Bharti School for telecom is yet another initiative in the telecom engineering domain, though Bharti group has very little direct involvement in the day-to-day running of the school.

Yet another initiative in the engineering domain is one by the HCL group. Shiv Nadar, the founder of the corporation, has been interested in education for quite sometime. The SSN Group of institutions set up by him has been running well regarded engineering college in Chennai for the last 15-odd years. With academic tie-up and joint programmes with the likes of Carnegie Mellon University, the future looks quite bright for SSN.

The same group is now setting up a new university at Greater Noida, which also hopes to be a multidisciplinary institution, though it started off with an engineering school. We quizzed the founder Vice-Chancellor on what the institution hopes to achieve and where it is heading (See interview alongside). With the formidable networks, both formal and informal, that these corporations could tap into, the students could get not only good education but a host of opportunities to use the same as well. ■







Hindustan Times, New Delhi  
June 29, 2011

Ishita Jindal

Modern School, Barakhamba Road



Gone are the days when we had a set of colleges to choose from and a common entrance for all

Living without your phone and all the contacts stored (especially when school is over and you REALLY miss your friends) is tough! Thanks to the entrance exams again, I lost my cell. Stolen should be more appropriate. The guard at the entrance of the examination centre asks you to deposit the cell with him, takes down your roll no and disappears once the exam is over. Obviously, the school authorities are not responsible! Its awesome how systematic things are in government colleges and schools, Isn't it?

Gone are the days when we had a set of colleges to choose from and a common entrance for all. Currently, there are a hundred universities with a thousand courses to offer and new ones always keep coming up. Shiv Nadar University and NIIT University are two such new universities that I applied to for B.Tech this year. The private universities today are coming up and offering top class education. They not only provide with great infrastructure and first class learning process through research work, but also enhance the overall personality more due to the various co-curricular activities they offer. These colleges conduct interviews for admitting students and the entrances alone are not the only criteria for selection. These universities, I believe, are a great option to consider for studying in. They have great prospects for the future. Plus, there is obviously no added tension of losing your cell phone.



The Times of India, New Delhi  
June 5, 2011

## Ecology priority, varsities take green pledge

JNU & Jamia Promote Bicycles, DTU Makes 33% Power On Campus

Manash Pratim Gohain | TNN

New Delhi: Harnessing natural resources and safeguarding the ecology seems to have become a priority for most universities in the national capital region.

If Jamia Millia Islamia is turning its reclaimed land into a green patch, JNU students have taken it upon themselves to reduce carbon emission and promote cycling on the campus. While TERI University prides itself to be the first green campus in the city because of its innovation in cooling the classrooms and the hostel naturally, Delhi Technological University (DTU), too, started green initiatives like generating 33% of energy from alternative sources developed on the campus.

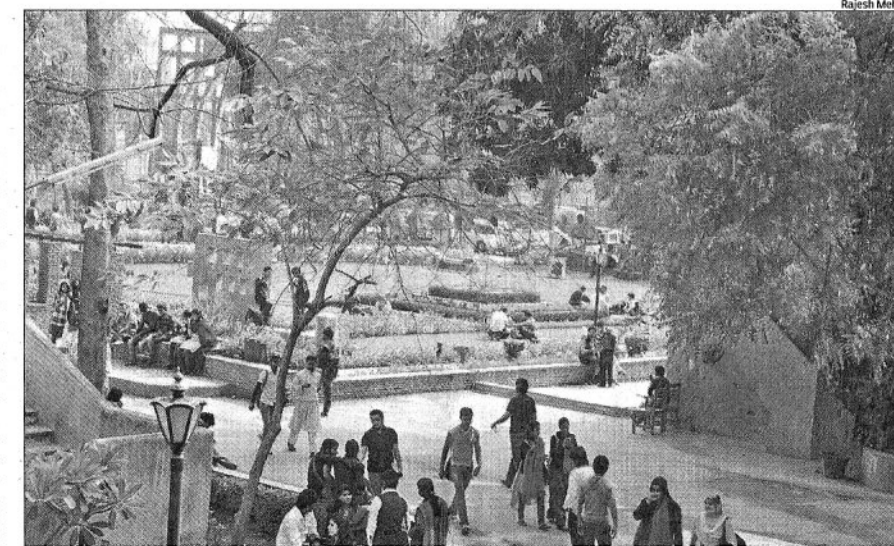
The relatively new NIIT University (NU), Neemrana, is also not falling behind. In its pedestrian-only, 100-acre, fully residential campus in the foothills of the Aravalli is built to minimize its carbon footprint through earth-air tunnels.

Bharat Bhushan, a horticulturist who is responsible for greening Jamia's 'wild area' near the Ansari Auditorium complex and the engineering faculty, said this nearly 20-acre land was under threat because of encroachment. "After reclaiming the land, we have planted over 1,500 trees and made pathways. We have tried to restore the natural flora and fauna since June 2010 and we are witnessing the results as some of the migratory birds have returned this year," he said Bhushan.

The students at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) have joined hands to make the campus eco-friendly and are envisaging the university premises as a role model for other campuses in future. The JNU community chose its foundation day to take the 'green pledge' last year.

The president of JNU's Mahi Mandvi hostel, Fakhruddin Ansari, said: "Of late, there has been a lot of deforestation and we have seen a significant rise in the number of vehicles inside the campus. On November 14, 2010, we launched the eco-club of the university. Our aim is to reduce carbon emission on the campus, shifting from use of two and four wheelers to bicycles and expanding the usage of solar energy."

But it was the TERI University which added a new chapter to the concept of 'green campus' in 2009 when it opened its new premises at Vasant Kunj. According to Rajiv Seth, registrar of the university, its main features include passive solar



INTEGRATING WITH NATURE: Jamia Millia Islamia is turning its reclaimed land into a green patch. NIIT university in Neemrana (below) is minimizing its carbon footprint through earth-air tunnels. It also has rainwater harvesting and water recycling facilities

design, unique energy efficient cooling system and water and waste management system that "would help reduce 40% energy consumption as compared to a similar structure built on the conventional lines".

The cooling systems have three features — variable refrigerant volume (VRV) system, earth air tunnel (EAT) and thermal storage. The EAT system is primarily for the hostel. Through this system, the temperature of hostel rooms can be maintained within 27 degrees Celsius during summer and around 19 to 24 degrees Celsius during winter.

Another campus which is planning big in terms of going green is DTU. According to the revisited master plan, this 164-acre campus will be out of bounds to all vehicles, one-third of the energy it uses will be generated from alternative sources developed on the campus by 2014-15. All this and more will cost Rs 200 crore.

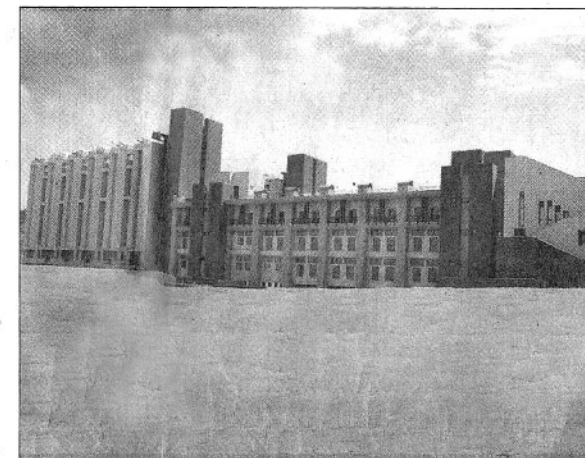
DTU vice-chancellor P B Sharma said: "To generate 33% of the energy, we shall establish a 1.1MW solar power electricity generation facility within the campus by 2011. To become self-reliant for water resources, the university has recently installed a waste water recycling plant to treat waste water and make it reusable. The plant has the capacity to treat 20,000 litres of

sewage water." At the dry region of Neemrana, the NU campus is designed to integrate with nature. The university aims at minimizing its carbon footprint through earth-air tunnels. It also has rainwater harvesting facilities and a water recycling system which is 97% efficient, thereby making the campus self sufficient.

"The natural lay of the land has been retained by adapting structures to the surface contours. This sig-

nificantly reduces the impact of construction on local geology. Blasting in surrounding ranges of Aravalli and illegal mining of rocks, earlier a rampant practice, has now been successfully curbed through a positive collaboration with local people," said Rajendra Pawar, founder, NU.

NU has also started its own nursery, which is now home to the 'Jal Pilu' tree a native plant which has got rare in the region.





Digital Learning  
June, 2011

CORPORATE DIARY

# Tomorrow Demands an NGuru Solution in Education

**Hemant Sethi**, President, School Learning Solutions, NIIT Limited in an exclusive tête-à-tête with Dr Ravi Gupta, reveals the infrastructural strength, standout point and plans ahead for the various sectors of institutes

**Please throw light on the portfolio of the solutions, which NIIT is offering under brand NGuru.**

NIIT is the only company, which offers comprehensive end-to-end solutions. There is lot of competition into the market, but they are into piecemeal solutions. Somebody is very active on let's say classroom solution. There are some which are active in content per se. There are some people, who are into teacher training; few others are for Education and Resource Planning (ERP) solution for schools, etc. We offer total comprehensive education delivery solutions, which cover the entire spectrum for education delivery, which is essential for the schools, teachers, students, and also for parents.

**Interactive Classrooms**-Interactive Classroom is a complete technology enabled classroom solution that revolutionises the teaching and learning of subjects like Math, Science, Social Sciences and English.

**Mobile Science Lab** - Mobile Science Lab is the first-of-its-kind portable computerised Science Laboratory, which enables students to correlate scientific concepts taught in the class to real life.

**Math Lab** - It is state-of-the-art Mathematics Laboratory for schools, which comes with Geometer's Sketchpad Software, Multiple Teaching and Learning Aids like Technology Applications, Videos, Manipulative, Measuring Instruments, Tables, Charts and Theme Based Ambience

**IT Wizard**-IT Wizard Next is a holistic IT education solution which enables

students to be better equipped to handle IT revolution. It redefines the learning experience through a combination of the audio-visual medium, demos and interactive hands-on practice sessions.

**Quick School**-Quick School is an integrated and comprehensive ERP software developed for schools to manage information spanning all functional requirements, including Fees Collection, Report Card Generation, Payroll, Admissions, Inventory Management and Transportation.

**Accreditation Standards for Quality Governance in Education** - Consultation is offered to educational institutions to help them attain accreditation.

**EPICT**-Teacher professional development course, with international certification, aimed at training and up-skilling teachers for the digital age.

**CCE Training** - Comprehensive course in CCE teaching methods to help teachers to successfully administer CCE in schools.

**Mind Champions Academy (MCA)** - Joint initiative between Grand

Master Viswanathan Anand and NIIT Limited, that promotes the game of Chess in schools across India. The academy offers a chess certification program in association with IGNOU.

**How do your interactive classrooms and labs enhance teaching and learning experiences?**

**Benefits of Content Based Solution:**

**TLM:** Innovative Teaching Learning Material (iTLM) allows teachers to prepare their lessons in advance and share interesting, relevant data and facts.

**Visualisation:** The core concepts are covered using multimedia. This helps learners visualise abstract concept and enhances retention.

**Interaction:** This feature allows teachers and students to interact with the content and hence makes the learning process livelier with active learner participation.

**Automate:** The automate feature provides alternate animations for a concept and hence provides different approach to the same concept.

**Who all are your partners for technology and software?**

**Partners**

Key Curriculum Press, USA-

Fourier Systems, USA-

Infospectrum India Limited-

Ncomputing -

Genee World-

Regional Institute of Education (RIM),

Mysore-

**Products**

Geometers Sketchpad, Math Software and Math Manipulative

Data Loggers and Data Sensors

School Management Solutions

Shared Computing Technology

Interactive Whiteboard Technology

Academic Alliance and Co-design and

evaluation and research



CORPORATE DIARY

**Apply:** It allows teachers to customise the content as per their requirements.

**Benefits of Lab Based Solution:** Research shows carefully designed experiences with real or simulated investigations can substantially improve long-term understanding of concepts. Students rely on the evidence at hand instead of upon pre-determined data. Students are encouraged to think by interpreting observed events rather than memorising concepts. They verify Math concepts and properties using models, measurement and activities. They construct geometrical figures and explore the mathematical properties using Geometer's Sketchpad Software Learning by doing promotes cause and effect thinking.

**How do your solutions keep you on in the run?**

**Strong Content** - Performance-based and learner-centered design methodology aligns the outcomes of learning to key customer objectives.

**Wide Range of Solutions** - School solutions address the needs of all stakeholders, including teachers, students and management.

**Mature Quality Processes** - 30 Years of experience in Content Development for a variety of Customers across the world ranging from Individuals, Corporate, Universities to Schools.

**Consultancy Approach** - Consultative selling by which schools can adopt NGuru solutions are based on their need, affordability and overall technology roadmap and vision.

**Continuous Support** - Each of our solution is intertwined with the appropriate support Intervention which helps the teachers and schools adopt these solutions easily and meaningfully.

**Please share your plans to establish NGuru as a holistic solution provider for K-12 education.**

We plan to extend our solutions to homes through association with schools, thereby extending our coverage of the learning ecosystem and involving parents. Moreover, we also plan to continue to build and extend learning platforms and communities. That way we build a



very close learning ecosystem involving schools, teachers, industry, parents and students. We also have in pipeline the concept of model school with holistic and integral development of students touching upon physical, emotional and aesthetic development in addition to academics. On the other hand, adequate ICT infrastructure, internet connectivity and full time computer teacher are our basic focus. The ratio we look to is Teacher: Student - 1:25; Classroom: Student - 1:40.

The implementation status depicts 2,500 of 6,000 are in educationally backward districts and 2,500 under PPP and modalities of remaining 1,000 are yet to be finalised. On the other hand the funding pattern says the 11<sup>th</sup> plan had 75 percent from Centre and 25 percent from states whereas the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan equalises it in 50:50 ratio; however, in case of the special category states, 90 percent are from Centre and 10 percent from states.

**Please tell us the major challenges you have faced and still do in the PPP model?**

- Few states showing interest
- Few takers from private sector
- Huge Investment

- Lack of model for shared investments and operating expenses and time frame for contract
- Authentication or security of Private Partner transactions not clear

- Non-standard policies and practices across states
- Political uncertainties or risks

**What are the key challenges you face while helping schools adopt these technologies?**

To point out the main problems, we often find

**Teachers not Tech-savvy** - Teachers and staff members are not tech savvy and are adverse at using technology. This poses a challenge while selling and installing NGuru solutions.

**Price Competition** - The school education market is dominated by local players which sell off the shelf solutions and hence poses tough price competition.

**Poor Infrastructure** - Tier II and III cities still do not have good power infrastructure. Also broadband connectivity is limited in these cities that make it difficult to run the NGuru solutions smoothly.

**Are there any training solutions that you provide to the school teachers?**

Each solution comes bundled with training programs for teachers. It varies from three days to one week depending on the complexity of solution and also the adaptability of the person being taught. For few solutions training is given every year till a teacher becomes comfortable using the technology. We also provide computer literacy program for teachers.

**What are your future plans in expanding your reach in schools?**

We are increasing our reach to tier three and four towns by expanding the sales team as well as using channel partners to sell in locations where direct reach may not be feasible. Thus we are using references from customer schools for reaching out to more schools. Offering new products and solutions to existing customer schools so as to fulfill their ongoing requirements. \\\