IGNOU-NIIT to go for skill-based courses

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(From left) IGNOU V-C V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai, NIIT chairman Rajendra S. Pawar and NIIT's Individual Learning Solutions president G. Raghavan

THE Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has tied up with IT training company NIIT to offer a slew of programmes aimed at skill building and enhancing employability. The MoU on this partnership was announced by Prof V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai, vice-chancellor, IGNOU, and Rajendra S. Pawar, chairman, NIIT, on March 10.

Under this partnership, IGNOU and NIIT plan to collaborate in domains like information technology and management sciences for its India and international operations. Joint programmes in IT would include standalone undergraduate degrees or combined Master's programmes. An Executive MBA (15 to 18 months) will be offered as part of the management programmes. The tie-up will also be extended to the Finishing School programmes that would be available as an optional course for IGNOU students and alumni.

According to G. Raghavan, President, NIIT's Individual Learning Solutions, NIIT, the new programmes will benefit 10+2 students, graduates and workers. "The duration of the courses which will start from the academic session starting July this year will range from six months to five years and the fees will vary between Rs 15,000 and 1.5 lakh, depending upon the course, location and other parameters," he added.

Pillai called it a historic collaboration between two giants. "Education without employability can lead to problems. By 2020, 60 to 70 per cent of the world's youth population would be in India. So we've to create employability not only for India but for the entire world. To achieve the targets,

Pawar said it's the big idea whose time has come today. "IGNOU and NIIT were born around the same time, in the 1980s and both have achieved fairly good objectives since then. There are enormous possibilities and it's a huge task. The NIIT-IGNOU partnership will seek to contribute to large-scale skill development, inspired by the Prime Minister's skills mission," he added.

With the return of strong hiring outlook, industry would be on the lookout for job-ready talent. According to industry experts, more than 900,000 jobs are likely to be created this year in India, of which over 350,000 new jobs will be added in the IT services companies alone.

Prof Manohar Lal, director of the School of Information and Computer Sciences (SOCIS) of IGNOU said, "Democratisation of computer education is the call of today. Taking the state-of-the-art IT education to the doorstep of the learners, everywhere and anywhere, is a challenge we have undertaken."

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