

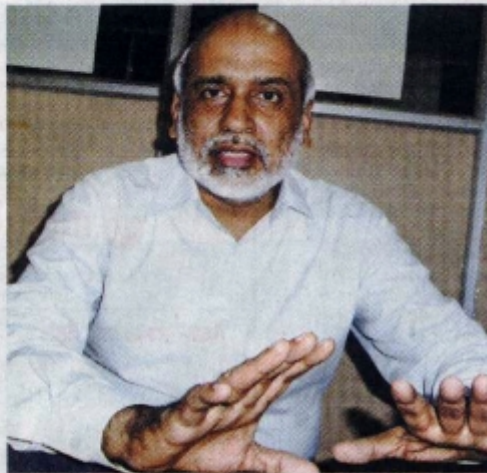
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‘IT is here to stay’

Information Technology has changed the shape of many businesses, and continues to seep vertically into most businesses. And there is nothing to worry about IT in a country like India, where the actual use of it has only begun. Those positive words came from P. Rajendran, Director and Chief Operating Officer of NIIT, a leading talent development organisation that currently offers learning solutions to individuals and enterprises in about 40 countries, during a chat with *The Hindu-EducationPlus*.

Mr. Rajendran, an alumnus of IIT Delhi, is actively involved in many professional bodies including Nasscom. He insists that a fall in profit should not be considered a loss. "The IT sector in the country was growing at 27 per cent. The projected growth remains at 16 to 17 per cent. And this year, we have done \$47 billion business... and a fall in profit does not mean loss," he said.

According to him, the interdependence today is so much that we always think



P. Rajendran, Director and Chief Operating Officer of NIIT

that unless they do well, we too cannot do well. This factor gives the IT sector a feeling of jitter, he says. Mr. Rajendran says that unlike the financial sector, numbers do not always work in IT. "The domestic market in our country is yet to touch IT. The whole paradigm of IT has been built based on

demand outside the country," he said.

Citing examples from the early 80s when a couple of IIT Delhi graduates started NIIT, Mr. Rajendran says IT has overhauled the phase of business across the world. "It has changed the way an existing job happens." And it is not just about creating

new segment; it is about affecting the existing segments positively. Mr. Rajendran prophesies that the country can make huge leaps through private-public partnerships in IT education.

"It's time we had a rethink. The government has to do so much in education. And we cannot think that the government alone can do it. This is where the financial and intellectual capabilities of private people ought to be tapped," he said.

There is a huge and exciting space for government-private partnership in education, he says. The new model school project proposed by the Union government in public-private partnership (PPP), according to him, is a bold step. Mr. Rajendran says 'employability' rather than 'employment' has become the keyword today. The days were gone when parents used to insist on their children joining only solid companies for job security. "Today, your only security is your employability and not employment," he said. "Lifelong employment actually

depends on somebody else. But lifelong employability lies in your hands." Therefore, any investment in training employees to equip them to work better in future is considered an asset.

Changed mindsets

Thanks to IT and the changed mindset it brought about, we find youngsters sporting exciting designations such as CMD and MD. "There was a time when you could never see a company owner without grey hair," he said. Mr. Rajendran says IT cannot disappear at any cost. Everything is dependent on IT.

Without IT nothing happens in the country. Businesses got redefined with the diversification of IT. Mr. Rajendran, who oversees the day-to-day operations as well as the organisation-building function at NIIT, says media have a significant role to play in portraying the correct picture in IT. "When 300 people lose their jobs, it gets project. But people fail to see that 30,000 people are inducted elsewhere." It is integrating more and more to businesses.