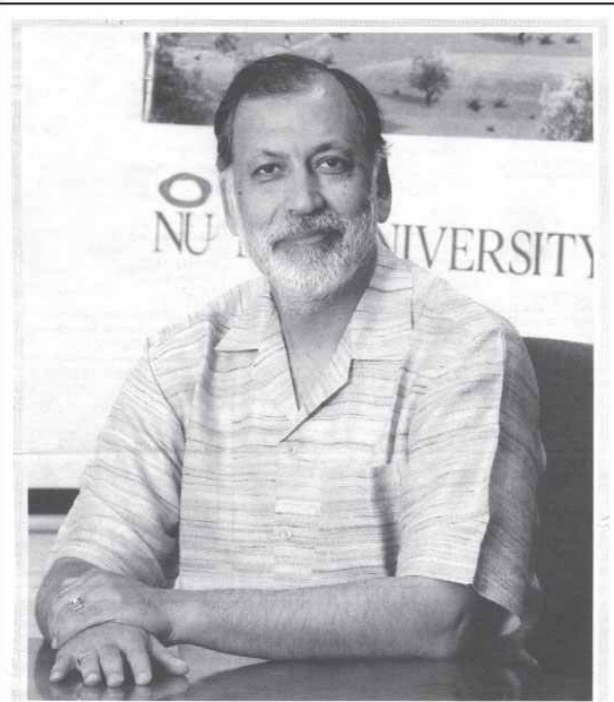


NIIT in the News





Talent Incubator

RAJENDRA S. PAWAR

Chairman, NIIT

FEW individuals stand out for their contributions to India's IT success story more than NIIT founder Rajendra S. Pawar. Back in 1980, when Pawar was looking for funds to start an IT education centre, many people thought he would end up wasting his qualifications. Being a visionary in the true sense, Pawar persisted, for he knew that IT was going to be the next big thing for the country's economy. Jammu-born Pawar, an old student of Scmdia School, Gwalior, co-founded NIIT in 1981 along with his friend and electrical engineering batchmate from IIT Delhi, Vijay K. Thadani, under the mentorship of HCL Chairman Shiv Nadar, thus becoming the pioneer of IT education in the country. NIIT today offers training solutions in IT, business process outsourcing, banking

WAY FORWARD

Rajendra Pawar's youngest bratchild, NIIT University, has formally taken off with the admission of its first full B.Tech. batch of 110 students this

year. The university, according to Pawar, will produce industry-ready professionals who'll bridge the yawning skills deficit in the country.

finance and insurance, executive management education, and communication and professional life skills, reaching out to more than 5 million learners every year. It operates more than 450 schools in 40 countries, offers IT programmes for schools, and has provided computer-based learning to nearly 7.8 million students in more than 15,000 government and private institutions. After computer education, Pawar also led NIIT's foray into the software and services market, establishing NIIT Technologies, a global IT solutions organisation in 2004. Today, the NIIT Group encompasses two businesses — NIIT Technologies Ltd, the software and services arm, and NIIT Ltd,

the global talent development corporation. Elected Nasscom chairman and awarded the Padma Bhushan last year, Pawar is also a member of the Prime Minister's National Council on Skill Development and the Planning Commission's Task Force on Skill Development. With so much on his hand, Pawar still finds the time to nurture his newest baby — the NIIT University, blossoming slowly in the shadow of the Aravallis in Neemrana, Rajasthan. The university has emerged out of his idea of education being powered by curiosity and not conformity, and it has already emerged as a quality institution within driving distance from Delhi. Pawar's days tend to be busy, but he still finds time to savour his favourite form of music — ghazals, especially those sung by Mehdi Hasan. They keep his fertile mind ticking away.

7.8m

The number of students who have studied at NIIT since its inception in 1981

Mail Today, New Delhi, July 31, 2012



Google, NIIT join hands to train IT professionals

Our Bureau

New Delhi, July 21

Google has launched a programme to train young professional developers and cloud computing professionals, in partnership with NIIT Ltd

The programme, Google Web Academy, is aimed at bridging the digital skills gap in India and creating "high-quality, Google-qualified" talent pool for the online industry. NIIT will be Google's first partner to offer specialised courses through its centres across the country, while Google will provide the training curricula and certification standards for the advanced training programmes, a Google

release said. The Academy, initially launched in India, would subsequently be introduced in other emerging countries as well.

INTERNET ECONOMIES

Mr Rajan Anandan, Vice-President and Managing Director, Google India, said, "As the Indian internet market continues to show robust growth, we believe a capacity building programme is the need of the hour. Google Web Academy is part of our initiative for emerging Internet economies."

The courses offered by NIIT will include certification programmes for online pro-

fessionals. It will cover topics such as search engine marketing, optimising online presence with web analytics and enhancing business productivity with Google products and technologies.

Later, the companies would also introduce technical courses for IT professionals and developers and cover topics such as building new Web and mobile applications using Google technologies. It will also cover Web optimisation — bandwidth and loading performance, introduction to cloud computing and others.

aesha.datta
@thehindu.co.in

Hindu Business Line, Hyderabad, July 22, 2012

NEWSBYTES

WEB ACADEMY

Google has recently introduced a comprehensive training programme for young professionals in India in alliance with NIIT Limited. The programme, named 'Google Web Academy' (www.niitgooglewebacademy.com), aims to bridge the digital skill gap in the country and help students and professionals to capitalise on the emerging job market for the online industry. The programme, Google Web Academy, will be initially offered in India, and subsequently launched in other parts of the emerging world.

The Times of India, New Delhi, July 23, 2012



NEWS BOARD

WEB ACADEMY

Google has introduced a comprehensive training programme for young professionals in India in alliance with NIIT Limited. The programme named 'Google Web Academy' (<http://www.niitgooglewebacademy.com/>), will bridge the digital skill gap in the country and help students and professionals capitalise on the emerging job market for the online industry. Under the initiative, NIIT will be Google's first partner to offer specialised courses through its centres across the country.

Google will provide NIIT with its world-leading training curricula and certification standards to offer advanced training programmes that are specially designed to create a pool of high quality Google-qualified professionals and help young professionals to gain useful skills required in the job market for the online space. The programme will be initially offered in India, and subsequently launched in other parts of the emerging world.

The courses offered by NIIT under this programme will include certification programmes for online professionals covering topics like search engine marketing, optimising online presence with web analytics; enhance business productivity with Google products and technologies. Subsequently, the programme will also offer technical courses for IT professionals and developers covering topics like building new web and mobile applications using Google technologies, integration across Google products and 3rd party APIs, Web optimisation - bandwidth & loading performance, Introduction to cloud computing, including web standards, System integrator - Google Apps for Business, including configuration, deployment and management and Performance tracking & monetisation (Google Analytics, SEM).

Tribune, Chandigarh, July 25, 2012



NIIT to train Tax Returns Preparers

NIIT Limited has strengthened its partnership with the Department of Income Tax (DIT) to create a pool of trained and certified Tax Return Preparers (TRPs) across the country as part of a Tax Return Preparers Scheme (TRPS).

TRPS is an initiative by the Department of Income Tax, Government of India, to increase awareness of tax laws through larger community participation, with NIIT being mandated to train and certify Tax Return Preparers (TRPs).

According to a press release from the NIIT, the company will utilise its nationwide network to test graduates across 110 locations, and select 5,000 candidates who will undergo a rigorous training programme on income tax filing procedures.

The trained candidates will be referred to as 'Certified Tax Return Preparers' and will obtain a unique identification number from the Department of Income Tax, which will authorise them under Income Tax Act, 1961 to work as self-employed Tax Return Preparers.

A graduate in one of many select

disciplines can apply for this scheme. The training will begin with a 15-day self-study period through the online Learning Management System and the handbooks, followed by 11 days of classroom training.

The training blends case-study illustrations, task-based interactive and close to real life practice exercises. The training content will be created by experts and the training will be delivered by tax professionals.

Graduates who successfully complete the training and certification exam will be issued a certificate and a unique identification number which will authorise them under the Income Tax Act, 1961 to work as self-employed Tax Return Preparers (TRPs).

The Tax Preparers will also assist the Department in other taxpayer initiatives like Aayakar Sewa Kendra, Tax Kiosks, Customer Contact Centre, Register for Home Visits, E-return intermediaries and E-filing utilities for TRPs.

More details at
www.trpscheme.com.

Hindu, Chennai, July 23, 2012



PARTNERSHIP STRENGTHENED
NIIT Limited has strengthened its partnership with the Department of Income Tax (DIT) to create a pool of trained and certified tax return preparers (TRPs) across the country as part of the Tax Return Preparers Scheme (TRPS). TRPS is an initiative by the Department of Income Tax, government of India to increase awareness of tax laws through larger community participation, with NIIT being mandated to train and certify tax return preparers (TRPs) across the country. NIIT will select 5,000 candidates for this initiative. Interested graduates can visit www.trpscheme.com to apply.

The Times of India, New Delhi, July 16, 2012

Graduate? Become IT Return Preparer

The Income Tax department in partnership with computer education company NIIT and Taxmann, a portal for tax and corporate law, is offering career option to graduates to become a Certified Tax Return Preparer.

Tax Return Preparer (TRP) can assist small and medium tax payers in preparing their returns of income. The Government has now decided to increase their area of operations by including training on Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) returns and Service Tax returns to these TRPs. Students who have completed their graduation from recognised universities in subjects such as law, economics, statistics, mathematics, commerce, management and are in the age group of 21 to 35 are eligible for the course. The selection is done from students who have applied for the course and process of selection is done by centers individually which are spread all over the country. The selected individuals after undergo training at NIIT. These students have to go through Assessment Examination successfully to be certified as a Tax Return Preparer.

Further details about the course are available at www.trpscheme.com.

GARGEYA

Hans India, Hyderabad, July 31, 2012



'Aggression is motivation'

World chess champion Anand says luck plays huge role in chess

ABHISHEK PUROHIT ■ NEW DELHI

You may not link aggression with chess — nor with five time world champion Viswanathan Anand. It is, as per general perception, for physical sports. But, according to ever calm and composed Anand, aggression is a driving force that motivates a player at crucial junctures.

"Aggression is a very useful tool. Players use it for extra motivation. It is done simply to make the atmosphere more intense. I don't show it openly and but I keep motivating myself by some simple thoughts and that is important. I keep myself motivated by thinking how horrifying would it be if I lose this match or that," Anand said during a 10 year celebration of NIIT Mind Champions Academy here on Friday.

"When I played against (Veselin) Topalov in the World Championships match in Sofia, they wanted to make the atmosphere tense. I tried to make the game as long as possible and that I did in my style. I was thinking 'How happy Topalov will be if he beats me and I am not going to give him that happiness'. You learn these things with experience," he added.

Asked how he held his own against Boris Gelfand in the World Championships in Moscow (Russia), which he went on to win after playing many draws and even losing a couple of times, Anand said that he tried to make every training day a bit more special than the previous one.

"It comes with experience. You can't just be angry or being upset about a loss. Eventually, you know that you can make it. You have to go through a lot of routine work. I try to make every day



World chess champion Viswanathan Anand poses for a group photo with school children during a function

PTI

a little bit more special," he said.

Anand has been a professional since 1990 and has become world champion five times. His professional career of 20 years has given him many achievements. But, like many other sportspeople, he has also seen many highs and lows. Anand feels that talent and skill cannot always help you win. Sometimes you need 'divine intervention and luck' to keep moving ahead.

"Many a times, some moves are just a huge leap into the unknown. My intuition and informed guesswork turned out to be right in many situations. But it depends on the constant training of psychological functions and it is more likely that I am right in the exact places I know and am more used to it.

"Sometimes, even in tourna-

ments in which you were playing your best chess, you need some divine help. You need a little bit of luck. At times you need something to happen in your favour. During these times you feel only talent does not work though it is not something which happens often," Anand said.

Anand, however, said that he wants to improve his ELO rating from the current 2780 and take it past 2800.

"Of course, my ELO rating has gone down and I want it to go up again and touch 2800," he said.

In a career where almost everything has been achieved, things start getting monotonous. However, Anand, who is one short of emulating Garry Kasparov's six world titles, feels that motivation is still their and

it is the love for chess that drives him to keep playing.

"I face a hell lot of question like this. Lot of people ask what next and how long I will play. I said I will play as long as I am enjoying my game. Intention and desire are still there. And about targets and winning titles, I don't have any structured target that I want to win these many world titles and all. I see the sixth title as the next one, rather than as the sixth one," he said, rulling out the retirement plans.

On the question of Bharat Ratna, Anand said that he is not the one to decide on it. "I don't think about it at all. It is upto those people. It's their duty to decide who should get it. It is something you don't campaign for. You don't make hunger strikes for it," he said.

Pioneer, New Delhi, July 21, 2012



Vishy unplugged

NIITIN SHARMA
CHANDIGARH, JULY 17

HE might have been five-time world chess champion but 'Gentleman Champion' Viswanathan Anand still rates his first winning point as a junior chess player as his best point in his 20-year-old career. Although the win came after his opponent did not turn up for the match, Anand still rates his first win as the foundation of his stellar career. Anand shared some moments like these during an interaction with businessmen and corporates in a special interaction at the CII Headquarters.

On his first memories of chess

I lost my first three matches in a junior tournament in Chennai and when I came to know that my opponent in the fourth match would not turn up, I was nervous. The first 45 minutes made me nervous as I kept looking at the watch. During that time, a player used to get one point after the opponent would not turn up after one hour of the match. I would often stare at my mother and she would ask me to stay calm. Finally, when my opponent did not turn up, I thanked God as that was my first winning point in chess. I will not ever forget that point at all my life.

On achieving the Grandmaster norm in 1987

I spent two years waiting for the title to come. I would try new strategies and when it did not happen, I was bit sad. Then in 1987, I took a three-month rest due to Class XII exams and that break from the sport worked well for me. Three months after my exams, I got the Grandmaster title. The period after that was also a learning curve for me. For two years, I did not have a goal and would often falter or lacked motivation. I talked to some of the fellow GMs and they also shared the same thing to me. Later when I qualified for the world title, I realised that I have to set new goals.

On the rivalry with Gary Kasparov and Anatoly Karpov

I played matches against both the players in 1990 and sometimes, they would say that Anand was a coffee house player. And he would not go far. But I did not see as a threat. I simply concentrated on my game plan. Yes, some players idolised them a lot but that time in the late 90s was crucial for me. It made me realise that I belonged to the world stage and most of my crucial wins came during that time. During the 1995 World Championship title match against Gary Kasparov at the 107th floor of the World Trade Centre, we sat in a cube. Kasparov would go and slam the door after every move. It was his tactic of unsettling me. I still believe that I should have protested, which I did not do eventually.

On his World title matches against Veselin Topolov and Boris Gelfand

Topolov is a very clever player. One of his habits is that he would never talk during a match. And he would never offer and accept a draw offer. He would always play in dry positions and would tire the opponent. But I made it a point that the preparation for the match against him started at least a year in advance. As for Gelfand, he is a close friend. His son and mine are of the same age and during the World Championship at Moscow early this year, we would often talk about them. He plays fairly and it was a fair match. I knew that I had to score early wins in tie-break and luckily that happened for me.

On life away from chess

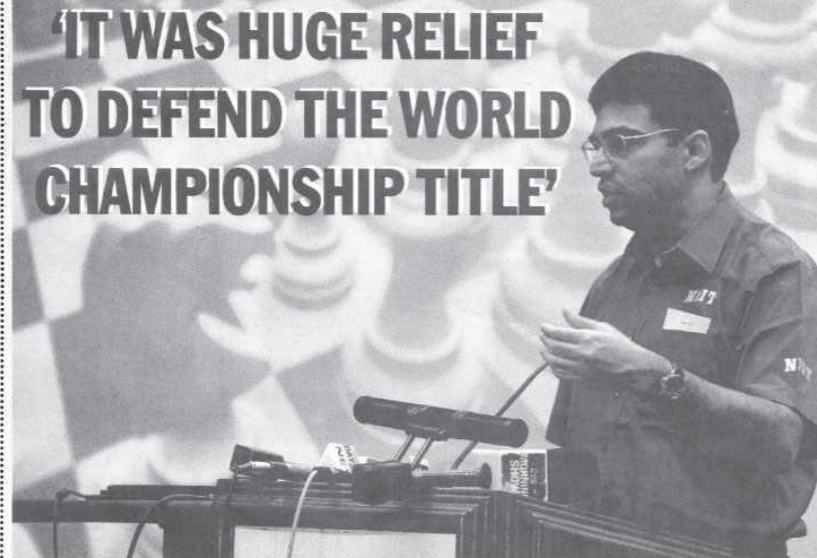
I have been busy since the birth of my son last year. Whenever at home, I wake up late and spend time with him. Sometimes, we go for shopping in the near-by market and my wife Aruna would prepare food at home. But sometimes I do think about chess. In chess, we have ELO ratings which always end with 5 or 10. Once, my wife put a numerical lock to a safe and the number was 2706. I told her that it does not relate to ELO rating as mine was hovering around the same figure at that time. And she replied that June 27 was our marriage anniversary and hence the number.

On Challenge from younger player like Norway's Magnus Carlsen

Magnus is a fine chess player and I am looking forward to the match with him next year. I am 42 now and I have not thought about retirement as yet. It will happen at one stage, but I am not thinking about it now.



'IT WAS HUGE RELIEF TO DEFEND THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE'



Viswanathan Anand, five-time World Champion, addresses mediapersons in Chandigarh on Tuesday.

TASHIL LUNDUP
CHANDIGARH, JULY 17

IF someone like Viswanathan Anand, five-time World Champion, says he has no intention of stopping and there were many more things in life to achieve, then it is expected those words would be heard with utmost attention. In Chandigarh, almost after 25 years to present the NIIT Turning Point Scholarship to Rajat Kapoor, an underprivileged college student from Ambala, Anand was at his impeccable best, answering to queries ranging from his successful defence of world championship title, the importance of making chess a part of school curriculum, the tense moments before a big match, his role model and also about the much-hyped Bharat Ratna award.

more game left in the championship. At least there was something to cheer about," said Anand. That extra something provided him with the spark and spurred him on to win the title. Gelfand committed a mistake in the eight game which allowed Anand to make a comeback. That, according to Anand, was the turning point of the match. However, it was after 12 games and four tie-breaks, Anand who was leading after the 14th game, when Anand smelled victory. Those rapid chess tie-breakers, according to Anand,

"The night before the rapid chess tie-breaker, I kept thinking about the outcome of the game. Also, the match could have gone on and on. It was a huge relief when I finally won the title," Anand shared. The ecstasy of winning the match was marred by criticism from Vladimir Kramnik of Russia, who thought Anand offered to draw the 12th game which he could have easily

won, and took the match to play-off. "As far as I know, he behaved impeccably when we met. Kramnik and I went to meet the Russian president and he showed exemplary behaviour. Anyway, my only reaction during the match was to win the title. I cannot respond to all the criticisms," Anand said in an authoritative voice. So, how does it feel to become the World Champion for the fifth time and the fourth in a row? "I do have the feeling of a world champion and I am happy to defend the title. I know it (winning the titles) is a record of sort but the most important thing was the successfully defend the title. There are many critical moments and these come down to few minutes, even few seconds in the end. If you don't grab the opportunity then all your hard work goes to waste," he asserted. Anand, currently enjoying a purple patch in his life, said he will continue playing as long as he enjoys the feel-

ing. "Something drew me towards chess. As long as I enjoy, there is no reason to stop playing. I certainly have no intention of stopping," he asserted. He will play in Brazil, London and Holland in the coming months. Anand certainly did not stop here. There were flurry of other queries to follow. Anand, who draws inspiration from her mother who taught him chess, shared chess should be taken to schools, like the states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh have done.

"There is a connection between chess and academics. Playing chess a couple of weeks help in developing certain skills like making strategies and looking at situation from different perspectives. Only chess can teach you that," Anand, who also like to indulge himself in sports like badminton and table tennis, rolled on.

Speaking on the occasion, Anand shared his mantra for success: Keep on practising and you will get good at it. He also shared his happiness over the crop of next-generation of chess players. "Negi is a bright prospect and so is Hari Krishna. Then there is Krishnan Sasikiran and Koneru Humpy," he added.

At last when asked about the Bharat Ratna, an award which many are demanding for him, Anand replied nonchalantly: "Well, I am not going to ask it for myself. If someone proposes my name, I am grateful for their support."

Anand, currently enjoying a purple patch in his life, said he will continue playing as long as he enjoys the feel-



INDIA'S Best Companies TO WORK FOR

INDIA'S LARGEST WORKPLACE STUDY

TO WORK FOR GREAT PLACE TO WORK 2012
A STUDY BY THE ECONOMIC TIMES & WORK

Mahima Puri

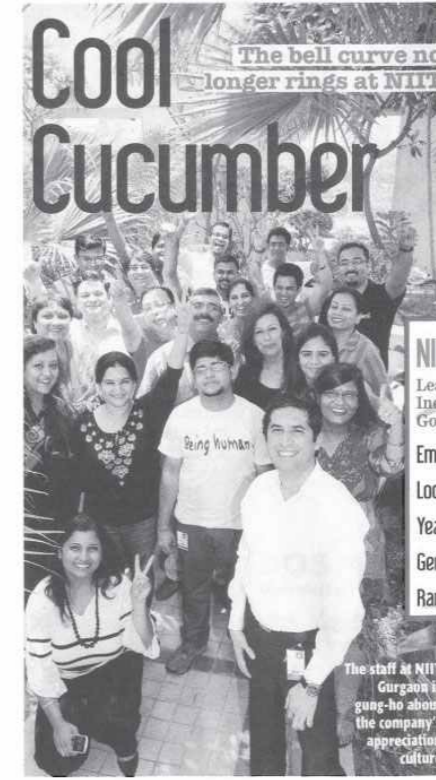
NIIT has reinvented itself as an employer over the year, bringing its HR policies in line with new age expectations. Understanding that it has to appeal to youth, the 30-year-old organisation introduced a series of initiatives like cool contests that encouraging peer appreciation. Perhaps the most radical step it took was to get rid of the Bell Curve, something that many companies still swear by. Instead, NIIT introduced Performance Assessment & Career Enhancer (PACE) last year, an initiative aimed at recognising the performance of every individual who meets his pre-defined goals in the organisation.

This annual assessment system takes into consideration not only the achievements of an employee, but also the values and behaviour used to achieve those results. "Demand from employees is what gave a push to this initiative," says Shampi Venkatesh, chief people officer, NIIT. "It will take some time for us to see the results of this system that has been put in place since the beginning of last financial year, but the initial response has been tremendous in the organisation." She explains that evaluation of performance is auto-calculated by the online system, based on the Balanced Scorecard, without the supervisor having to give any performance ratings.

NIIT also introduced an Art of Supervision programme for managers, wherein they are provided training and support before they start handling a team. For its new recruits,

NIIT introduced N-Tie, in which employees are assessed at intervals of 90, 180 and 365 days. The programme is aimed at allowing new NIITians to settle in, understand their own potential, start performing and finally, enter the evaluation process. The assessment allows the company to understand if the recruits are the right fit for the company, if they have understood their roles, the business and if they will contribute to organisational growth.

The company has put in place Mobility Maps, a view of the typical career paths for various roles in NIIT. "Mobility Maps consist of both Intra-business unit and Inter-business unit vertical and lateral paths. We encourage job rotation at regu-



lar intervals among employees, which gives them a great deal of exposure across the company," Shampi says.

Peer appreciation was something that was on the radar in the past one year at NIIT. Employees regularly give e-WOW cards to each other as tokens of their appreciation. At the corporate office in Gurgaon, every floor has an 'AppreciaTree', on which employees put notes appreciating and thanking their colleagues. NIIT People Awards allows employees to nominate and vote for each other under categories like FUNtastic, Cool Cucumber, Good Samaritan, Ms and Mr Fitness First, Ms and Mr Super Style and Service with a Smile (for people in support functions).

NIIT also created Passion Groups for employees with common interest areas like yoga, entertainment, dance, cricket, photography and mountaineering. Another initiative, called the HATS OFF program, recognises the outstanding behav-

our that an employee has demonstrated in achieving the strategic goals of the organisation. It not only rewards performance, but also recognises desirable behavior at work place, long service and upward recognition, which means team members recognise their supervisors as well.

HATS OFF also allows employees to collect redeemable points, which they can exchange for electronics and air tickets.

NIIT involves employees corporate social responsibility initiatives through its iGive program (launched last year), which allows each employee four days leave to help contribute to the betterment of society.

NIIT LTD.
Learning Solutions for
Individuals, Corporates,
Government, Colleges & Schools
Employees: 3,308
Location: Gurgaon
Year of India OPS: 1981
Gender Ratio (F/M): 1:1.67
Rank 2011: 23

The staff at NIIT Gurgaon is gung-ho about the company's appreciation culture



GARBAGE DUMPED ALONG THE WALL OF THE DELHI
ADMINISTRATION FLATS, GULABI BAGH, OBSTRUCTS THE
RIGHT OF WAY.

Workshop for science teachers

htpacenotes

DLDV Model School, Shalimar Bagh, organised a workshop for science teachers of primary and secondary classes under the guidance of their principal, Adarsh Kohli. More than 100 teachers from 12 schools of Delhi and NCR attended the workshop. The principal said that in the pres-

ent scenario, it is imperative for science teachers to remain abreast of the latest in the field of science education. Eminent resource persons from the world of science teachers were invited to enrich the teachers with their expertise. In the biology session, Dr Rashmi Wardhan, associate professor, Shivaji College, talked about the recent research done in the field of bio-technology. Dr Meenu Sarabhai, assistant professor, Hindu College, talked about green chemistry. Teachers were made aware of the hazardous effects of chemicals on life and were also made to learn to perform experiments in an eco-friendly manner. Dr Gagan Gupta, associate professor of physics, Department of Education in Science and



A workshop for teachers was conducted at Montfort School, Ashok Vihar, to help them raise the quality of the institute.

Mathematics, NCERT, showed the teachers activities in physics, which are must for science learning.

Montfort School, Ashok Vihar, too, conducted a workshop for its staff. The teachers were made aware of how to

raise the quality of the institute. The workshop was conducted by NIIT. Rachna Swaroop, the consultant, commented that Montfort was already on the path of constant enhancement, especially in spiritual development.

HT Live, North Delhi, July 17, 2012

ADMISSIONS

NIIT Imperia invites applications for the ninth batch of senior management programme in association with IIM Calcutta. Managers who are likely to take on the essentials of functional skills of management and are aiming for leadership roles and practicing senior managers, who wish to stay updated with contemporary management thoughts, can opt for the programme. The applicant should be working professionals or self employed or graduates (10+2+3) in any discipline with a minimum of 50% marks. The last date for submission of forms is August 22.

The Times of India
New Delhi, July 30, 2012



'Chess players are no more eccentric than other people'



From left: Shekhar Gupta, Editor-in-Chief, The Express Group, Viswanathan Anand, and Rajendra S Pawar, chairman, NIIT

PHOTOS: NEELAM PIVDARSHI, SAHU, TIKHON, AMY MEHRA, DINAKARAN

At the Express Adda presented by Reid & Taylor in association with Olive Beach at New Delhi last week, world chess champion Viswanathan Anand was quick-witted and insightful. In conversation with Shekhar Gupta, Editor-in-Chief of The Express Group, and Rajendra S Pawar, chairman of NIIT, he said though Indians playing chess were highly regarded by the world — like those in technology, fashion and IT — the enormity of social changes needed in India remain as baffling as ever

TALKING ABOUT an analogy between what happens on the chess board and other sports, Viswanathan Anand, 41, spoke about Roger Federer's dismantling of his opponent in a way that is a very beautiful thing. He drew parallels between Federer's mastery over Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray at Wimbledon 2012 and said it was able to lure disinterested opponents while playing with white pieces. He also spoke about how he interprets the body language of opponents across the board and on why most chess players are 'normal people'.

On chess/players vis-à-vis cricket/cricketers in India:

When I started playing chess, the big thing was will we ever have GM (Grand Master). But when I started winning titles, people showed a little more interest in chess. Over time it got better because the coverage improved and I started hearing slightly more sophisticated questions. Like the openings that I might have selected or some other details. Something like the sophisticated questions posed on cricket in India.

On increased awareness about chess:

In Frankfurt there was a big rapid tournament. There was a Parsi who owned an Indian restaurant. He used to come and watch the tournament every year. He once told me, "I follow all the activities of the Indian hockey team but for you I make an exception and come to watch you play." I was quite touched by that.

On interpreting body language:

It has happened very often that if I am hesitating over taking some sort of gamble, but I see that my opponent's body language is not very comfortable — he is shifting uncomfortably in his chair — then that encourages me to take a bigger gamble. I also remember a lot of instances where I saw the right moves but my opponent's body language was so tense that I made the second best move, doubting myself. Nowadays you have to consciously force yourself to take hard decisions but at the same time keep a calm demeanor while playing.

On chess players being 'crazy':

I don't think it's very true. When you have colourful characters like Bobby Fischer, it is very difficult to compare people that all chess players are not like him. 'Crazy' chess players are reported on much more than the sane ones. I would say, on an average, chess players are no more eccentric than most other people. Most chess players I know are very normal people.

On the analogy people make (chess terminology) with other sports:

The first thing is as long as you see what you see, it doesn't matter if it is accurate or not. It just represents an idea in your head. The second thing is when I

see other sports it is also often recognised factors or emotions which I can identify with. I was recently watching Wimbledon and I noticed a pattern in Federer's play. At crucial moments in the match when he was serving for the set or playing a break point, something used to go wrong. Federer used to be disappointed, he used to calm himself, utter some words and his next shot would be absolutely amazing. However, Djokovic completely disintegrated in the semi-final and the same thing happened to Murray. I identified with Federer's pattern because it happens a lot in chess, when I am just exchanging whites or am stuck in a certain opening and the ability to bounce back is quite similar. For commentators it is different. If they want to say that something is planned, they immediately resort to chess because they think all of chess is planned.

On man versus computers in chess:

In 1980 we just laughed at the computers because they just could not beat us. But once the computers started processing two million moves per second, it stopped being funny. When Deep Blue beat Kasparov we thought it was a freak occurrence but since then they have just gotten better. I grew up with the idea that we were smarter than computers but once they started beating us, it was a blow. I realised two things — the first was that chess was essentially a game of tactics, manoeuvring strategy and profound thought. It was short-term tactics which merely happened to look as if it was long-term judgment.

On parental pressure in chess:

Chess ability is different, some children learn fast then taper off, for some children chess is a gradual process. It is a gradual process. It is a very good thing to get your doubts cleared but doubts will only come if you play constantly. My mother taught me how to play chess. She put me in a chess club when I was six so I could play regularly. Then we went to the Philippines for a year and there they even had chess shows. My mother used to watch the show during my school time, write down important points and then share it with me when I came home. I sent in a lot of entries and won some prizes in their club. At one point the TV station called me to the studio and said, "help yourself to all the books but please don't send us any more solutions and entries".

On India's chances at the London Games:

We tend to hype our contingent a lot. This time I am cautiously optimistic about our medal chances. We have a lot of chips on the table this time around and there is a lot of hope in disciplines like archery, shooting, athletics, wrestling and boxing. But we are not the odds on favourites in any of these.

(Transcribed by Chinmay Bhargava)



Shekhar Gupta, Editor and Editor-in-Chief of The Express Group



Viswanathan Anand, world chess champion



Rajendra S Pawar, chairman of NIIT



Shekhar Gupta, Editor-in-Chief of The Express Group



Viswanathan Anand, world chess champion



Jorge Bocca de Oliveira, ambassador of Portugal to India



Shekhar Gupta, Editor-in-Chief of The Express Group



Viswanathan Anand signing autographs



Can NIIT Technologies break into big league?

From focusing on niche verticals to seeking geographic diversity, the company offers a lesson for mid-cap tech firms on how to climb up the value chain

PIYALI MANDAL
New Delhi, 4 July

NIIT Technologies might not come across as an exciting company in the Indian software industry today, an emerging star like a young Cognizant or a Mindtree. Yet, its evolution in just the last three years could make it an example of how a software company successfully adapts with changing times.

In 2009, the company found itself, like many others, confronting a worldwide recession. It had also incurred huge hedging losses of around ₹60 crore. Yet, its most difficult decision was something that confronts almost every software player in India today — namely, how to migrate from a linear model that involves growing revenue in direct proportion to headcount to something higher up on the value chain.

Post-2009, NIIT Tech decided to adopt a strategy of 'focus and differentiate'. This meant undertaking three transformational steps — focusing on just a few verticals and becoming a specialist in those segments, chasing geographic diversification and thirdly, investing in future growth which includes sales and marketing as well as strategic acquisitions. At the rate it's going, the goal of eventually becoming one of Indian IT's heavy hitters may not be wildly as improbable as it may have been three years ago.

"One of the key elements has been to transform itself from a generic service provider to a specialised domain-focused player," says Vishal Jajoo, senior research analyst from Nirmal Bang. NIIT Technologies began to focus on select verticals such as travel, insurance, banking and financial services and started acquiring Intellectual Property (IP) assets and niche capabilities in those verticals. "We believed in being the best (in select verticals), and being big enough in contrast to being the biggest and good enough," said Arvind Thakur,



NIIT is betting on three key areas — mobility, analytics and cloud computing — for future growth

CEO NIIT Technologies. The travel, as well as insurance and financial services verticals have been contributing 90 per cent of the company's incremental growth in the past few quarters.

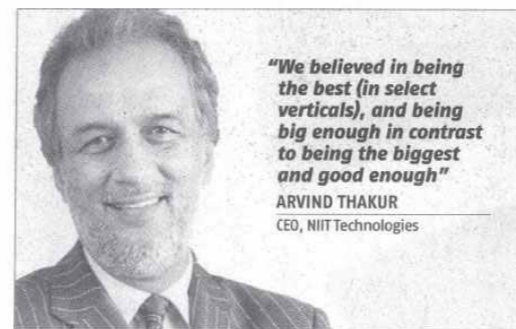
Entering new territories

The diversification into newer geographies has also helped. In 2008-09, the company used to get 50 per cent revenues from Europe, West Asia and Africa (EMEA). Now, NIIT Tech has a balanced mix. It gets 37 per cent revenues from the US, 37 per cent from EMEA, 13 per cent from Asia Pacific and rest from other geographies including India. As Arvind Mehrotra, President Asia Pacific, NIIT Technologies puts it, "The way we approach an acquisition has changed. We are looking at acquisitions to give us entry into newer geographies or areas of operations."

"Moreover, 2009 made us look at the Indian market. In that space we signed a large deal with the Border Security Force (BSF) for its "Intranet Prahari" project. The deal not only helped us get inroads into future government deals but also catapult us into the large deal league," says Mehrotra.

NIIT Technologies had bagged this ₹229-crore project last year. Under the seven-year project, network connectivity has been extended up to BSF's battalion level and it has also set up a data centre and disaster recovery centres in different seismic zones.

In some sectors, NIIT Technologies has developed IP assets to offer platform-based services, and where it does not have them, it has elected to partner with the owners of those IP assets.



"We believed in being the best (in select verticals), and being big enough in contrast to being the biggest and good enough"

ARVIND THAKUR
CEO, NIIT Technologies

For example, NIIT Technologies has deployed cargo-handling systems across some major airports in the Asia Pacific region (Beijing, Taiwan and Hong Kong), in partnership with Singapore Airport Terminal Services (SATS). In partnership with SATS, it is now taking these solutions to other markets as well. NIIT Tech in July, 2011, had signed an \$85-million partnership agreement with Georgia-based Morris Comm-

unications. Under the terms of the agreement, the media company transferred its key assets including IT infrastructure, people and applications landscape to NIIT Technologies. This JV with Morris started realising revenues from September 2011 and has contributed about ₹243 million to the revenues in Q3FY12. During Q4, the JV realised revenues of ₹245 mil-

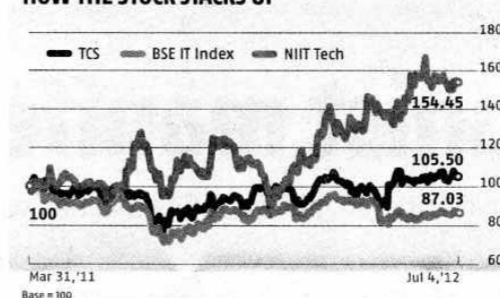
STEPPING ON THE GAS

The journey from FY09 to FY12

	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Net profit (₹crore)	114.8	126.4	182.2	197.2
YoY growth (%)	-15.1	10.0	44.2	8.2
Headcount	4238	4476	5806	7362
Ebitda (₹crore)	176.4	188.8	240.4	268.4
Ebitda margins (%)	18.0	20.7	19.5	17.0
Ratio between linear & non-linear businesses	74:26	72:28	73:27	75:25
Revenue (₹crore)	979.9	913.7	1232.3	1576.5
YoY growth (%)	4.1	-6.8	34.9	27.9

Source: Industry

HOW THE STOCK STACKS UP



Sales and marketing push

Besides deepening its vertical focus, the company also enhanced its focus on the sales and marketing team. The company hired seasoned marketing professional, Deepak Khosla, as the global head of sales and marketing last year, with the objective to sharpen its sales focus.

Khosla, who has years of marketing experience with Patni Computers Systems (now iGATE Patni), HCL and others, realised that mining existing clients is as important as acquiring new one. Apart from various other initiatives, Khosla focused on customised marketing initiatives or account-based marketing for select clients. This paid off as business from the top 10 clients grew by 39 per cent within a year.

As part of its strategy to invest in future growth, NIIT Technologies increased its spend on sales and marketing considerably in the last three

years. It spends 1.5 per cent of its revenues on sales and marketing, which is much higher than its other mid-cap peers. While the headcount pyramid remained flat, the company increased its international sales team by 20 per cent last year.

Acquisitions

NIIT Tech has also used acquisitions to help it accelerate from a four per cent YoY revenue growth in 2009, to a 28 per cent YoY revenue growth in 2012. In August 2011, it acquired Spanish software services firm Proyecta Sistemas de Informacion SA for \$7 million to strengthen its capability in the travel vertical. Proyecta sharply focuses on two segments: Travel and financial services. Almost 68 per cent of its revenues come from the travel vertical.

Now, the company says the focus on growth, especially the inorganic kind, will be ratcheted up a few notches. With an

executable order book of \$243 million, mid-cap IT firm NIIT Technologies is now setting its eyes on larger deals. The company has formed a team called the 'Elephant hunters', who would be identifying and pursuing significant transformational opportunities.

"We will be actively pursuing large deals upwards of \$25 million and have already put a team in place to identify such deals; \$25 million is our sweet spot as the number of \$100 million deals has remained static post 2009," says CEO Thakur.

Going forward, the company has already identified key areas that will add specificity to its growth — mobility, analytics and cloud computing.

"We have three clear horizons. The first, is the current revenue generators like application development and others the second, are the ones where we have made investments in 2009 and are now paying off and the third is the area where we are investing now, which includes cloud computing, analytics and mobility," said Thakur.

So, what does the future hold for NIIT Technologies? "The new deal additions and acquisitions may stress the balance sheet of the company. It has a cash reserve of \$40 million and an order book of \$243 million. Its increased focus on government deals is good, but government deals usually locks in a lot of cash, which is a concern," said a senior research analyst with a Mumbai-based brokerage firm.

Does this mean they can't aspire towards the big leagues? "Whether NIIT Technologies can catapult itself into the billion-dollar bracket would largely depend on its capabilities to develop expertise in the upcoming areas such as cloud, mobility and business analytics. The last phase of growth came from increase in the \$25-100 million deals but the next phase of growth would be driven by expertise in these specific areas," added the analyst.



NIIT Tech Overcomes Slump Blues, Continues to Bag Orders

Earnings Analysis

RANJIT SHINDE
ET INTELLIGENCE GROUP

NIIT Technologies continues to show resilience despite worries over project delays due to slowing Western economies and pressure on margins owing to falling billing rates. The Delhi-headquartered tier-2 IT services company reported sustained order flows and employee utilisation as well as moderate attrition rates for the June 2012 quarter.

Earlier in the week, another mid-tier IT player, MindTree, also reported healthy growth, addition of clients, and margin expansion. While other peers are yet to declare results, the performance of these mid-sized players may help lower concerns over the impact of a prolonged economic slowdown in the US and Europe.

NIIT Technologies reported a 6% sequential growth in revenue at Rs 469.6 crore during the June quarter, helped largely by the depreciation of the rupee against the dollar.

Though operating profit grew just over 1% to ₹75.1 crore, net profit shot up 24.5% to ₹57.5 crore on account of higher other in-

come. The company reported an 80 basis points drop in operating margin at 16% following a salary increase.

NIIT Tech also reported robust addition to the order book. In the June quarter it added projects worth \$83 million (approximately ₹150 crore), taking the total outstanding orders to around ₹435 crore. This offers revenue visibility of nearly one-fourth of its annual revenue.

The company added five clients during the quarter on top of the four it added in the previous quarter.

This shows sustained momentum in business. Its transportation vertical has shown significant momentum of late, accounting for 40% of the company's business, compared with 35% a year ago. In the June quarter it added two new clients under the vertical. This will help keep the tempo in the coming quarters.

NIIT Tech's employee utilisation has remained flat at 79%, which is on the higher side compared with the sub-70% rate for some peers. This, together with a moderate at-



NIIT Tech: June '12 performance

	₹ crore	QoQ % Chg	YoY % Chg
Revenue	469.6	5.9	42.8
Operating profit	75.1	0.8	23.4
Net profit	57.5	24.5	39.7
Operating margin (%)	16	-80 bps	-252 bps
Attrition rate %	12.4	30 bps	-340 bps

Source: Company data

trition of 12.4%, shows that the company has been able to deploy its manpower efficiently.

One concern, however, is the rising number of days it takes to collect outstanding sales (DSO).

It has increased from 78 to 84 days in a year.

The stock ended 1.7% higher on Thursday from the previous day's close. At ₹291, it trades at a trailing P/E of 8.3. It appears to be fairly valued considering the business momentum.

ranjit.shinde@timesgroup.com

The Economic Times, New Delhi, July 20, 2012



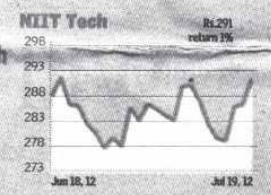
Q1 Performance at a Glance

	Quarter ended		YoY
	June 30, 2011	June 30, 2012	% Growth
Consolidated revenue	328.8	469.6	42.8
Operating profit	60.8	75.1	23.4
Profit after tax	41.2	57.5	39.7



We're seeing continued growth in the US, Europe, WAsia and Africa through travel and transport businesses.

Mr Arvind Thakur
Chief Executive Officer,
NIIT Technologies



NIIT Tech Q1 rises 40% at Rs 57 cr on higher revenue

Our Bureau

New Delhi, July 19

NIIT Technologies on Thursday reported a net profit of Rs 57.50 crore for the first quarter ended June 30, up 40 per cent from the corresponding period last year.

The company's net profit during April-June 2011 was Rs 41.20 crore.

Gains from depreciation of the rupee were offset by annual compensation increase during April-June 2012 quarter, resulting in drop in operating margins by 80 basis points sequentially to 16 per cent from 16.8 per cent in January-March quarter, the company said.

Its revenue also rose to Rs 470 crore during the April-June quarter this year, up 43

per cent, as compared to Rs 329 crore in the corresponding period last year.

Its operating profit grew by 23.4 per cent to Rs 75 crore from Rs 61 crore.

BIZ GROWTH

"Steady growth has been there in the business irrespective of what's been happening in the environment. We are seeing continued growth in the US, Europe, West Asia and Africa through travel and transport businesses," Mr Arvind Thakur, Chief Executive Officer, NIIT Technologies, said.

He said the environment for banking, financial services and insurance is sluggish, but challenges are more with large financial institutions. Therefore, the company is ad-

ressing and getting traction in tier-II cities.

"We are focussed on this segment because these are actually first time outsourcers and that represents an opportunity for us," he said.

The company during the quarter secured \$83 million of fresh orders, leading to \$240 million executable order book for this financial year.

NIIT Technologies had 82 net additions of employees during the quarter leading to total headcounts of 7,444 as of June 30, Mr Thakur added.

Shares of the company on Bombay Stock Exchange closed at Rs 291.05 on Thursday, up 1.71 per cent from its previous close.

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Hindu Business Line, New Delhi, July 20, 2012

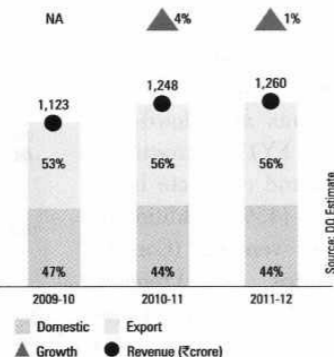


61

NIIT Limited

CEO: Vijay Thadani
www.niit.com

FY12 was a watershed year for NIIT Limited as it enhanced its focus on rebuilding core strengths and doing away with non-core operations such as Element K which it sold for \$110 mn to Skillssoft. It also launched cloud campus with its GNIIT program and partnered with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to enhance skills and employability of youth through its NIIT Yuva Jyoti initiative.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Partnership with NSDC
- Divested stake in Element K for \$110 mn
- Launched cloud campus

108 | July 31, 2012

Data Quest, National, July 31, 2012

NIIT profit doubles to ₹11.5 cr, revenue up 4%

IT training company NIIT on Wednesday said its profit after tax doubled to ₹11.5 crore during the first quarter ended June. The company had a PAT of ₹5.5 crore in the April-June period of the 2011-12 fiscal. The net revenue of the company for the June quarter stood at ₹227.5 crore, up 4% year-on-year basis. Last year, the Q1 net revenue was ₹219 crore.

Financial Express, New Delhi, July 26, 2012



KASPAROV WANTS TO FOCUS ON CHESS POLITICS: ANAND

World Champion Vishy Hopes For Garry's Return But Feels Chances Are Slim

Vineeth Krishnan | TNN

Kochi: They have been involved in a few of the most memorable encounters in chess in the 90's and early 2000's. As recently as May this year during the World Championship match in Moscow, they were involved in a verbal joust reigniting their old rivalry.

And yet, current world chess champion Viswanathan Anand declared in no uncertain terms on Monday that the game would be very happy to see his nemesis Garry Kasparov make a return from retirement. While he termed the possibility of Kasparov's return "unlikely," Anand felt it would raise the popularity of the sport yet again.

"He (Kasparov) retired back in 2005 and does not



World chess champion Viswanathan Anand handing over the NIIT Turning Point scholarship to Clinta PB at a function in Kochi on Monday

seem like he wants to make a comeback. If it does happen, it would surely be a very nice story. His fans would be ex-

tremely happy and he knows very well just how much it would mean to the sport to have him back. However, I get

the feeling that he wants to concentrate on chess politics more than making a full-fledged return," said Anand of his great rival, during a function in the city.

Anand, who is one championship short of matching Kasparov and fellow Soviet Union GM Anatoly Karpov's haul of six world titles, said that such statistics do not really matter to him. "I want to stay as world champion as long as I can, but the sixth title holds no particular importance. While I was preparing to face Boris Gelfand in Moscow, I really did not know that I was fighting for a fifth title," he said.

Talking of India's progress in chess, Anand said the country could soon become a powerhouse in the sport. "Right now, we have a lot of players doing well up to

the age of 20. But the likes of P Harikrishna, Surya Shekar Ganguly, K Sasikiran have all failed at consolidating a top-20 spot. They are all working very hard but seem to lack a certain consistency which will come once they get the right breaks. "But participation in chess has really gone up around the country among boys and girls. As long as children keep getting into the game, we will eventually become a powerhouse in the sport," he said.

Clinta receives scholarship
Viswanathan Anand also awarded 17-year-old Clinta PB with the NIIT Turning Point scholarship on Monday. The scholarship provides full fee waiver to meritorious candidates for the three-year GNIIT program.

The Times of India, Kochi, July 17, 2012

VISHY-ING 'EM A BRIGHT FUTURE

The Grandmaster was in the city to present the Turning Point Scholarship to Clinta P B for the flagship GNIIT programme



World chess champion Vishwanathan Anand gestures during an interactive session in Kochi on Monday | P K JEEVAN JOSE

Express News Service

Kochi: Focusing on the significance of turning points in life, world chess champion Viswanathan Anand spread his charisma on a gathering of students at the Holiday Inn here on Monday. "Success does not happen by chance. It is the result of hard work, positive attitude, strategic thinking and making the most of the opportunities that life offers us," Anand told around 200 students at an interactive session organised by NIIT. The Grandmaster was in the city to present the Turning Point Scholarship to Clinta P B for the flagship GNIIT programme of the IT institute. Doing the honours, he said: "When a chance comes your way, you need to grab it with

both hands. There are critical moments when certain decisions make critical changes in lives."

To buttress the point, he delved into the tactical aspects - aided by demonstrations on a giant screen - of his famous win in the crucial 8th game of the World Championship match against Israel's Boris Gelfand which brought him back into the contest after having lost the previous encounter.

"The 8th game was the turning point for me in the world championship which allowed me to come back," the five-time world champion said before proceeding to show how he pushed his opponent's queen to a corner, leading to his victory in only 20 moves.

The suave Anand fielded a wide range of questions from

India's chances in the London Olympics to his rivalry with Russian chess wizard Gary Kasparov, to measures required to make India a chess powerhouse. The Turning Point Scholarship programme has been instituted to commemorate Anand's world championship win, said NIIT Individual Learning Solutions vice-president Umakrishnan K Raghavan. "It is a big honour to receive the scholarship from a world champion," said Clinta, a BCom student of St Joseph's College, Fort Kochi.

She is the second recipient of the 10 scholarships of 100 per cent fee waiver that Anand is giving away over the next six months, with Shanmugha Priya from Chennai having been the first recipient.

The New Indian Express, Kochi, July 17, 2012



Anand presents NIIT scholarship to Ambala boy

DP CORRESPONDENT
Chandigarh

Grandmaster and NIIT Mind Champion Viswanathan Anand presented the NIIT Turning Point scholarship to Rajat Kapoor of Ambala for the flagship GNIIT programme at a function organised here on Tuesday.

On this occasion, Anand said, "Over the past 30 years, NIIT has been offering golden opportunities to youth aspiring to carve challenging career paths in the ever evolving IT industry. The NIIT's cutting edge career programmes have acted as the turning point in the lives of millions of youth across the globe. Today, I am delighted to present the NIIT Turning Point scholarship to Rajat Kapoor, which will help him in scripting his success story."

General Manager, Individual Learning Solutions, NIIT, Vinod Kumar Koul said, "Viswanathan Anand has always demonstrated

great sportsmanship abilities by translating challenges into turning point moments in his life. His phenomenal win in the recent World Championship is one such example which the youngsters can emulate. To commemorate his momentous win, it gives us immense pleasure to institute the NIIT Turning Point scholarship."

The scholarship has been instituted by the NIIT, Asia's largest IT trainer, to commemorate the phenomenal victory of NIIT Mind Champion Viswanathan Anand at the World Chess Championship-2012. This initiative by NIIT is aimed at giving an opportunity to meritorious candidates from economically weaker sections of society aspiring to make a mark in the IT industry.

Kapoor is the recipient of third of the 10 scholarships of 100 per cent fee waiver that Anand will be giving away over the next six months.

Daily Post, Chandigarh, July 18, 2012



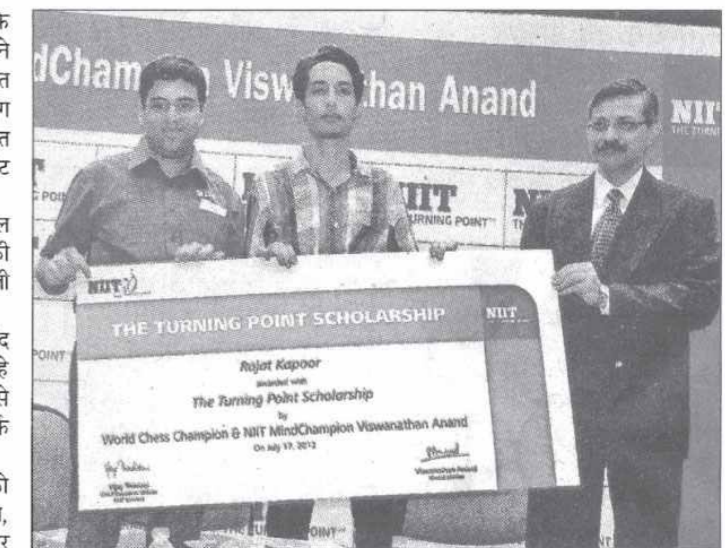
विश्व चेस चैंपियन ने छात्र को किया छात्रवृत्ति देकर सम्मानित

खेल संवाददाता, चंडीगढ़ : पांच बार के विश्व चेस चैंपियन विश्वनाथन आनंद ने मंगलवार को सीआईआई में आयोजित समारोह में यहां एनआईआईटी के टर्निंग प्वाइंट छात्रवृत्ति प्रोग्राम में अंबाला के रजत कपूर को एनआईआईटी टर्निंग प्वाइंट छात्रवृत्ति देकर सम्मानित किया।

इस मौके पर आनंद ने कहा कि खेल की तरह करियर भी एक टर्निंग प्वाइंट की तरह होता है। जिसमें सफलता की कुंजी कड़ी मेहनत होती है।

हालांकि समारोह के बाद खुद आनंद मीडिया के उस सवाल पर मुस्करा कर रहे गए कि देश को और विश्वनाथ आनंद कैसे मिल सकते हैं, इस पर उनके मुंह से सिर्फ कड़े अभ्यास की बात निकली।

अन्यों खेलों में फुटबाल और टेनिस को पसंद करने वाले आनंद सितंबर में ब्राजील, अक्टूबर में स्पेन, दिसंबर में लंदन और जनवरी में हाबोर्ट में टूर्नामेंट खेलने जाने वाले हैं।



ग्रेंड मास्टर विश्वनाथन आनंद चंडीगढ़ में एनआईआईटी के टर्निंग प्वाइंट प्रोग्राम में अंबाला के छात्र रजत कपूर को छात्रवृत्ति प्रदान करते हुए।

जागरण

Dainik Jagran, Chandigarh, July 18, 2012



NIIT IFBI ANNOUNCES 2ND NBET

LOKMAT NEWS SERVICE
NAGPUR, AUG 26

NIIT Institute of Finance, Banking & Insurance Training Ltd. (IFBI)-India's largest banking training institute has announced the second National Banking Entrance Test (NBET) for their post graduate programmes from August 8 to August 30. The post-graduate banking programmes offered under NBET are post-graduate diploma in banking operations (PGDBO), post graduate diploma in retail banking (PGDRB) and BankVantage career programs.

Graduate, post graduates or MBAs in any discipline with minimum 50 per cent marks are eligible to apply for the NBET.

The final year graduation students born on or after August 1, 1986 are also eligible for the entrance test.

The applicants can either visit IFBI centre or can apply online by submitting application form at www.ifbi.com. Successful candidates of National Banking Entrance Test can also earn scholarships.

Lokmat Times
Nagpur, August 27, 2012

National Banking Entrance Test

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Successful candidates of National Banking Entrance Test can also earn scholarships up to Rs. 16,000 on the various PG programmes in banking, offered by IFBI.

The Hindu, Chennai, August 20, 2012



For Working Professionals

NIIT Imperia is an initiative of NIIT Ltd to provide quality management education and customised learning solutions to the working professionals, and to companies with scattered work force, through strategic academic alliances with the top Indian B-schools and organisations. The initiative has synchronous learning technology at its core. More programmes can be launched to cover more functional areas and thereby addressing diversified needs of the students. Customised programmes can always be updated regularly as per the industry demands.

Target Group: Working Professionals

Challenges: Initially it was hard to convince the target group that the high standards that are generally associated with business schools would be maintained at our centre. Managing the inputs derived from diverse geographical locations and catering to customized requests is by itself a challenge. It is also not a simple task to bridge the gap between the exact demands of a corporate house with what is being offered by the Business School.

NIIT
IMPERIA
CENTRE FOR ADVANCED LEARNING

Implementing Agency
NIIT Imperia

Website
www.niitimperia.com

Objective
To overcome challenges of mobility and time, and facilitating access to world-class management training

Achievements

- Trained more than 7000 working professionals
- Introduced short duration programmes on contemporary topics like Digital Marketing, DTC, GST, IFRS, XBRL

Digital Learning, National, August 2012

news
brief

Applications invited for management course

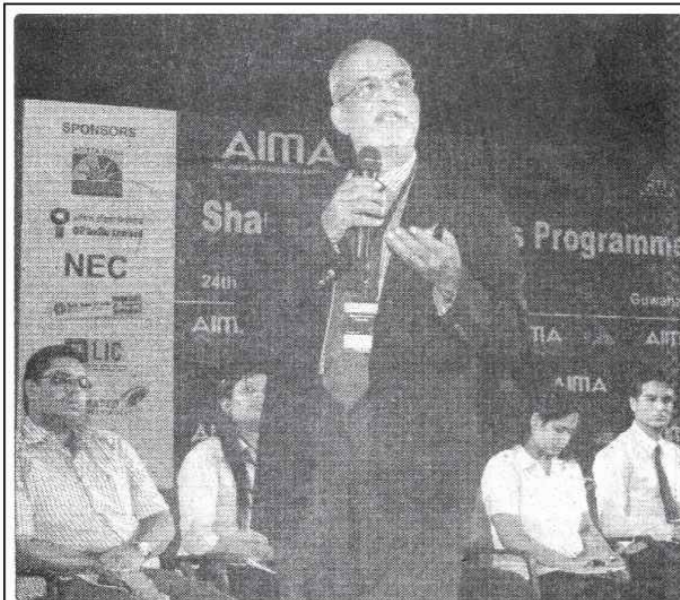
NIIT Imperia in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta, is inviting applications for its one-year senior management programme. The course has been designed to equip the senior level executives with tools and perspectives to make well considered strategic decisions. Interested candidates can visit www.niitimperia.com to fill the application form online and get more details. Last date for submission of forms is August 22, 2012.

Hindustan Times
New Delhi, August 1, 2012



प्रतियोगिता गांधी नगर में सोमवार को महिला शतरंज टूर्नामेंट की समाप्ति के अवसर पर भाजपा के वरिष्ठ नेता लालकृष्ण आडवाणी, गुजरात के मुख्यमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी एवं विश्वनाथन आनंद भी मौजूद थे।

Swadesh, Bhopal, August 28, 2012



Vijay Thandani CEO, NIIT Limited addressing the gathering during the Shaping Young Minds programme, organized by All India Management Association (AIMA) and Guwahati Management Association (GMA) at Pragjyoti ITA Cultural complex in Guwahati on Friday. (Sentinel)

Sentinel, Guwahati, August 25, 2012



NIIT students learn rural development from MBA sarpanch

Share 2 Tweet 1 Like 6

New Delhi, Jul 29 (PTI) About 200 students of the NIIT University (NU) at Neemrana in Rajasthan had a village sarpanch talking to them on rural development on the day of their induction.

The sarpanch (head of Soda village) was not a conventional turban clad villager but savvy 31-year-old Chavvi Rajawat, who did her graduation from Lady Shri Ram College in Delhi University and is a Master in Business Administration (MBA).

Rajawat interacted with the NU students yesterday. She had left a corporate career to return to her ancestral village.

Talking about the initiative, NIIT University President Rajiv Shorey said, it would help the students to know about the community.

The university has started a "Community Connect" project where students interact with the local communities. They also teach the local students, he said.

"We keep on inviting local leaders like sarpanch to the campus so that students get to know about the local practices," Shorey said.

He added the Community Connect is an audit-level course and every student is required to clear it.

Till now, NU has adopted seven schools in the nearby villages and a group of 20-40 students visit there every week.

Over 200 BTech students have joined a four-year academic course at NU, about 100 km from Delhi, which has been declared as the greenest campus in the country by a well-known weekly magazine.

NU offers B.Tech programmes in Computer Science and engineering, Information and Communication Technology, Biotechnology and Electronics and Communications engineering.

The university works closely with corporate giants like Microsoft Research, IBM Research, Alcatel-Lucent, Bell-Labs Research and Research in Motion (RIM).

<http://news.in.msn.com/business/article.aspx?cp-documentid=250418504>



Learning from School to Home

INTERACTIVE SOLUTION PROVIDERS

Today's children are Digital Learners and understand the native language of technology very easily. They are surrounded by the simulating world of the Internet, mobiles, apps and social networking. Today schools understand that traditional methods of imparting education can no longer engage children nor can it provide a true understanding of the concepts. The NIIT Nguru School 2 Home Solution connects the home and school, teacher, student and parent and the entire learning eco-system in a very meaningful, radical and revolutionary manner.

Target Group: School going Children, Teachers, School Administrators, Parents.

Challenges: We didn't face too many challenges, since the programme was built with full understanding of the infrastructure available in the country. We had taken into account the issues related to internet bandwidth, accessibility to technology and technology adeptness of the teachers. Some teachers were really averse to using new technology. In their case we started a well designed training programme, during which these teachers were introduced to the digital solutions. Eventually a majority of the teachers were able to understand that technology can play a seminal role in classrooms.

Objective

To erase inflexibility in the current technological offerings and insufficiency of the available resources

Achievements

- Better student engagement
- Shift from rote based system of teaching and learning
- Enables the class to go beyond textbooks



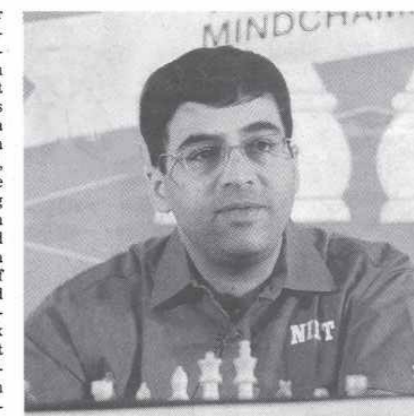
Implementing Agency
NIIT Limited

Website
www.niitnguru.com



Learning from chess board

Chess has been touted for centuries as a way of educating the mind in preparation for life and has been seen as one of the most powerful educational tools available to strengthen a child's mind. A study on impact of playing chess, was carried out by the Foundation for Learning Research in Chess, which undertakes research and development work in inter-disciplinary field of infusing Chess-centered culture into schools, communities and their work environment. The report titled 'Developing Mind-Champions through Chess' provides an in-depth account of the impact of the MindChampions' Academy clubs on 11,000 schoolchildren across India. The study report was published in 2010. NIIT MindChampion Academy, a joint initiative with NIIT, is aimed at initiating children across India to the game. Indian chess Grandmaster and the current World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand is an ambassador of this initiative and has been involved in spreading awareness about the game among schoolchildren in the country. In an interaction with J&C he talks about this sport-academic initiative. Excerpts:



Indian chess Grandmaster and the current World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand is popularising chess among schoolchildren

How can chess enhance academic performance?
I believe that chess helps in improving self-confidence, problem-solving techniques besides enhancing the memory of students. Chess increases strategic thinking skills, stimulates intellectual creativity, and improves problem-solving ability while raising self-esteem. It brings out latent abilities that have not been reached by traditional educational means.

Chess promotes logical thinking, improves communication and pattern recognition skills. It teaches the values of hard work, concentration, objectivity, and commitment.

The obvious benefits of playing chess in academic performance are: increase

in confidence and concentration; better discipline and communication skills; and learning sportsmanship and better analysis and evaluation of problems.

You are associated with this unique initiative of using the game to help in the development of young minds, how does this work?

It is heartening to know that chess has really caught on well with the youngsters with this initiative. MindChampions' Academy (MCA) is a not-for-profit initiative and its aim is to enable the development of young minds, subsequently helping them to think logically and improve their analytical skills. This academy exposes students in the age group of 7-17 years to chess. Students are given an opportunity to join chess clubs and get coaching in the nuances of the game in their schools and this leads to a positive impact on their behaviour and academic performance.

What has been the response to this chess-education initiative?

MCA has introduced chess to lakhs of schoolchildren across India. From schools in the Himalayas, to institutions in the southern tip of the country, the MCA has got children playing

the game. The academy has fostered over 15,600 chess clubs in India that have more than 1.5 million students as members. The first Chess Master tournament was held in 2004. The success of this initiative has reiterated the fact that chess has been a rewarding experience for students, helping them to approach academic problems in a more tactical and logical manner and in improving their analytical skills.

How has this experience helped you personally to take the legacy of this game to young children?

This academy has been a significant milestone in my life. I feel privileged to be a part of this movement that has not only enabled schools to use chess as an academic tool but has also made it possible for me, personally, to take the legacy of the game to youngsters in India. It is heartening to note that the results of this effort are already beginning to show, with young players like Karthikeyan M, who is the world champion in the under-12 category, getting a thorough grooming in the game. There are many other young talents like him who will make India proud and I am confident that they will script greater success stories in the years to come.

As told to Geetu Vaid.



Bridging the digital divide

E-EDGE At the digital literacy conclave organised by *Hindustan Times* & Intel, experts brainstormed over how the common man can leverage technology for daily use



HT Correspondent
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: What would you expect a student in the hinterlands to do with a computer replete with broadband connection? Well, what they actually do is listen to music, watch movies and play games.

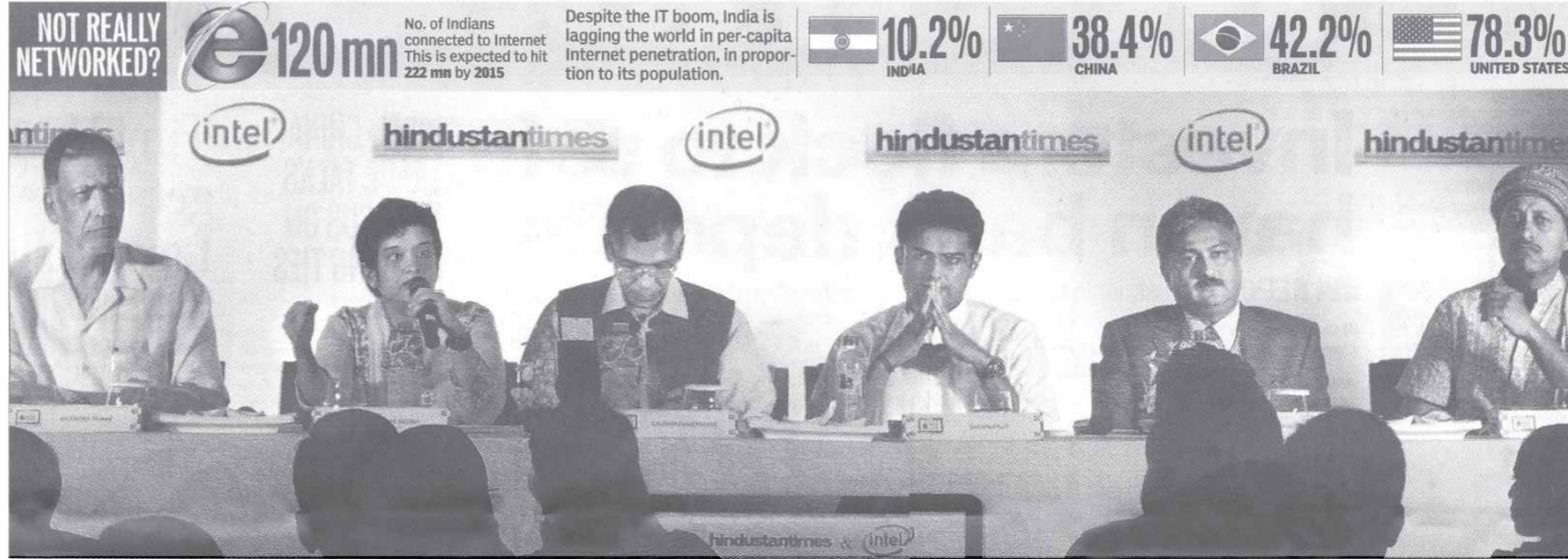
And, when it comes to conducting a simple computing task such as checking exam results on the net or uploading resumes for job postings, they reach out to a digitally literate *bhaiya* or *didi* in the locality.

Vijay Kumar and Sunita, such a *bhaiya* and *didi* respectively, offered these and more valuable insights at the conclave "Digital Literacy — Keeping India ahead in the Information Age" jointly organised by *Hindustan Times* and Intel here on Wednesday.

The panelists at the conclave included Sachin Pilot, minister of state, communications and IT, Debjani Ghosh, MD, Intel South Asia, Sanjay Kapoor, CEO, Airtel India and South Asia, Rajendra Pawar, chairman and co-founder, NIIT Group, and Osama Manzar, founder and director, Digital Empowerment Foundation.

In fact, Vijay and Sunita set the tone of the conclave, where, for the next couple of hours, the panelists debated and discussed issues that need to be ironed out if India is to become digitally literate in both letter and spirit.

Moderated by Gautam Chikermare, executive editor-Business, *Hindustan Times*, the panel discussion focused on issues and solutions beyond the obvious. The panelists brainstormed over how an individual should leverage 'a connected device' such as a computer, smartphone or tablet to access information on education, healthcare services, land records and so on. Discussions also focused on India's cultural diversity and how internet penetration is behind other emerging economies such as Brazil and China.



From left to right: Rajendra S Pawar, co-founder and chairman, NIIT Group; Debjani Ghosh, MD, sales and marketing, Intel South Asia; Gautam Chikermare, executive editor-Business, *Hindustan Times*; Sachin Pilot, minister of state, communications and information technology; Sanjay Kapoor, CEO, Airtel, India & South Asia; and Osama Manzar, founder and director, Digital Empowerment Foundation at the Digital Literacy Conclave in New Delhi on Wednesday. PHOTO: M ZHAZO/HT

Sachin Pilot
Minister of state, communications & IT
'ONE IN EACH FAMILY TO BE E-LITERATE'

SACHIN PILOT underlined the importance of English-led digital access wherein an individual needs to be well versed with English first so that he can make sense of the digital world.

He pointed out that there are cultural challenges to our digital growth, as multiple languages make it difficult for the government to reach out to all netizens with common content. "We are dismantling barriers by creating the right ecosystem that will help increase digital literacy rates in India. We want to create an India where at least one individual in every family is digitally literate," he said.

He added that the government remains committed to connecting every village in India with a fibre optic network.

Debjani Ghosh
MD, sales & marketing, Intel South Asia
'EMPOWERMENT AT THE GRASSROOTS'

DEBJANI GHOSH made a case for generating awareness around the ways in which an individual can connect through any device to the Internet.

"In today's day and age, merely being in possession of a device such as a mobile or a laptop is not important, rather the awareness of how to leverage the device to access the Internet is more important," she said.

"For our grass root citizens to know what they can do with technology is important," she added.

"The government, on its part, is making efforts to lay down optic fibres across the country and it should be a shared responsibility to empower people at the grassroots level to drive personal growth," she said.

Rajendra S Pawar
Co-founder & chairman, NIIT Group
'SWITCHING ON SELF-CONFIDENCE'

RAJENDRA PAWAR elaborated how India is at a tipping point where connectivity is becoming all pervasive. He pointed out that over the three decades of its existence, NIIT had touched as many as 33 million lives.

"Digital literacy means different things to different people. An economically challenged individual sees his life being radically transformed through the use of a 'connected' device. The very thought of being digitally literate 'switches on' the individual's self confidence," he said.

Pawar stressed the need for all leaders in the IT industry to 'make things happen'. At the same time, he emphasized that it was equally important that the majority of Indians, the 'last leg', must 'let IT happen'.

Sanjay Kapoor
CEO, Airtel, India and South Asia
'YOUTH TO POWER OUR DIGITAL DRIVE'

SANJAY KAPOOR said an entire plethora of home delivery jobs have been created due to rapidly rising mobile phone penetration in the country.

"Mobiles have hitherto been used for voice but with proliferation of internet-enabled smartphones there will be a stupendous increase in data-related traffic." The data related traffic will increase by 1,000 times in the coming months, he said.

He also spoke of the Indian edge, stating that we have the advantage of a large youthful population that is raring to try out new technology.

"We have financial, educational and entertainment services that are under-resourced. We can use digital technology to bridge the resource gap."

Osama Manzar
Founder, Digital Empowerment Foundation
'CHANGE CULTURE TO BREAK BARRIERS'

OSAMA MANZAR said that digital literacy is a cultural challenge and India must do the right things to break these barriers.

"Digital literacy requires transparency, interactivity and promptness and being digital means speed. But India is so feudalistic that even a reply to an e-mail by an elected representative takes ages. This needs to change," he stressed.

"Elected representatives do not have dedicated websites for their constituencies," he said. "Around 1.4 million schools and 70% of small and medium enterprises do not have any websites. We must take steps to ensure at least functional digital literacy. A first step would be to target institutions and elected representatives so that it percolates."



The Digital Literacy Pledge, and the signatories. PHOTO: M ZHAZO/HT

Intel has initiated a **Digital Literacy campaign** with the intent of spreading public awareness and building up the desire for digital literacy. The partners in the campaign include DELL, HP, Lenovo, Nasscom, NIIT and Microsoft. More partners are expected to join from the government, the industry, and the NGO space. A **Digital Literacy Week** will be conducted by year-end,

wherein Intel has committed to participate. *Hindustan Times* will be the media partner for the Digital Literacy Week. A special purpose vehicle named **Bharat Broadband Network Ltd** has been created that will lay down fibre network to connect 250,000 gram panchayats. As a pilot project, around 500,000 km of fibre network will be laid in Tripura, Vizag and Ajmer.



Learning from chess board

Chess has been touted for centuries as a way of educating the mind in preparation for life and has been seen as one of the most powerful educational tools available to strengthen a child's mind. A study on impact of playing chess, was carried out by the Foundation for Learning Research in Chess, which undertakes research and development work in inter-disciplinary field of infusing Chess-centered culture into schools, communities and their work environment. The report titled 'Developing MindChampions through Chess' provides an in-depth account of the impact of the MindChampions' Academy clubs on 11,000 schoolchildren across India. The study report was published in 2010. NIIT MindChampion Academy, a joint initiative with NIIT, is aimed at initiating children across India to the game. Indian chess Grandmaster and the current World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand is an ambassador of this initiative and has been involved in spreading awareness about the game among schoolchildren in the country. In an interaction with J&C he talks about this sport-academic initiative. Excerpts:

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As told to Geetu Vaid.

The Tribune, Chandigarh, August 22, 2012



NIIT, MICROSOFT PARTNER TO OFFER CLOUD COMPUTING

NEW DELHI: IT education provider NIIT said it has signed a pact with Microsoft Corporation to make available one lakh cloud-ready professionals over the next three years.

As per the alliance, NIIT will offer new programmes in cloud and emerging technologies in association with Microsoft.

"We will work alongside Microsoft and launch programmes mapped to the wave of new cloud technologies that Microsoft is poised to release worldwide," NIIT Limited Chief Executive (Career Building Solutions) G Raghavan told reporters here.

He said NIIT will offer three kinds of programmes, including long duration GNIIT programme on cloud campus, diploma programme and shorter duration technology skill enhancer programme.

The first set of training programmes will cover all emerging technologies from Microsoft like- SQL Server, Visual Studio, Windows Server and Windows 8.

Raghavan said at present the programmes are available in 350 of its retail centers and within one year, they will be available in all its 500 centers across the country.

NIIT has also collaboration with around 2,000 placement clients which will help the students to get a job in the marketplace.

"We remain dedicated to improving the lives of developers and IT professionals through training and certification," Microsoft Learning General Manager Alison Cunard said. According to a recent IDC study, cloud computing will generate nearly 14 million jobs globally in the next 3-4 years.

More than 50 per cent of these jobs will be generated in the small and medium businesses. PTI

The Pioneer, Lucknow, September 18, 2012

NIIT, Microsoft partner to offer cloud computing

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Financial Express, New Delhi
September 12, 2012



NIIT Nguru's Interactive Classrooms @ Home

The present scenario in most educational environments where teaching is imparted through conventional means focuses on memory based short term information accumulation and not on the construction of knowledge. As a result, students are not learning through understanding and they find it difficult to tackle questions that appear to vary from those typically found in the textbooks given in the class.

NIIT brings unique learning solution "Interactive Classrooms @ Home" for the new age learners to make learning engaging and meaningful and also to overcome the current challenges. It is the first 'cloud campus solution' which is built keeping in mind these central ideas:

- Children already have varying degrees of access to technology. Since technology has already entered the schools, now it must be put to better use at homes to teach better and enhance student performance.
- Children need to be taught 21st century skills.
- With parents as co-teachers, they play a pivotal role in their child's education through technology.
- Collaboration, communities and social learning networks are the way forward in the field of education.

Advantages of Interactive Classrooms @ Home

- Technology enabled learning, simulations, 3D animations and interactive models replace rote learning and dull home lessons.
- Completely mapped to the school syllabus and daily lessons, Interactive Classrooms @ Home allows students to access lessons, notes, take practice tests, submit assignments and collaborate with peers, all while sitting at home.
- This Hybrid model aids students to

Challenges Faced by Schools

School Management

- Connecting with all stakeholders on a single platform
- Adoption of appropriate teaching and learning methodologies, which will provide a meaningful and enriching experience for teachers and students.

Students

- Comprehending the subject
- Recalling all concepts taught
- Self-assessment
- Developing an interest for the subject
- Understanding real life application of the concept learnt.

Teachers

- Time constraints
- Making the subject equally comprehensive for all students
- Pressure to score high results

Parents

- Not equipped to contribute actively in the child's overall education.
- Do not have access to learning resources to provide support at home or assess the understanding of child.
- Unable to stay in constant touch with the child's academic progress.

develop questioning skills and also provides Experiential, Cognitive and Personalised learning.

- Parents can now be co-teachers and play a more pivotal role in their child's education. The child's progress and learning can be monitored

A Research study affirmed the fact that students can benefit from the flexibility and regular access to course materials provided by online education

on a regular basis. A better connect with the school and the teacher is possible through Interactive Classrooms @ Home.

- The NCF 2005 has recommended that schools be converted to ICT rich environments. However teachers and schools should not be mere users of technology, instead they should be able to co-create content, adopt their own teaching styles, and collaborate with the entire teaching community in order to learn and contribute to the large repository of knowledge and experience available on the World Wide Web and all this is made possible by "Interactive Classrooms @ Home."

NIIT Nguru's Interactive Classrooms @ Home (the solution which made learning possible at home through the advanced Cloud Technology) has been awarded "Best Interactive Solution Providers" award in World Education Awards 2012. ■



Make a date with industry

JOB READY • Hundreds of students are reaping the benefits of academia-industry collaborations. Opt for industry-linked courses that come with a job assurance, advises Avijit Chatterjee

Samik Gupta is ecstatic. He found his calling thanks to an industry-academia partnership between ICICI Bank and Praxis Business School (PBS), Calcutta. "I would never have realised my true calling had I not worked in the financial intelligence division of the bank in Mumbai," says the second-year MBA student of PBS.

If Gupta's stint at India's largest private bank worked wonders for him, Mihir Nadkarni's internship at the finance arm of a construction major helped him realise his knack for marketing financial products. "I had earlier worked in finance but earned my spurs in marketing while working with L&T Finance as part of an arrangement my institute had with the company," says the second-year MBA student of Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS), Mumbai.

Gupta and Nadkarni are among hundreds of students who are reaping the benefits of academia-industry collaborations that help institutes match students' skill with their desired field of work. "This kind of partnership works to the advantage of students, industry and institute. The students benefit from practical experience which helps them integrate classroom knowledge with practical work, the company gains from a reduction in the training cost of inductees, while the institute benefits from aligning its curriculum to the needs of industry," observes Parimal V. Mandke, registrar and dean, NIIT University, Neemrana, Rajasthan.

As part of the academia-industry initiative, NIIT University has tied up with ICICI Bank to offer a two-year MBA in finance and banking and with ESRI California and ESRI India for an MTech in geographic information system (GIS).

One of the advantages of pursuing these programmes is the job assurance that comes with them. Also, the heavy practical component of these programmes ensures that students spend half the time on the job instead of all

their time in class. "A student who completes the MBA programme will be absorbed by ICICI Bank in a managerial position at a starting salary of Rs 15 lakh per annum. Similarly, the MTech programme prepares students for positions as project managers or business development managers at a starting salary of between Rs 4.5 lakh and Rs 6 lakh per annum," adds Mandke.

Charanpreet Singh, associate dean, PBS, says such close linkages help students attain their skills to the needs of industry. "It helps students to understand how the knowledge and skills they acquire in class are applied in real life. An intense interaction with a company allows students to understand the skills they need to acquire to build successful careers. If the curriculum is designed in collaboration with industry, students enter the corporate arena much better equipped than their competitors from institutes that are impervious to industry needs and influences," he points out.

PBS offers a one-year programme in business analytics with PricewaterhouseCoopers and ICICI Bank. "Practitioners from industry have co-designed the entire curriculum. ICICI Bank has also endowed the dean's chair at Praxis. The partnership involves research in finance by Praxis faculty members and design and delivery of courses by ICICI Bank practitioners," adds Singh.

The academia-industry interface through research and collaboration. "Academic institutions aid industry by conducting case studies, research and consulting projects that not only leads to knowledge creation but also development of industry-relevant courses and management development programmes. Also, institutions use the research and consulting projects to publish academic papers and build their credibility," says Deepak Chandra, deputy dean, Indian School of Business, Hyderabad.



IN GOOD COMPANY

THE INSTITUTE	INDUSTRY PARTNER	COURSE
NIIT University	• ICICI Bank • ESRI Inc	• MBA in finance and banking • MTech in geographic information system
Praxis Business School	PricewaterhouseCoopers and ICICI Bank	One-year MBA in analytics
Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies	• Wipro • National Stock Exchange, Mumbai	• MBA in innovation management • MBA in capital markets
Skyline Business School	Aditya Birla Group	BBA
Manipal University	• EMC2 • ICICI Bank	• BSc in computer science • MBA in finance and banking

According to Saugat Mukherjee, regional director (east), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), apart from addressing employability issues and reducing training costs, such tie-ups also

help in bridging the demand-supply gap by creating a talent pool for companies. "We have been partnering with management and technical institutions and encouraging them to join hands with in-

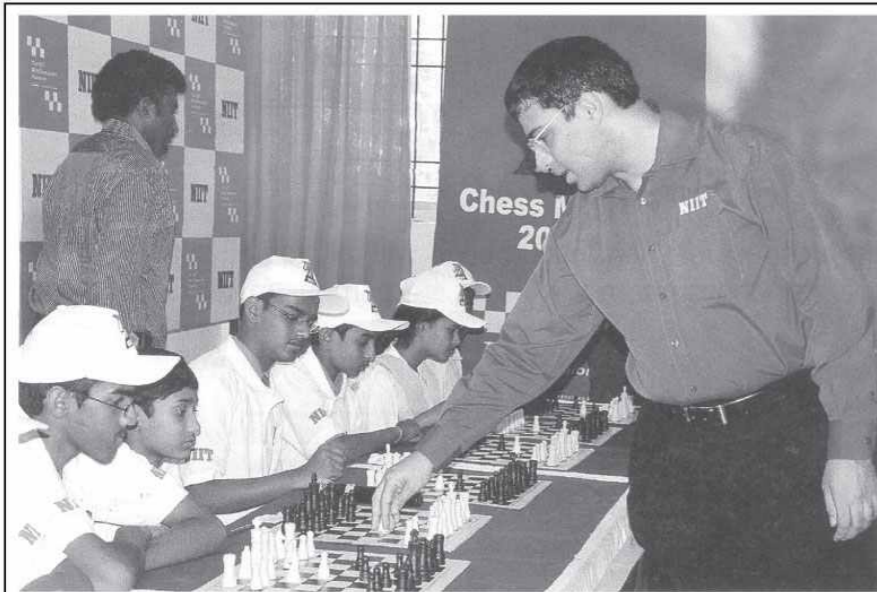
dustry to train faculty members and students," he says. According to a report by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci), out of approxi-

mately 3.5 lakh engineers and 2.5 lakh graduates who pass out each year, around 5 lakh remain unemployed because they are unskilled. H. L. Basal, former chairman of Ficci's higher education committee and pro vice-chancellor, Manipal University (MU), Manipal, Karnataka, cites a McKinsey Global Institute survey which reveals that multinational companies find only 25 per cent of Indian engineers employable. "An academia-industry linkage can change the equation considerably. This is the reason some companies like Infosys ask freshers to undergo a training programme to make them job ready," says Basal.

Debashish Sengupta, professor and chair, organisational leadership and strategy area, Alliance Business School, Alliance University, Bangalore, feels low employability is the primary reason for the demand-supply gap. "Bridging this skill gap is only possible when academia and industry come closer, form productive partnerships and ensure that proactive measures are taken to overcome the problem. For example, IBM has launched 'Drona', a training programme aimed at empowering faculty members with technical knowhow," he says.

Academicians point out that it is not just students who benefit from such tie-ups. Faculty members too gain practical knowledge from such exposure. "For example, the 'Sangam' project with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) provides an opportunity for the teaching community to visit the company's facilities to receive training in the latest technologies. TCS also conducts workshops at the institute from time to time," adds the MU pro vice-chancellor.

Besides, the tie-up helps institutes during placement by virtue of their association with companies. "Such partnerships give companies a feeling that they are contributing to the student's development and institutes get an edge over others in terms of maintaining relations beyond placements," observes Debashish Sanyal, dean, NMIMS. But E. Balaji, managing director and chief operating officer of Randstand India, the human resources firm, argues that industry-academia tie-ups should go beyond leveraging the partnership for financial resources or guest lectures. "The partnerships should happen on a large scale for real benefits to occur. If only the top companies collaborate with the top universities, the benefits will not trickle down to the small-scale industry. The partnership should expand to industry consortiums and include other stakeholders like government bodies as well," he observes.



Checkmate

The NIIT MindChampions Academy was the first to discover the correlation between chess and academic excellence. Then Vishy made a smart move

The NIIT MindChampions Academy (MCA) is a joint initiative between NIIT and Grand Master Viswanathan Anand. The main objective of this not-for-profit is to promote the game of chess amongst schoolchildren.

"While chess is a part of everyday life in some parts of South India, there are still many students who would not get the chance to learn and play this game. We set up the MCA hoping to let everyone enjoy the benefits of chess. The most important of which is the role that chess plays in enhancing the logical, visual, memory, analytical and

concentration skills of students," says Anand. Today the MCA has helped over 1.5 million children in 16,600 schools across India learn the basics of playing chess. Transforming this learning into healthy competition, the organisation has also set up 15,000 tournaments in the last ten years.

Any Indian school is free to integrate the MCA chess programme in their curriculum. Software training will be provided to teachers. Anand also personally pays a visit to various schools in order to motivate students to keep on playing and answer doubts.

SWEET SUCCESS

3,454

students reported an improvement in their math scores after having played chess for a year

2,187

MCA participants stated that they enjoyed a game of chess during their free time at home

92%

children who play chess in school feel that they are now more intuitive in decision-making

India Today, National, September 10, 2012



NIIT Nguru set to redefine school education

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Sept 28: NIIT Limited today launched cutting edge ICT enabled solutions for the schools of tomorrow, under the aegis of "NIIT Nguru".

These cutting edge solutions will significantly improve the efficacy of the teaching and learning experience for school administration, teachers and students.

NIIT Nguru is a holistic range of School Learning Solutions which aims to make the vital process of teaching and learning simpler, thus bringing back the joy of learning for students. It is an integrated and comprehensive teaching, learning and education resource planning solution for the schools that

has been designed to address the needs of all key stakeholders within the education realm—students, teachers, school management and parents.

P Rajendran, Chief Operating Officer, NIIT Limited, said, NIIT Nguru endeavours to bring back the joy of learning by making the present curriculum in Schools interesting and interactive, through use of innovative ICT enabled teaching and learning solutions.

He added that NIIT Nguru suite consists of interactive classrooms, automation and web links library, Math lab, multiple teaching and learning aids like Technology applications, Videos, Manipulative, measuring instruments and theme based ambience, IT Wizard, quick School and mobile science lab.

Designed as per the recommendations of National Curriculum Framework-2005, NIIT Nguru integrates the teaching, learning, assessment and analysis processes through optimization of technology, P Rajendra added.

Daily Excelsior, Jammu, September 29, 2012

NIIT Tech to buy Sabre's centre in Manila

NEW DELHI: NIIT Technologies, on Tuesday, said it had signed an agreement to acquire U.S. firm Sabre Holdings' Philippines Development Centre.

"The acquisition fits well with our strategy of 'focus and differentiate', and enhances our global delivery footprint," NIIT Technologies Chief Executive Officer Arvind Thakur said in a statement.

"Sabre is a global technology company which provides solutions for the travel industry.

The statement further said that Manila was a proven destination for business process outsourcing (BPO) services, and NIIT Technologies would provide services to Sabre and its other customers from the Manila centre, which had a capacity of 200 seats with opportunity for ex-

pansion. "Asia-Pacific is an important growth region for Sabre and the industry, and we believe this move helps further strengthen our established relationship with NIIT Technologies and positions Sabre for greater growth within APAC," Sabre's Chief Information Officer Barry Vandevier said. — PTI

Hindu, New Delhi, September 12, 2012



CELEBRITIES VISWANATHAN ANAND

Checkmate?

With being the numero uno chess player from the country, what stops Viswanathan Anand from endorsing more brands?

By Arshiya Khullar

Indian chess Grandmaster and recipient of the second highest civilian award Padma Vibhushan, Viswanathan Anand has quietly and diligently worked his way to become one of the greatest sporting legends of India. While the world chess champion enjoys an iconic status among chess enthusiasts across the globe, it is the celebrity-driven advertising world that has not yet cashed in fully on this sporting genius.

The chess player has been associated with only a handful of brands that include NIIT, AMD India and Parle-G. While these brands have leveraged Anand's intelligence quotient and intellectual achievements, most other brands are yet to explore his brand attributes.

Intelligence quotient vs cool quotient

According to Harish Bijoor, CEO, Harish Bijoor Consults, Anand's key personality attributes are solidity, true blue intelligence, poise, and a calculating mind. For brands that want to rub off some of these traits



"Anand's key personality attributes are solidity, true blue intelligence, poise, and a calculating mind"

Harish Bijoor
CEO, Harish Bijoor Consults

onto their own products, and showcase such qualities as part of their brand ethos, Anand seems an ideal fit. In Bijoor's opinion, the chess champion would work well for financial products for similar reasons.

For Jagdeep Kapoor, Chairman and Managing Director, Samsika Marketing Consultant, apart from his individual achievements and intellectual capacity, Anand also has a calm, collective and cool persona, and would be apt for brands who want to

While brands like NIIT, AMD India and Parle-G have leveraged Anand's intelligence quotient, most other brands are yet to explore his brand attributes

let their performance speak for itself. "It all depends on how you position your brand and Viswanathan Anand," he says.

Besides NIIT, which, according to Kapoor, has used him for a relevant knowledge management industry, there are several other product categories and industries that would blend in perfectly with Anand's traits. He cites a few categories like indoor sports and those into strategising and intellectual achievements.

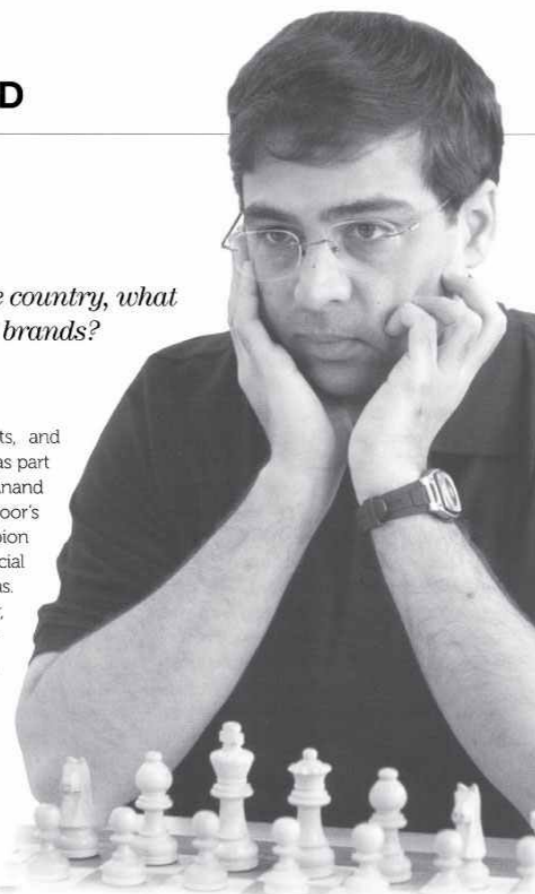
Mind champion

Out of the numbered few brands in his kitty, one brand association that has remained on top of mind recall is his 13 year

old partnership with NIIT.

Explaining the synergy between the two, Prateek Chatterjee, Associate Vice President & Head, Corporate Communications, NIIT says, "Just as chess helps to develop the young mind and enhance lateral thinking skills; NIIT has also been shaping minds by bringing people and computers together."

Among the various marketing campaigns with the chess master, the prominent ones include an NIIT mind champion's academy, with the objective of promoting chess among school students. Its also focuses on on-ground activities like mentoring, and lectures by Anand. Its lat-



est campaign 'Turning Point' will also see similar interactive activities by Anand.

Most experts agree that NIIT has benefited tremendously from Anand's hard appeal which goes well with the brand's intended positioning. According to Dr Prashant Mishra, Associate Professor IIM Calcutta, besides NIIT, AMD's association with Anand is also a correct fit since AMD talks of performance, stability, and technical intelligence; traits that perfectly match Anand's personality.

The missing piece

If the existing brands have struck the right chord, then why doesn't Anand have the same magnetic appeal as other celebrity sport endorsers when it comes to brand endorsements? The underlying factor behind any brand association is that the characteristics of the celebrity, in this case the sportsman and the game he is associated with, should be in alignment with the brand, its intended positioning and its target audience. In Mishra's words, brands do not just pay for the celebrity sportsman, they pay for the combined effect of the person, the game that he plays, and the hysteria it generates.

Perhaps it is on this front that an elite game like chess loses out to mass sports like cricket and football. According to Bijoor, it is the same reason because of

Anand hasn't yet showcased his own success story in front of the world and his true potential as a celebrity will get unlocked only once he opens up

which advertisers get attracted towards players of popular sports, even though they might not be of the same calibre as that of Anand. "It is the game that poses a problem. Chess is a niche game and not a crowd puller," he adds.

Bijoor's comment taps the intrinsic problem behind advertisers not queuing up to sign on Anand. Chess, with its exclusive appeal is not a mass puller.

Mishra echoes a similar opinion and says that the limiting factor is not Viswanathan Anand or his personality traits but the nature and perceived image of the game he plays. "It would be unfair to attribute the less number of endorsements to Anand's personality. The personality of the sportsman comes in much later, it is the game that is of prime importance," he adds.

For Mishra, it is all a game of numbers and calculation and advertisers' prime motive behind any celebrity association is to grab eyeballs and convert those eyeballs into sales. For such brands then, which leverage celebrities' popularity to create a mass connect, cricket and other mass

sports would definitely score over chess. NIIT's Chatterjee, however, disagrees. He says, "We are using Anand not just as a brand ambassador, but because of the underlying synergy and brand fit."

The untold story

However, keeping aside the limitations of the game, has the 'hard appeal' of Viswanathan Anand and his few brand associations cast him into a stereotype?

Perhaps, his mass appeal can extend to a broader consumer base if Anand shares a lighter side of his personality, than his usual suave and mature self.

Vidyadhar Wabgaonkar, Sr VP Strategic Planning at Draft FCB Ulka cites the example of cricketer, Mahendra Singh Dhoni. According to him, it is Dhoni's personal story; his rise from a small, backward town existence to pinnacle that has inspired many a small town youth, and made a great theme for many brands to ride on.

Anand, he feels, hasn't yet showcased his own success story in front of the world and his true potential as a celebrity will get unlocked only once he opens out many layers of history and personality. "I'm sure he has his own story of triumph over mammoth odds before he could plant his flag at the summit, or challenges of staying there for long enough," he says. "He can go for a makeover and share with us a lighter side of his personality or can pick-up a cause such as 'schooling for poor children' or a 'computer for everyone' and provide us with one more reason to adore him."

So while this relative lack of hysteria for Anand as far as advertisers go can be primarily attributed to their reluctance to look beyond cricket and other popular sports, one shouldn't forget that there is also the possibility of the man himself being wary of too many brand associations. ■

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"Apart from his intellectual capacity, Anand also has a calm, collective and cool persona"

Jagdeep Kapoor
Chairman and Managing Director, Samsika Marketing Consultant



"Just as chess helps develop young minds, NIIT has also been shaping minds"

Prateek Chatterjee
Associate VP & Head, Corporate Communications, NIIT



विजय थडानी
चेयरमैन,
सीआईआई, नॉर्दन
रीजन

बाह्य आर्थिक सुधार से देश को लाभ होगा

उदारीकरण जरूरी

अमरीकी राष्ट्रपति बराक ओबामा ने भारत में रुके आर्थिक सुधारों पर जो कहा था, वह उनको राजनीतिक या आर्थिक तौर पर कैसे सूट करता है, यह अलग बात है। जहां तक आर्थिक सुधारों का सवाल है, तो विकसित देशों की ओर से मोटे तौर पर एफडीआई, खासतौर पर एफडीआई इन रिटेल की बात हो रही है। वे हमारे बाजार में ज्यादा पहुंच चाह रहे हैं।

अभी हमारा सबसे पहला विचार होना चाहिए कि हमें क्या चाहिए। हम वैश्विक अर्थव्यवस्था का हिस्सा बनना चाहते हैं। हम दूसरे देशों के बाजार में अपनी पहुंच बढ़ाना चाहते हैं, नए देशों में जाना चाहते हैं, उनकी तकनीक चाहते हैं, उनका ज्ञान-विज्ञान चाहते हैं, तो फिर उन्हें आने देना होगा। हां, पहले हमको उनसे अपने हितों से जुड़े सभी पहलुओं पर खुलकर बात करनी चाहिए। मेरा



मानना है रिटेल में एफडीआई एक बड़ा सुधार है और यह जरूरी भी है। नजरिए को सही करने की जरूरत है। एफडीआई के आने से उनके यहां नौकरियां बढ़ेंगी, तो हमारे यहां भी मिलेंगी। एक संगठित क्षेत्र बनेगा, जो हमारे युवाओं की पसंद है, जिससे उन्हें फायदा मिलेगा। रिटेल एफडीआई से कीमतें कम होंगी। अर्थव्यवस्था को फिलहाल एफडीआई की जरूरत है। हमारा अरबन

इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर बढ़ेगा। एफडीआई जैसे सुधार से अब बचा नहीं जा सकता। अमरीका से बात करनी चाहिए कि वह हमें भी अपने यहां पूरी जगह दे। अपनी आईटी कंपनियों को भारत में नौकरियां आउटसोर्स करने दे। सरकार को ज्यादा से ज्यादा सहमति बनानी पड़ेगी। सुधार अटके इसलिए हैं, क्योंकि सत्ताधारी पार्टी भी कमजोर है। सरकार को बेहतर तरीका ईजाद करना पड़ेगा।

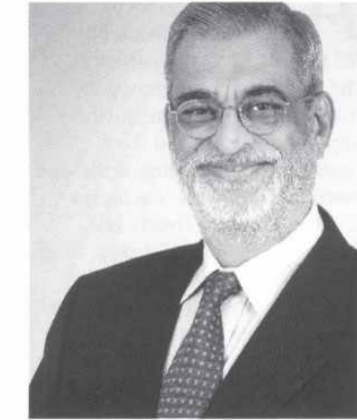
Rajasthan Patrika, Jaipur, July 29, 2012



Creating excitement at work

NIIT is People' has been a part of NIIT's value and belief since its inception. The fact that people are its key resources has made the organization create an environment where employees can be creative, especially when it comes to delivering value to customers. A performance-driven culture, with a well-defined awards program, wherein achievers and achievements are constantly spotlighted, differentiates NIIT from others. Says Shampi Venkatesh, Chief People Officer, NIIT, "The key differentiator which makes NIIT a great workplace is its constant focus on improving the quality of work-life of its people and its endeavor to contribute back to the society at large."

Employees feel that NIIT is a great workplace because of its friendly people, good HR policies, supportive bosses, and an open and relaxed atmosphere, which encourages innovation and creativity. It is indeed NIIT's



"People are our greatest assets and every single NIITian has, over the last 30 years, played a key role in making NIIT a great place to work"

Vijay Thadani, CEO, NIIT

#10

NIIT Ltd.

Learning solutions for individuals, corporate, government, schools & colleges

2011 Rank: 23
India HQ: Gurgaon
Founded in India (Year): 1981
Employee Strength: 3,308
Gender Ratio (F to M): 1:1.67

people who make every day, every moment, fun and exciting to work. The organization has ensured ample opportunity to perform, to do different things and do things differently on a regular basis. NIIT's people-centric policies and initiatives, work environment which is open, friendly, fun filled with incentives to learn, develop and grow is what makes every NIITian excited to get to work everyday.

People Matters, September, 2012



EDUCATION BRIEFS

MindChampion Academy's 10th anniversary commemoration

NIIT MINDCHAMPIONS ACADEMY (MCA, ESTB.2002) — A NOT-for-profit initiative of Grand Master Viswanathan Anand and NIIT Ltd, the transnational IT skills development and certification corporation, to promote the mind stimulating game of chess in schools across India — celebrated its 10th anniversary on July 20. Over the past few decades, the academy has promoted 16,600 chess clubs countrywide with over 1.5 million student members.



MCA's little masters with eminent guests

At a commemorative function held in Delhi, Union HRD minister Kapil Sibal felicitated five national chess masters nurtured by MCA since 2004, in the presence of NIIT MindChampion and World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand. Mme Grace Pinto, managing director of the Ryan International Group of Institutions — which has promoted India's largest chain of proprietorial primary-secondary schools (128) — was a special guest on the occasion.

"It is heartening to note that MCD has developed several masters and young players like Karthikeyan M who is world champion in the under-12 category. There are many young talents like him who make India proud, and I am confident they will script greater success stories in the years to come," said Anand, speaking on the occasion.

Added Rajendra S. Pawar, chairman of NIIT: "This is a proud moment for all of us and it gives me added pleasure that MCA's ten-year eventful journey coincides with Vishy's 5th World Chess Championship win. We have been fortunate to have the wholehearted support and involvement of Vishy in this venture, and together we hope to make the movement a bigger success."

EducationWorld, August, 2012



<http://www.youtube.com/niitcareers>