LEADERSHIP
IN GLOBAL TALENT DEVELOPMENT

NIIT

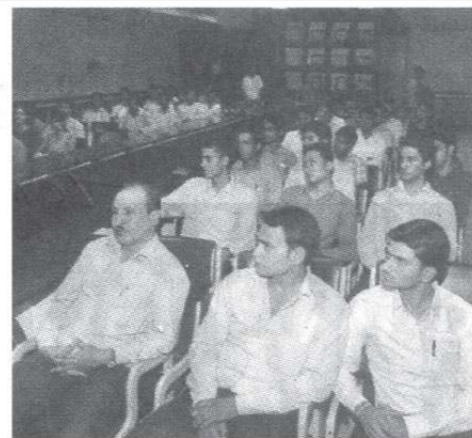July - September 2013

NIIT in the News

BUSINESS DECISIONS

NIIT Imperia invites applications for the fifth batch of the one-year executive programme on managing business decisions in association with IIM Calcutta. The applicant should be a graduate (10+2+3) in any discipline with minimum 50% marks, having minimum three years of work experience after completion of graduation. Applicants should be working professionals/self-employed. Eligible applicants will be selected on the basis of their performance in the Programme Aptitude Test (PAT) to be conducted by NIIT Imperia, together with the assessment of background and motivation (Statement of Purpose) based on the application form submitted (*www.niitimperia.com*).

The Times of India, New Delhi
July 1, 2013

■ ■ ■ NEWSBYTES

Job fair at RIET

Rajasthan Institute of Engineering and Technology, Jaipur, recently organised a national level Mega Job Fair for the students. Various renowned firms including HCL, Tech Mahindra, NIIT, TNS and over 25 prestigious recruiters participated in the mega event. More than 400 students of from different universities of India were also the part of the fair. One of the major highlights of the fair was the fact that the students, who were chosen by these firms, were given offer letters right during the event. The institution also signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with these firms that included organising of industrial interaction sessions for the students of the institution. Kunwar Bhim Singh, along with the Chairman of the institution, RS Tomar and the Principal of RIET, Dr VS Sisodia were also present during the grand event and congratulated the students who were recruited during the job fair.

The Times of India, Jaipur, *July 1, 2013*

India's great places to work in

Google India Pvt. Ltd. topped the list of best companies to work for in a survey of 550 companies across 22 industries in India. The survey was conducted by the Great Place to Work Institute recently. Intel Technology India Pvt Ltd, American Express India Pvt Ltd. and NIIT Ltd. were acknowledged as the second, third and fourth best companies, respectively, on the basis of employee satisfaction criteria.

Global Talent Development Corporation and Asia's largest IT trainer NIIT was also recognised as the number one Training and Education Company to work for, consistently for the third year in a row.

The survey, which is the most extensive workplace study in India, is conducted across the country by the Great Place to Work Institute (GPTW).

Commenting on the results of the survey, Vijay Thadani, Chief Executive Officer, NIIT Ltd. said, "What makes NIIT a Great Place to Work is that we always put people first. Since the past three decades, the organisation has lived its core value and belief that NIIT is People. We foster career building by creating opportunities that facilitate learning, thinking and innovation."

NIIT also achieved the distinction of being among the top two companies in India for fairness in Performance Management System, and among the Top 10 companies in terms of rewards and recognitions for its employees.

Over the past year, NIIT has re-engineered its performance management system by revamping the organisation's goal-setting process and has introduced annual performance appraisals based on individual absolute performances. This is coupled with a strong execution focus on making appreciation a way of life with its innovative rewards and recognition programme called HATS OFF.

The top ranking companies, including NIIT, scored high on caring for employees, equal opportunity for recognition, candid communication, reliability of managers, collaboration with employees, impartiality and ample opportunities for career growth. — TNS

Tribune, Chandigarh, *July 3, 2013*

NIIT IFBI announces Third National Banking Career Fair

NIIT's Institute for Finance, Banking and Insurance (NIIT IFBI) has announced the Third National Banking Career Fair to benefit students aspiring to make a mark in India's banking sector. Being held from July 3-26 across 35 cities, it aims to guide banking aspirants on the opportunities, roles and career paths available in the banking sector.

Financial Express, New Delhi / Bangalore, *July 8, 2013*

NIIT IMPERIA INVITES APPLICATION FOR EXECUTIVE PROGRAMME:

NIIT Imperia in association with Indian Institute of Management, Culcutta (IIMC) is inviting application for one year Executive Programme on Managing Business Decisions. The programme promises to equip practitioners with key concepts and tools of Modeling and Business Analytics thus helping candidates to make efficient strategic and tactical business decisions. Professionals who want to sharpen their analytical skills to arrive at optimal decisions will find the programme stimulating. Graduates with an aggregate of 50 per cent marks and three years of work experience can apply for the course. Applicants will be selected on the basis of an aptitude test conducted by NIIT imperia. For more details log on to www.niitimperia.com

Mail Today, New Delhi, *July 10, 2013*

B.Tech Admission

NIIT University invites applications for B.tech Programe in: Computer Science and Engineering, Bio Technology and Electronics and Communications Engineering.. The University is situated in 100 acres campus equipped with state-of-the-art technology-enabled teaching methodology that is backed by a strong research-focused curriculum. Application forms are available online on www.niituniversity.in. Applicants will be short-listed on the basis of the eligibility criteria. Scholarships would also be provided based on students' merit. Last date of submission of forms is 21 July. For further details, visit the official website of NIIT University.

The Statesman, New Delhi
July 11, 2013

Admission at NIIT University

NIIT University, invites application for four years full-time BTech Programmes in - Computer Science and Engineering, Bio Technology and Electronics and Communications Engineering.

Eligibility criteria are as follows: Those who have scored an aggregate of 60 per cent marks or equivalent in grade Class X from any Board in India or its equivalent from any other country are eligible to apply. They should be pursuing Physics, Chemistry and Math's in Class XII for CSE and EC streams; and Physics, Chemistry and Biology or PCM or PCMB in Class XII for Biotechnology (BT) stream.

Should be appearing in the Board examination in March/April 2013 or should possess the score of Class XII Board examination from year 2011 or 2012. Candidate must have appeared in either JEE-Main or BITSAT or SAT or NUET (NIIT University Engineering Test) or any State Engineering Entrance Examination and have valid scores.

Shortlisted candidates have to go through a personal counselling interaction. This will be followed by an interaction with parents of shortlisted candidates.

Download the admission application form online at www.niituniversity.in. or get a printed copy of the form by post to NU Central Admissions Office at NIIT House, 85, Sector 32, Institutional Area, Gurgaon – 122001. Submit the duly completed Admission Application form along with an attested copy of class X and class XII (if available at the time of application) mark-sheets and if applicable, the ranking/score in AIEEE/JEE/SAT/NUET online, by post or in person.

Last date for application submission is July 21.

Hindu, Chennai, *July 15, 2013*

BTech at NIIT University

NIIT University invites application for four years full-time BTech programmes in Computer Science & Engineering, Biotechnology and Electronics and Communications Engineering.

ELIGIBILITY:
The applicant should:
• Have filled the Regular Application form.
• Have scored an aggregate of 60% or more in class 10 from any board in India or its equivalent from any other country.
  Be pursuing PCM in class 12 for CSE and EC streams.
  Be pursuing PCB or PCM or PCMB in class 12 for Biotechnology (BT) stream.
  Should have taken the board exam in March/April 2013 or should possess the score of class 12 board exam from 2011 or 2012.
  Have taken either JEE-Main or BITSAT or SAT or NUET (NIIT University Engineering Test) or any state engineering entrance examination and should have valid scores.

SELECTION PROCESS:
Shortlisted candidates have to go through a personal counselling interaction designed to assess the candidate's English communication skills, interests and hobbies, degree of self-awareness and out of the box thinking and reason for the choice of stream. This will be followed by interaction with parents.
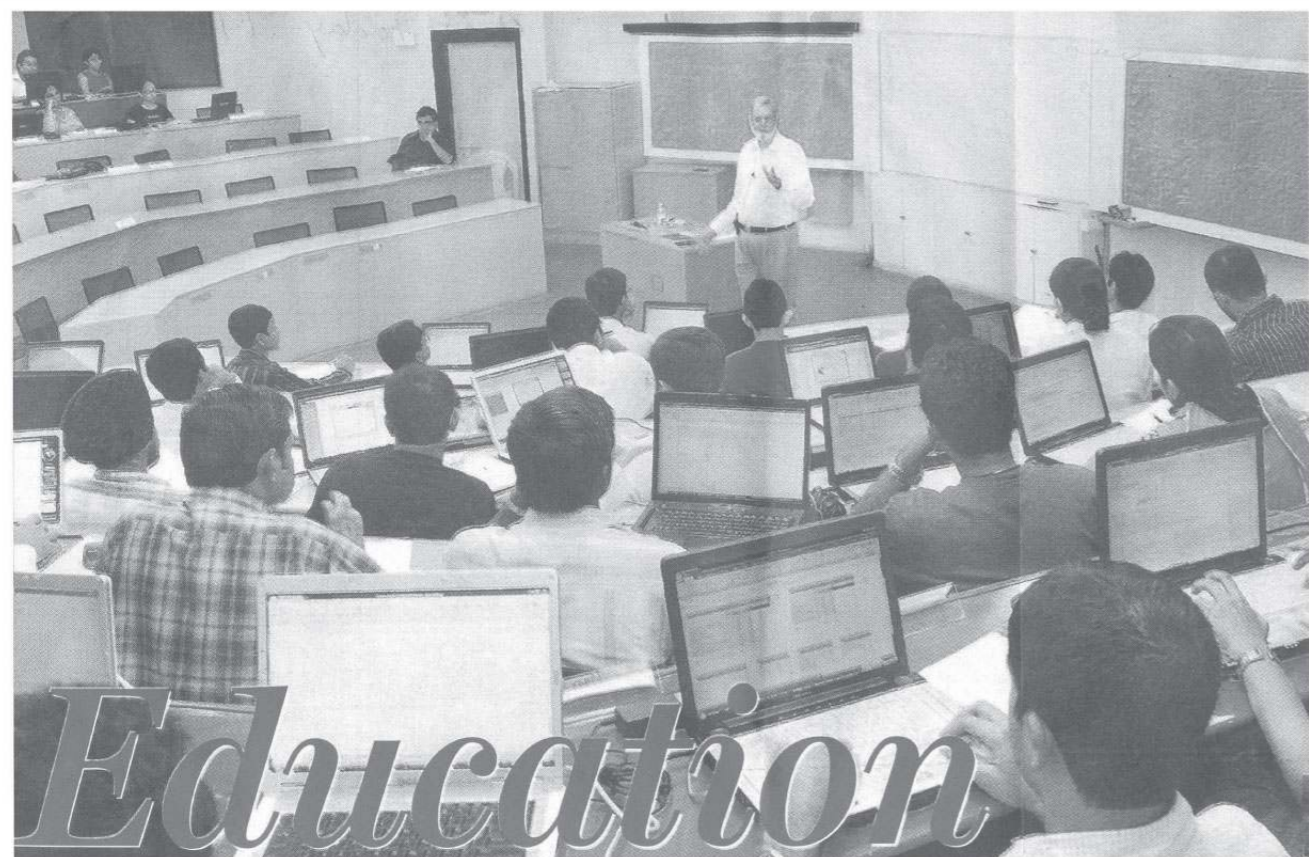
SCHOLARSHIPS:
Scholarships based on class 10 and class 12 scores will be awarded.
APPLICATION:
For the application process and other details, refer www.niituniversity.in.
DEADLINE:
July 21, 2013

Free Press Journal, Mumbai
July 15, 2013

OPENING SALARY:
₹40,000 to ₹50,000 pm

TECHNOLOGY

Education

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU? As e-learning opportunities grow in both companies and universities, there is now a pressing need for Education Technology (ET) professionals. A course in ET aims to train information engineers to design learning and information systems that enable organisations to bring about a quantum change in their productivity and efficiency. From designing more efficient information models for top companies to harnessing the power of technology in the classroom, ET professionals have their hands full.

EXPERT'S TAKE: "The emerging field of Educa-

tional Technology (ET) has the potential to transform the way organizations conduct business. The M.Tech (ET) program provides students with deeper understanding of the educational technologies and information systems that bring about a transformational way in which businesses operate," says Rajendra Pandey, President, NIIT University

GROWTH PROSPECTS: The world of education and training has seen a tremendous change over

the last decade and has progressed from teacher-centricity to learner-centricity and now to collaborative learning. Technology has impacted education by not just providing a new means of imparting education but by changing the very way learning environments can be designed. The two worlds have interlocked together giving rise to a new body of knowledge- Educational Technology or ET. This new emerging field has the potential to transform the way organisations and academic institutions function in the coming years.

TOP RECRUITERS: Google, Microsoft, Infosys, NIIT Group, GE Technology

Education Technology aims to train information engineers to bring about a quantum change in their productivity

Mail Today, New Delhi, *July 16, 2013*

NIIT Tech sees deal revival in US

Beryl Menezes @berylmenezes

Mumbai: Kicking off the June quarter results of Tier-II IT companies on Tuesday, NIIT Technologies reported a 7.5% drop in net profit to ₹53.2 crore a year ago, but said business from the US, the main source of revenue for software firms, was growing.
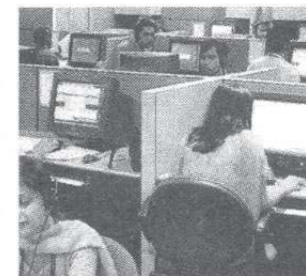
Revenues rose 0.9% to ₹542 crore from a year ago while Ebitda margins declined 202 basis points sequentially to 14.4% at ₹78.2 crore. However, year-on-year operating margins grew 4.1%.

Arvind Thakur, CEO and joint managing director, blamed the fall in margins on 3% onsite and 8% offshore wage hikes given in the last quarter.

However, growth also declined on account of a change in the business model in the second half of 2012 that leaned towards more large, transformational deals, which will take some time to show profits, analysts said.

Dipen Shah of Kotak Securities said, "While revenue growth in line with estimates, margins fell more than expected. Recent order wins and improvement in profitability of the GIS / Morris should lead to better growth and profitability over the next few quarters."

However, Thakur said the company was seeing good traction in the US again - based on an order intake of $145 mil-

lion in Q1, as well as a return to banking, financial services and insurance vertical and risk and compliance-based discretionary spends.

He said the company had four large deals in the offing, each with a total contract value of $10 million, expected to be cleared within the next 3-9 months.

NIIT also has orders worth $263 million executable over 12 months.

The contribution to total revenues from the US increased to 39% (38% a year earlier), while that from Europe, Middle East and Africa stood at 35%.

"We expect a slowdown in Europe, but steady growth in US and very good traction in Asia," Thakur said in an analyst concall.

He said US Immigration Bill was likely to be disaggregated into various components giving Indian IT firms more time to plan.

NIIT would not be impacted much by any changes to the Bill, he said. With agencies

DNA, Jaipur, *July 17, 2013*

Workshops

Delhi Public School, Sushant Lok, Guragon, organised multiple workshops for its teaching staff during the summer break. A workshop on mind mapping for the teachers of the middle and senior school was conducted by Ajay Aggarwal of Apsara Foundation. It stressed on the role of using mind maps while teaching learning concepts to the students. They will help them in managing time. Another workshop was conducted by Rachna Swarup from NIIT to enhance the understanding, objectives and reasons for introducing CCE at different levels. A one day capacity building programme on enhancing listening and speaking skills for all language teachers was conducted by Kumkum Tiwari of PC Training Institute. A cancer awareness workshop was conducted by Jyotsna Govil and Dr Subojit Dey from the Indian Cancer Society that discussed the role of health and nutrition in cancer prevention along with the importance of following a healthy lifestyle. Dr Priyamvada Agarwal of Oxford University Press conducted a workshop on English language teaching for the teachers of the primary and the pre-primary wing that threw light on the various methods and techniques that can be used in the classroom to make learning English easy and interesting. Asif Rehman, a parent, conducted a week-long workshop on self defense for teachers. He demonstrated various strategies and tactics to protect oneself and counter attack during emergency. A workshop on whole brain training by Dr Shankar Goenka aimed at improving the thinking performance of students in their early years. Geet Oberoi of Orchids conducted a workshop on accommodations and interventions in classroom management to handle students of varying abilities. Rakshit Tandon of the Encore group conducted a workshop on cyber safety. Major crimes being committed on the Internet were discussed. He suggested various ethical applications to counter protect them. The principal, Dr Ruchi Seth commented that such workshops enriched the teachers and provided them with a platform to interact, plan activities and strategise professionally using the right assessment tools in the school.

An interesting and absorbing workshop was also held for the teachers of **Chiranjiv Bharati School, Sushant Lok,** Gurgaon, by the executive president of schools, Goldy Malhotra. She started once again by reviewing the purpose of education and the role of a teacher. She discussed that the main aim of education is to bring the actual potential of a child and to mould him in such a way so that he/she is competent to make life worth living as it is the most precious gift of God, is able to make quality decisions and also always remains in sync with nature and above all tries to do something for the society by thinking beyond oneself. The workshop was very interactive. A lot of discussions took place on the various roles of a teacher and their teaching skills. Malhotra made it very clear that knowledge should be given little by little so that the concepts are absolutely clear to the students. And for this, a lot of support aids should be taken and teaching should be made so interesting that it breaks the monotony. A child should find his/her education interesting, which should be related to real life, which in turn always keeps him physically alert. The workshop ended with an activity. The teachers were divided into teams and topics were allotted to them and they had to give a presentation.

■ Delhi Public School, Sushant Lok, organised a number of workshops for its teaching staff.

NIIT Technologies reports 15% growth with a revenue of ₹53.5 cr

SOHIL PRUTHI

NEW DELHI: NIIT Technologies Limited (NSE: NIITTECH), a leading global IT solutions organisation, reported its financial results for the quarter ended in June 30, 2013 with a revenue increase of 15.4% and net profit of Rs 57.5 crore in the year-ago period to ₹541.9Crores in the April-June quarter against Rs 469.6 crore in the same quarter of last fiscal. Operating Profits stood at ₹78.2Crores, representing a YoY growth of 4.1%.

A dividend tax of Rs 5.4 crore was paid to overseas subsidiaries during the quarter which contributed to the net profit decline," said NIIT Technologies CEO Mr Arvind Thakur.

It secured fresh orders of USD 145 million during the quarter leading to USD 263 million worth of orders executable over the next 12 months. This includes a USD 15 million contract renewal with a travel and transportation client in the US and USD 60 million contract to implement Airport Operations Control Centers across 10 airports in India with Airports Authority of India.

"Robust intake of USD 145 million during the quarter will make further growth during the year," said by Thakur. NIIT Technologies added 5 new clients during the quarter, including two in India. . The company made 49 net additions to its employee strength during the April-June quarter this fiscal taking the total headcount to 8,207 at the end of the quarter. "We are also focusing on manufacturing, which is seeing an expansion in Asia," Thakur said.

"We Operating margins declined 202 basis points sequentially to 14.4 per cent primarily due to wage hike implemented from April this year. The company gave a wage hike of 8 per cent to off-shore employees and 3 per cent to those on-site.. The revenue share from rest of the world improved to 26 per cent. Among segments, travel and transportation contributed to 36 per cent followed by BFSI at 30 per cent and manufacturing/distribution 7 per cent to the revenue mix.

Pratibha K Advani, CFO, **Rajendra S Pawar,**Chairman, **Arvind Thakur,** CEO NIIT Technologies.adresing media regarding 15% revenue growth for Q1 FY2014 in New Delhi
A S Bhushan

SUCCESS FORMULA **ARVIND THAKUR,**

chief executive officer and joint managing director, NIIT Technologies

A leader must have a compelling vision

Gaurav Choudhury

✉ gaurav.choudhury@hindustantimes.com

It is important for a leader to anticipate changes. The dotcom bust of the late 1990s holds out important lessons on the vagaries of being unidirectional. Arvind Thakur, chief executive officer and joint managing director, NIIT Technologies Ltd spoke to HT on a range of issues of leadership. Excerpts:

How do you define a leader?
A person who stands tall not just in good times but more so during adversity.

What are the three most important traits of a leader?
A leader must see more than what others see. So, an essential trait of a leader is the ability to articulate a compelling vision. A leader must be inspirational to align the team to the vision and should also be a good communicator to effectively communicate the means to realise the vision to all stakeholders.

As a leader of your group, how do you cultivate leaders?
It is not adequate to just cultivate leaders at the top but develop leadership capabilities at all levels within the organisation. Training plays an important role in leadership development but that in itself is inadequate. Cultivating leadership requires continuous coaching and support in dealing with real life situation.

Can leadership be learnt? In other words, how can a manager become a leader?
Indeed, leadership can be learnt but the transition from manager to a leader requires a shift in mindset. I often tell my supervisors that their role as a leader is not to supervise, but to create a superior vision. A team aligned to a superior vision produces dramatic results left to its own and needs no supervision. A leader assumes the role of a coach in guiding the team to realise their vision.

What is the role of a professional leader in a promoter-driven company?
A big challenge in many promoter-driven companies is the inability of the promoter to let go as the business scales. A leader in such an environment needs to put in place an effective performance ethic programme with clear lines of accountability and have systems in place that transparently track business drivers to provide comfort to the promoter that things are in control.

Since September 2008, the world has fallen into a maelstrom of serial crises. What is the role of a leader in these times?
Every crisis presents an opportunity. The opportunity arises from the discontinuity created by the crisis. Since 2008, the world has experienced one crisis after another. In such turbulent times, the past cannot be used to predict the future. The role of the leader during such periods is to spot the discontinuities and create an agile organisation to navigate through the turbulence. A leader also needs to see opportunities before others see them. The traditional "sense-and-respond" approach to leadership shifts to "anticipate and create".

What has been the biggest leadership challenge you have faced?
The dotcom meltdown in early 2000

A CEO IS A CHIEF ENABLING OFFICER WHO MUST CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH IS CHALLENGING AND FULFILLING , WHICH NURTURES INNOVATION

was one of the biggest leadership challenges. Till then, as a technology company we were riding high on the Internet boom. When the bubble burst on e-commerce, client investments in emerging technologies became discretionary and business suffered. We went through a period of pain and had to completely reinvent the organisation. Lessons learned from this experience enabled us to deal with the aftermath of the economic slowdown in 2008 far more effectively.

Leaders have to often carry the cross of others' wrong doings and inefficiencies, the global banking sector today, for instance. What role can good leadership play to counter balance this image?
Leaders need to demonstrate greater transparency and integrity, and ensure proper governance structures are in place to address perceptions created by any external wrongdoings.

What is your one-line leadership mantra?
Align the team to an inspiring vision and get the right people in place to realise the vision.

Who are the leaders who have inspired you?
Founders and leaders at Google particularly Eric Schmidt who left the corporate world to join this startup. Google's success is derived from a simple and coherent vision – "to organise the world's information and make it available to all". To do so it has focused its attention on search and created the world's best search engine. At the soul of the organisation is the desire to continuously innovate. It has a healthy disregard for the impossible.

Who is a leader in your industry whom you respect?
I have great respect for our founder and

chairman, RS Pawar. As a visionary he revolutionised the IT training industry and is a global thought leader.

What is the biggest leadership lesson that you have learnt?
A CEO is a chief enabling officer; a leader who must create an environment that is challenging and fulfilling, which nurtures a culture of innovation, where it's ok to make mistakes when they contribute to organisational learning. Of course, you can't make the same mistake again. Mistakes are an opportunity to learn.

What is the best leadership decision you have taken?
Setting the direction to remain sharply focused even at the cost of exiting from some segments, to build specialisation and thereby creating differentiation to compete effectively. Our business doubled during 2004-08 and as a result, operating margins improved more than one percentage point each year during 2004-07. Even during the slowdown of 2008-10, while revenue growth slowed, profits continue to increase as a result of this decision.

What is the worst leadership decision you have taken?
The worst decision was to single-mindedly pursue the e-commerce opportunity in the late 90s during the heady days of the Internet boom and not create an alternate platform for growth. We have learnt from that experience and have since ensured a balanced portfolio to mitigate risks.

EDUCATION IT

Bright smiles: NIIT Cloud Campus students in Delhi

A Cloudburst in the Classroom

The cloud could fill the gaps in India's education sector, but costs and last-mile connectivity are constraints – for now.

By NANDAGOPAL RAJAN

SHEKHAR GHOSH/www.indiatodayimages.com

NIIT's Campus in the Cloud

Blended Classroom
Centralised faculty, assisted by local teachers. Students interact with peers in other locations

Cloud Courseware
Content in a virtual space; interactive and accessible 24/7 from multiple locations

Anywhere Lab
Can practise using laptops or tablets. Lab delinked from location and timing

Online Assessment
Practice sessions to understand weak areas and to focus on those areas

Lessons on Demand
If students miss a class they can download a lesson and the instructor's notes, and learn

Buddynet
Students work on a project with a network of friends, with faculty chipping in when needed

The average pupil-teacher ratio in various categories of schools covered in the All India Student Education Survey is a healthy 31. But the figure could go up to one teacher per 120 students and, in the worst cases, even 600, if you consider that most of them teach more than one subject. Even then, you have to overlook the fact that many of these teachers add to the numbers, but don't really add value to the education system.

The task is daunting – we need more than 350,000 engineering teachers alone to cater to some four million students in the field. That is

where technology can be used to augment the system. The cloud could be the wonder pill for what ails Indian education, but its adoption is hampered by costs and poor last-mile connectivity. As All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) chairman S.S. Mantha says: "There is a lot of experimentation, but no massive implementation." But only widespread implementation will start changing the academic landscape.
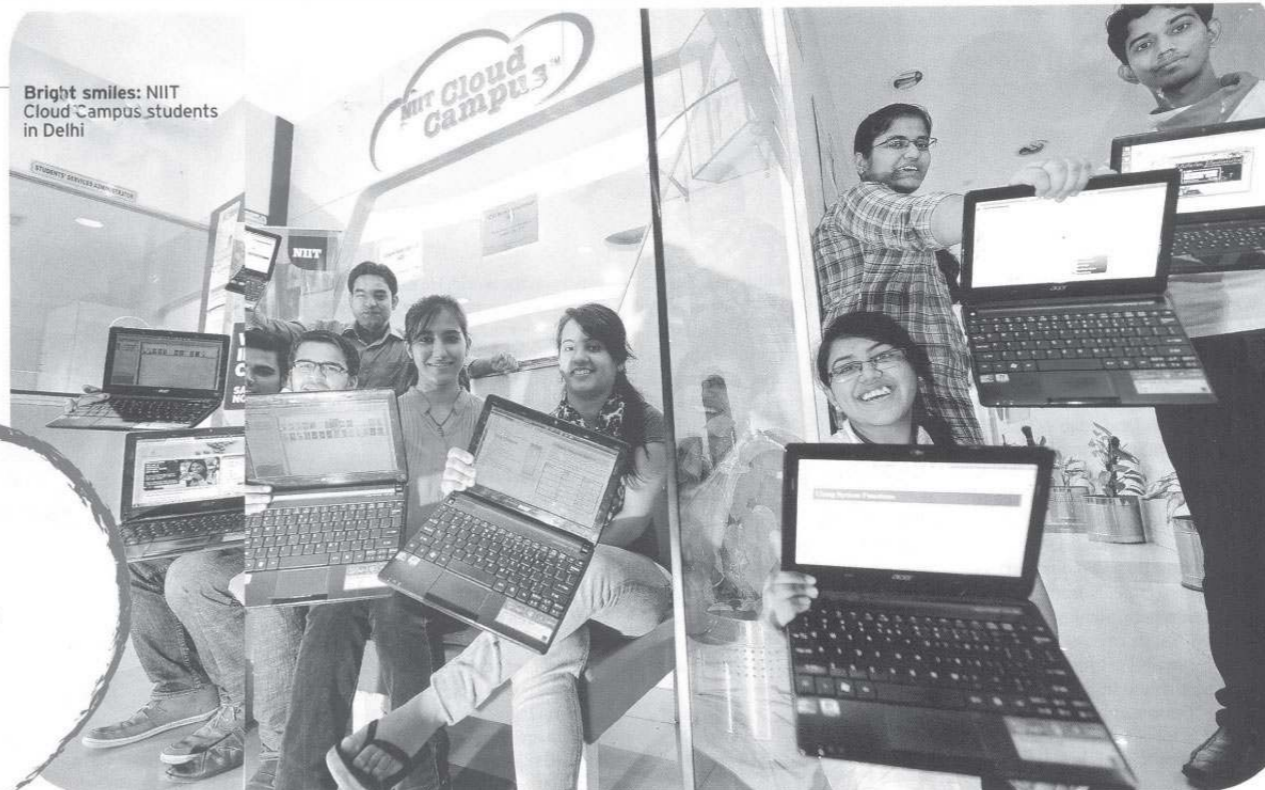
"The cloud brings a lot of advantages," says Aravind Sitaraman, president, Inclusive Growth at Cisco. "It lowers costs, provides a degree of scalability and keeps the complexity in a central location." His company has developed an integrated hard-

ware-software cloud solution for education, called Cisco Education Enabled Development (CEED) 2700. Code-named Dwara, this all-in-one box promises to reduce the cost of implementing cloud solutions to a dollar per child per month (see *A Box Called Dwara*, page 65).

"If you have a teacher in one location, and she is good at mathematics, this technology can be used to virtualise her to other locations," says Sitaraman.

The Karnataka government already uses Dwara in a handful of rural schools, and to train teachers in some districts. Private schools such as the Oakridge International chain and technical education insti-

tutions such as the Nettur Technical Training Foundation have also adopted this technology.

Some organisations implement cloud solutions with their existing bandwidth, and without extra hardware. Bangalore-based Aurus Network's CourseHub is one such low-bandwidth video capture, management and distribution platform targeted at educational institutes. Others, such as Gate Forum, use the cloud to help final-year engineering

students in small cities like Agra to prepare for the annual Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering. But the largest on-ground implementation is NIIT's Cloud Campus, now available in over 150 centres nationwide.

NIIT gives students access to its faculty as well as round-the-clock availability of labs, course content and collaborative platforms (See *Learning in the Cloud*, page 64). So while hundreds of students enrol in small towns such as Bagdogra, West

Bengal, and Haldwani, Uttarakhand, to learn from the best faculty, in big cities ambitious 20-year-olds such as Ridhima Kapoor may find that the Cloud Campus gives them time, for example, to do an evening course in commerce at Delhi University.

NIIT chief executive G. Raghavan says their cloud campus basically addresses the need for flexibility and learning on demand. "Flexibility will be in terms of when, what and how to learn," he says. "This

EDUCATION IT

will be different for each person, so we have to get an optimal mix of pedagogy to get learning effectiveness."

His colleague, NIIT Imperia Executive Vice-President Udai Singh, says that the cloud enables instructors to get valuable data about the level at which students are able to understand a point. "This data point is not possible in a physical world."

But how do you manage traffic when students from multiple centres are listening to a single teacher? Singh says more centres don't mean you get more questions than you would in a single classroom. "Once you have reached a critical mass of students, the questions depend on what is being taught," he says. "So just a finite number of questions emerge, and that is enough for the others to understand." He adds that the data quickly helps teachers pre-empt questions and emphasise what they teach.

There is much debate on whether a virtual teacher can actually replace or fill in for hundreds of others. Singh says: "If you are looking at technology replacing teachers, we are missing the point. Tech is a force multiplier that can increase the scope and impact of a teacher."

However, Sameer Brahmachari, Director General of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), says technology has blurred the lines that separate teacher and student. "My experience with open source drug discovery has shown that groups of students who are monitored are the weakest," he says.

One of the most successful experiments in this field has been conducted by Sugata Mitra, Professor of Educational Technology at the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences at Newcastle University in the UK. His acclaimed "Hole in the Wall" experiments sought to find out whether children could learn to use computers on their own. The results were positive – startlingly so. However, Mitra said in an email interaction with *Business Today* that it would be wrong to believe any child who participates in a Self Organised Learning Environment (SOLE) session will finish school with flying colours, go on to university and make a big

impact on the world. He said: "This is not realistic. Every child will respond in his or her own way, and achieve to the extent of their own potential. Some will go on to great things, while others will simply finish school, an achievement in itself in many parts of the world."

Mitra, who recently received the TED Prize for his work, says that SOLEs are not designed to be as effective as a really good teacher or facilitator in a great school, but they can make a real difference to children who do not have the resources and who would otherwise get left behind. "Unfortunately, there are always going to be places in the world where a good teacher cannot or will not go – SOLEs are designed to 'beam' them into these locations."

But the real essence of the cloud classroom is that it enables students to go back to the content whenever they want. "The problem with live video classes is that there is no pause, rewind and forward, so students might miss parts if connectivity is affected," says Sunit Singh Tuli, CEO of Datawind, the company that makes Aakash tablets. "That is why we are big believers in affordable individual devices. If students get access to devices 24/7, they can rewind, pause and forward. This is crucial, as not everyone can learn at the same pace, and this ability will have a huge impact on a lot of students."

Mukesh Mohania, Distinguished Engineer and Chief Architect, Education Transformation, IBM Research, says prescriptive analytics from such data could lead to identifying personalised learning and help improve timely graduation and the employability of the graduates.

Learning in the Cloud

Cloud Classroom
Teacher interacts with students in multiple locations. Content is available 24/7 so students can revise it as long as they are connected

Blended Classroom
Students take lessons from regular teachers, but take help of online videos or instructors when needed. Instruction is packaged according to students' academic level
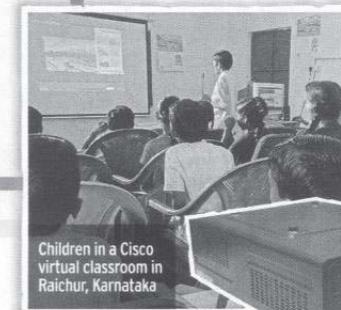
Flip Classroom
Works where connectivity is limited. Students learn a topic through access to devices with preloaded or streamed content. They use classrooms to clear doubts or understand the topic better

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A Box Called Dwara

Dwara, the code name for Cisco Education Enabled Development (CEED) 2700, is a complete cloud and infrastructure solution for education and skill development

It has everything a classroom needs – router, computer, projector, cameras, speakers, microphones, and even power management

It has been designed to withstand heat and dust, and is theft resistant

It lets teachers in a central location interact and share content with students in multiple locations in real time

Children in a Cisco virtual classroom in Raichur, Karnataka

It is conceived, designed and manufactured in India, but has global significance. It costs $1 per child per month over three years

The pilot projects in Hoskote, Raichur and Shimoga in Karnataka, have already clocked 600,000 student hours

In the Indian context, where connectivity is a problem in many regions, Tuli says the flip classroom model is useful, as it lets children study from content pre-loaded on a device and then interact with the teacher in a classroom. He says this is where access to quality content through massive open online courses, or MOOCs, can be effective. Such content is freely available online. "We should stop teaching people things that they can Google," he says. "The ability to analyse information is what we need to inculcate."

Despite the abundance of free content, there is still a bottleneck, especially in technical education. AICTE's Mantha says it is looking at hosting quality content

through the National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning. This collaboration between the Indian Institutes of Technology and the Indian Institute of Science provides free web and video courses in engineering, the sciences and the humanities. "This content can be hosted in the cloud and made interactive," says Mantha. "Interactivity is the key, as technology is based on concepts and algorithms. Hence the importance of blended education cannot be ignored. The major work still has to come from the teacher, who cannot be replaced."

Asheesh Raina, Principal Research Analyst at Gartner, says everything in and around the cloud will take a while to become mainstream. "The landscape will emerge

only when there is equilibrium of demand and supply." Mantha adds that it is important for any cloud solution to be able to become sustainable after a point, and this includes content and the last mile.

The adoption of the cloud in schools is expected to pick up once last-mile connectivity is ironed out. This could happen after the high-speed pan-India National Knowledge Network starts reaching the villages that most require such assisted education. "Roads don't reach all villages, but we can take fibre optics everywhere," says CSIR's Brahmachari. "In this new world, we should be able to put content on the cloud and take it to all these locations." ◆

Send your comments to editor.bt@intoday.com

फोर्स की एक अरब से नीचे सर्वोत्तम सूची में 19 भारतीय कंपनियां

वाशिंगटन। व्यापार पत्रिका फोर्ब्स की 200 शीर्ष लघु एवं मध्यम श्रेणी की एशियाई कंपनियों की एक अरब से नीचे सर्वोत्तम सूची में 19 भारतीय कंपनियों ने जगह बनाई, जबकि चीन की 63 कंपनियों ने जगह बनाई। इस सूची में एशिया प्रशांत क्षेत्र की लघु एवं मध्यम श्रेणी की उन कंपनियों को जगह दी गई है जिनकी सालाना आय 50 लाख डॉलर से एक अरब डॉलर के बीच है और जो शेयर बाजारों में सूचीबद्ध हैं। एक बयान के मुताबिक फोर्ब्स के संपादकों ने 15 हजार कंपनियों में से 200 सर्वोत्तम कंपनियों की सूची तैयार की। कंपनियों का चुनाव निरंतर बेहतर हो रहे वित्तीय प्रदर्शन, ठीक-ठाक कर्ज स्तर और लाभ कमाने की क्षमता के आधार पर किया गया। सूची में चीन और हांगकांग की सबसे अधिक 63 कंपनियों, ताइवान की दूसरी सर्वाधिक 26 कंपनियों, भारत की तीसरी सबसे अधिक 19 कंपनियों को जगह दी गई। 2007 के बाद सूची में भारत की सबसे कम कंपनियों को

जगह मिल पाई है। जापान की 17 कंपनियों ने सूची में जगह बनाई। सूची में शामिल भारतीय कंपनियों में सबसे ऊपर विकास डब्ल्यूएसपी (52.5 करोड़ डॉलर की सालाना बिक्री), दूसरे स्थान पर माइंडट्री (बिक्री 43.5 करोड़ डॉलर), तीसरे स्थान पर केपीआईटी क्यूमिंस इंफोसिस्टम्स (41.2 करोड़ डॉलर) है। इसके बाद अगले दो स्थानों पर क्रमशः एनआईआईटी टेक्नोलॉजीज (37.2 करोड़ डॉलर) और हेक्सावेयर टेक्नोलॉजीज (35.6 करोड़ डॉलर) है। सूची में शामिल अन्य कंपनियों में हैं एसिल्या काले सोल्यूशंस, अजंता फार्मा, धानुका एग्रीटेक, इरोज इंटरनेशनल मीडिया, इनफाइनाइट कंप्यूटर सोल्यूशंस, जुबिलैंट फूडवर्क्स, ला ओपाला आर जी, एमटी एडूकेयर, नाटको फार्मा, परसिस्टेंट सिस्टम्स, आरएस सॉफ्टवेयर, सोम डिस्टिलरीज एंड ब्रूअरीज, टीटीके प्रेस्टिज और तालवलकर्स बेटर वैल्यूज फिटनेस।

Samachar Jagat, Jaipur, *August 2, 2013*

BANK ON IT: *If you have the financial acumen, you could be sought after for jobs in the banking sector.* PHOTO: REUTERS

Banking boom

With an estimated 85,000 vacancies in various PSU banks to be filled this year and new private players set to enter the sector soon, opportunities for aspirants can only rise.

S. DIPAK RAGAV

TRENDS

At a time when there is a reduction in hiring and campus placements by the IT sector, banking is one of the few industries that is optimistic.

As the Reserve Bank of India is planning to open up the banking sector with new players set to be given licences, a lot of jobs will be created over the next few years. Keeping this in mind, NIIT IFBI is offering diploma programmes for students to get them ready for the times ahead.

Setting up new banks

Bimal Jain, president, NIIT IF-BI, says, "With India close to fulfilling its long-awaited commitment of opening up more banks in order to achieve financial inclusion, job opportunities in the banking sector are set to rise. There are an estimated 85,000 vacancies in various PSU banks across the country for the year 2013-14 and the government is keen on filling these in the current fiscal year." He adds, "As per

other industry reports, 3,00,000 people will be hired by PSU banks alone in the next three years. Analysts are of the view that with the opening of new banks, at least 10,000 more jobs will get created."

Speaking on programmes offered by NIIT IFBI, Jain says, "We have a range of programmes for various categories of BFSI aspirants and professionals. Our offerings are designed in the context of modern-day banking, insurance and financial services by developing competencies on four dimensions — domain, technology, application and customer-service."

Elaborating further on the career prospects, Jain says, "A fresh graduate with an attitude to learn and a financial acumen is being sought after by all banks, both PSU and others. These are entry level jobs which can pay from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 5 lakh per annum."

"The banking sector has been known to be stable and, banks invest big to keep the team agile and

sharp to compete in the market. Given the size of the industry and reach of the banking network, many professionals have had rounded careers and varied growth opportunities."

Even within banking, there are opportunities in a wide variety of sectors. Some of the sectors that are poised for growth in the banking industry are retail banking, SME, credit, rural, Agri and Forex where people are required in large numbers.

NIIT IFBI offers various postgraduate diploma programmes. The postgraduate diploma in Banking Operations (PGDBO) is a six-month programme with three months of full-time class work, followed by three months of internship. The postgraduate diploma in Retail Banking (PGDRB) is an exclusive career programme for Axis Bank. It is a three-term programme spanning three months of full-time class work, followed by one week of on-the-job training at a specified Axis Bank branch. The postgraduate diploma in Branch Banking (PGDBB) is a one-month programme with eight hours/day of full-time class work targeted at careers in Karur Vysya Bank.

For most of these programmes, a candidate should have successfully completed graduation. The fees for the courses range from Rs 50,000 to Rs 1 lakh depending upon the programme.

Hindu, Chennai, *August 19, 2013*

Innovation cannot grow in a clinic

Anuj Srivas

"How far is NIIT from your house?" went the punchline of the IT and education training company's television advertisement nearly a decade ago. With a presence in over 30 countries, NIIT Ltd. has been able to reach and teach hundreds of thousands of students globally.

Surviving through the IT bubble and the proliferation of engineering colleges, NIIT may almost have managed to achieve its goal of putting a training centre not too far from every household in India. In 2004, its software development business was spun off into a separate entity—NIIT Technologies.

Vijay Thadani, who co-founded NIIT in 1981 and is currently the company's CEO, sits on the board of NIIT Technologies. In an interview to **The Hindu,** Mr. Thadani talks on the current uncertain business environment, the IT industry's hiring problems and the way forward for NIIT. Edited excerpts:

How is the general macro-economic environment shaping up for the IT industry and NIIT Technologies? Is the industry well-equipped to deal with the headwinds?

It's becoming definitely much better than 2012. This year will be better than 2012. And 2014 should be much better than 2013.

For NIIT Technologies, our geographic revenue distribution works well in our favour sometimes, and other times not so much. However, the overall macro-economic environment is not one where everybody is jumping with joy. The general ambience is one of caution. And, the real problem for the industry is that innovation cannot grow in such an environment. Innovation cannot grow in a clinic!

We're trying out various things to weather the storm — outcomes-based solution, for instance. Non-linear growth is working in the industry's favour. We have successfully moved in the past from application maintenance development to infrastructure. And now the industry has moved from infrastructure into new area applications and so on.

As IT becomes more and more oriented towards business and becomes more strategic, the question becomes how do we deal with this and live with the current environment? Moving to an 'outcomes-based revenue model' is merely an outcome of trying to adapt with the current environment.

We're all learning a lesson. The industry never saw what it meant to be in a cyclical business, and most of the IT guys never studied economics, so we don't realie that the fundamental of economics is that business is cyclical. You just have to discover what kind of a cycle it is, is it a 30-year cycle or a 3-year cycle. The IT industry is beginning to figure this out. Once one understands that IT is cyclical, you can organise yourself. And then it is no longer the euphoria of past growth that drives us.

Are the new buzz areas for the IT industry such as 'social media, mobile, analytics and big data' resulting in viable business deals?

Here it is. When we talk of social media for an IT company, it's not about setting up a social media company. If I am an American Express, the question is what is my consumer thinking about me? Whatever two people spoke amongst each other was generally not known. There were surveys, all kinds of TRP ratings, and other nonsense to figure out customer attention and traction.

Therefore, it's about discerning the real noise from the chatter. When we say social media, we're really talking about the huge analytics play that is present. Every IT company is worried about this. There are huge business deals out there....online reputation management has become a science by itself. NIIT University will soon offer a course in this as well.

With the slowdown hitting the IT industry, campus hiring is coming down. How is this affecting NIIT? Can it be seen as a disadvantage and an advantage?

If you see, the net hiring in the industry reduced last year, and it will reduce this year also. What are the contributors to this? It's not actually less business — it is the threat of less business. And this is important, the difference is important. I hate to use the word 'bench', but there is too much extra capacity. In good times, this extra capacity could have been used for research or skill upgradation, but, in bad times, it is just extra capacity.

People feared that if business slowed down, then there would also be no margins to support that extra capacity. So, what does the industry do? They start taking graduates only when they need the graduates. But here's the silver lining. While the IT industry hiring reduced by 22 per cent, NIIT's placements have dropped only by 4 per cent!

And we are not a small placement player. We place 40,000 students every year. Now, why have our placements dropped less?

The just-in-time hiring trend has worked in our favour. Companies don't want to absorb all the graduates in June-July. All formal colleges end in April-May, which is why you have clogging in the month of June-July.

If IT companies need graduates in September or October — our business model suits that, because in NIIT, our graduates come out every month.

Second, and this is more important, we tapped into the re-training period. Before the graduate can become productive in the IT company, the company has to retrain them. This process usually takes 2-6 months. We told the IT companies that we would give our graduates the necessary extra courses during the mandatory 'bench time' that fresh hires had to serve. Whatever extra skill the IT companies need to onboard our graduates quicker, we supply that.

As you can imagine, this is a better proposition for companies, when compared to what normal colleges offer.

The third and final reason why NIIT has better placements is that when you say the IT industry's net hiring has dropped, you need to understand what IT industry you are referring to. All the numbers that NASSCOM gives are only those which are for IT exports. We haven't realised that our domestic IT industry is becoming a large force.

Earlier, youngsters always looked at opportunity as being equal to IT exports or equal to H-1B visas. Now there's an opportunity called domestic IT. There are many companies which are creating small domestic solutions — nearly 3,000 of them at last count. We encourage these companies to come for recruitment at NIIT.

The barometer used for hiring is still IT exports; I feel a larger perspective is needed here.

Will IT hiring and hiring in general start looking up soon? Do you see any positive signals in today's market?

I have a feeling that this trend will turn in the coming year — it has to. We are still growing — all companies have had good first quarter results. Somebody [hiring new employees] needs to support those great results right? I have a feeling hiring will pick up next year. All these government reforms that are slowly seeing the light of the day, with many new sectors opening up to FDI, will actually create huge opportunities for young professionals to get into.

India has always been very proud of its small-scale entrepreneurs. What the small-scale entrepreneur did in the manufacturing sector (think about the guy who bought himself two lathes and did turning work for Hindustan Motors), which is how the ancillary industries came up for the auto industry. Now manufacturing has many offshoots.

The small-scale entrepreneur will now move from the manufacturing domain to the digital domain. Leave IT services — think about applications. A 17-year-old kid can create an app, and it can become the next big thing. As usual, of course, millions will come and only ten thousands will succeed. But this can't be seen as a deterrent, tens of thousands are still better than zero after all. The emergence of a small entrepreneur in the digital age is an interesting opportunity.

NIIT Ltd. has been changing its business mix of late and is offering a variety of courses now. Is IT as a career choice no longer the golden option?

There are two reasons for our diversification. It's not just because demand for IT courses is going a little down, therefore, the others need to go up. We are sitting on a large part of a much bigger cake. We realised that we could keep nibbling on our piece, but after a point, increasing market share would be very difficult.

The second is that we must increase the size of the cake. Moving from 'training in IT' to training through IT is to increase the size of the cake. Also notice that NIIT has come out with courses in the areas that are largely IT-dependent or IT-adjacent. So, we've come out with more banking and financial services. We are now the largest company in banking and financial services training.

Our BPO training is also another example. We are also getting into new areas like design and digital marketing.

Again, if you notice, all of these are adjacent to IT. The idea is that if an individual takes the trouble to contact us — and we offer only the same idli (well known as that idli might be), it is a little bad. I can offer other dishes right?

Yes, GNIIT has gone through a trough — but it is coming back. With the economic environment being as tough as it is, those who are doing arts and sciences courses are now finding GNIIT a very attractive option. Here is the true problem for today's workforce: my grandfather was a matriculate so he got a job, my father was a graduate so he got a job, and I was an engineer, so I got a job. Today if you're an engineer you aren't guaranteed a job. Specialisation is the value-add that IT engineers need now.
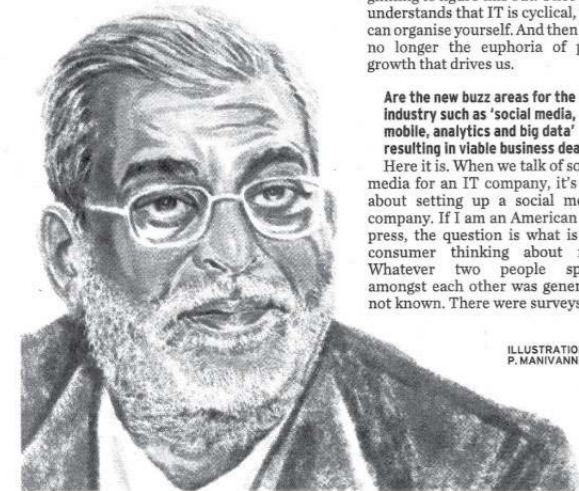
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ILLUSTRATION: P. MANIVANNAN

talking business

Hindu, New Delhi, *August 26, 2013*

एनआईआईटी के सीईओ विजय चाडवाणी नयी दिल्ली में शिक्षा की नयी पद्धति के बारे में जानकारी देते हुए।

United Bharat, Lucknow, *August 30, 2013*

NIIT in design training pact with Autodesk

Our Bureau
New Delhi, Aug 29

IT education provider NIIT Ltd, which had earlier this year announced plans to gradually diversify into training in various areas, such as banking and finance, has entered into a partnership with global design software company, Autodesk.

Under the partnership, Autodesk will provide technological and software support to NIIT, which, its Chief Executive Officer Vijay Thadani, said would enable them to inculcate "design-thinking into our education system."

"We have over a period of time become an industry driven economy rather than design-driven or innovation-driven economy," he said.

According to Thadani, the companies aim to take design, as a subject, to schools, starting with grade 6 itself and then further into the higher education space with NIIT University and NIIT Ltd. The company will introduce this in schools through their school learning division, which has relationships with 12,000 schools.

Further, other higher education institutes also stand to benefit from this tie-up, as almost 1,000 engineering colleges and other higher education institutes are currently partnered with NIIT Ltd.

"All the subjects that they currently have (in school), students will practice those subjects in innovations labs that we will set up," Thadani said.

However, design is not being envisaged as a grade-oriented subject in schools and will, instead, be assessed on the basis of the end results in terms of the products that students are able to design.

On its part, Autodesk aims at preparing the next-generation of designers, George Abraham, Director of Emerging Markets, Autodesk Education, said.

"We have a huge customer base using our software and technology. We need a next generation of designers. That's where education and students come into play. We need to provide students with software and technology in classrooms," he said. "It is important that we start with young minds and give exposure to them about the world of design."

Abraham said those who use the software, professional or personal, are customers, including "that kid using our software to print his own toy using our 3D printing."

Both Thadani and Abraham hoped this partnership would be a step toward bridging not just the employability gap plaguing graduates, especially engineering graduates, but also a way of upgrading their skills.

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Hindu Business Line, New Delhi, *August 30, 2013*

NIIT announces its IT scholarship

NIIT has announced its IT Scholarship programme Bhavishya Jyoti Scholarship to reward meritorious students aspiring to build successful careers in diverse industries that require Information Technology skills. Based on the students' performance in a competitive written test and Standard XIIth score, NIIT will be offering over 20,000 scholarships across the country this year for its IT programmes.

The scholarship examination will be conducted on September 22 at all NIIT education centres. The application forms for the test are available at NIIT education centres across the country. The last date for receipt of application is September 21, 2013.

DNA, Pune, *September 9, 2013*

Scholarship on offer

NIIT, India's leading Global Talent Development Corporation announced Bhavishya Jyoti scholarship programme to reward meritorious students desirous of building successful careers in diverse industries that require information technology skills.

Based on the students' performance in a competitive written test and Class XII grades, NIIT will be offering over 20,000 scholarships across the country this year for its popular IT and new age career programmes, such as programmes in GNIIT/GNIIT series, diploma/ post graduate programme in IT/Global Net+/Commerce and in programmes like diploma in corporate accounting and finance. The scholarship examination will be conducted simultaneously across hundreds of NIIT education centres, in the country on September 22, 2013.
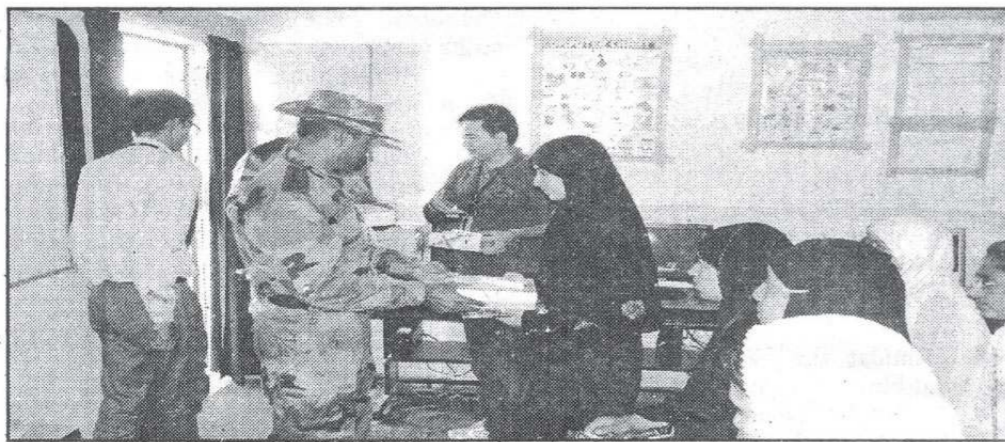
In addition to graduates, students who have completed their Class XII or equivalent and/or those currently pursuing graduation and post graduation programmes are also eligible for NIIT Bhavishya Jyoti scholarship. Selected students can avail special fee benefits on technology modular programmes like .NET, Java, Oracle, PHP and Cisco and new age programmes like Mobile App Development and Digital Marketing.

The last date for receipt of application is September 21, 2013. Students can also log on to *www.niit.com/bjs2013* to get more details.

Pioneer, New Delhi, *September 11, 2013*

NIIT conducts IT certificate course for girls

KT NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, Sep 10: National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT), Jammu is conducting an IT certificate course for girls at Thanamandi. This course, being conducted with the aim of teaching basic computer skills and the use of internet, is a part of the endeavour being made by Rashtriya Rifles battalions under counter insurgency Romeo Force to empower women in the region.

Around 14 students of class XI and XII of Government High School, Thanamandi are attending the course being conducted from September 6 to 21. On successful completion of the course, a certificate will be issued to all the participants by NIIT management.

While inaugurated the course, Jammu Director NIIT Rahul Sharma appreciated the efforts being made by the Army for educating girls in this remote area.

Kashmir Times, Jammu, *September 11, 2013*

Major Indian brands compete at the "Asian Brand and Leadership Summit 2013"

Asia's Most Promising (AMP) is a platform that will bring together a constellation of the biggest and most promising brands from India, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Scheduled to be held in Dubai on August 2013, it is an initiative by World Consulting & Research Corporation (WCRC) and ibrands 360 research initiative. In its first year itself, AMP is happy to announce some of India's most distinguishing brands and their leaders that are projected to be the market leaders of tomorrow in ASIA and around the globe. The brands participating at The Asian Brand and Leadership Summit 2013 are from various caetgories viz. Banking,Information Technology, Automobile, Healthcare, Infrastructure, Retail, Media & Entertainment, Food & Hospitality, Lifestyle and many more.
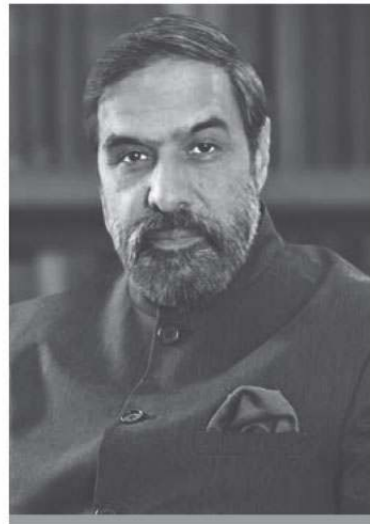
Some of the nominated brands from India are Ambuja Cement, Tata Tiscon, Sunflame, Godrej Interiors, Mahindra Finance, Lotus Refineries, Luxor Pens, Godrej Properties, Amby Valley, NIIT Tech, Suzlon Energy Limited, Muthoot Group, DHFL, Dr. Batra's, Fortis Healthcare, Mankind Pharma Limited, SRL Diagnostics, ITC Lifestyle, Kent RO, Usha International, Jaypee Group, Godrej Appliances, Kajaria, HR Johnson, Somany, Ultra Tech Cement, JK Lakshmi Cement, Mufti, Gitanjali, Fast Trax Food Pvt. Ltd and many more. AMP is deploying a variegated toolset of intrinsic and extrinsic brand barometers that are - advised and evaluated – by KPMG in India, and validating processes with precision-driven checks and balances at critical junctures of the research methodology that comprises an eminent panel of International Jury members, brand values-driven online voting parameters and in-depth analysis by the ibrands 360 research team.

On being nominated Mr. Dharini Mishra, Global Head of Brands, Suzlon Group said "We are very proud for this recognition that an esteemed organization like WCRC has bestowed upon us. At Suzlon we strive to bring about social, economic and ecological sustainable development and our brand promise of powering a greener tomorrow underlines that philosophy. We are thankful to organizations like WCRC who help take our brand and therefore this message to a larger audience."

Estate Avenues, National, *September, 2013*

3rd Africa-India Trade Ministers Meeting

Message

The people of India and Africa have shared a special relationship defined by centuries of exchange across the Indian Ocean. Over the years these historical ties have grown stronger and have been imbued with a sound political understanding. The India-Africa Forum Summit has provided the overarching framework of the engagement between India and Africa in the 21st century. This hinges on a strong developmental partnership in a diverse range of sectors like agriculture, health, education, capacity building, technology transfer and institution building.

In the last two decades, economic engagement has become a crucial element of our partnership. The 3rd India-Africa Trade Ministers' Meet being convened in Johannesburg on 1st October is a significant event which will help consolidate our economic ties. The African Union has been fully supportive of this initiative, which provides an opportunity for a comprehensive review of our trade and investment linkages. The trade between India and Africa has shown an impressive growth and has grown from US$ 5 billion in 2001 to US$ 70 billion in 2012. A large number of Indian companies have established their presence in African continent and are engaged in catalyzing economic growth. Indian companies have invested over US$ 50 billion in Africa with major investments in telecommunications, information technology, engineering, pharmaceuticals and automobiles. Indian corporate entities have followed a model of investment which is based on leveraging local human resource by imparting the appropriate skill sets, making them stakeholders in growth.

I am confident that the coming years will see greater synergy amongst our people and an even greater growth in trade and investment flows.

Anand Sharma
Minister
Commerce & Industry
India

ANAND SHARMA

Recent Initiatives in India-Africa Economic Relations

Africa-India Trade Ministers Meetings

'An annual Africa-India Trade Ministers Dialogue' to review economic relations between the two regions, enhance Africa-India trade & investment linkages and coordinate position in the ongoing negotiations in the Doha Round, is being held since 2011. The 1st Africa-India Trade Ministers Meeting was organised at Addis Ababa on May 21, 2011, prior to the 2nd Africa-India Forum Summit there, and the second meeting was held on March 17, 2012, in New Delhi. The 3rd Africa-India Trade Ministers meeting is scheduled to be held between September 30 and October 1, 2013 in Johannesburg, South Africa. 'Joint Statements' have been issued during the two meetings that have been held so far.

Trade-related capacity building

a. Indian Institute of Foreign trade (IIFT) has conducted thirteen Executive Development Programmes on International Business in African countries since April 2009; namely Ethiopia, Egypt, Botswana, Namibia, Angola, South Africa, Uganda, Senegal, Rwanda, Burkina Faso, Sudan, Mauritius and Seychelles.

b. Centre for WTO Studies (CWS), India has conducted six training programmes in the last two years, with active participation from Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Zimbabwe, Benin, Ghana, Sudan, Tanzania, Yemen, Kenya, Madagascar, Guinea, Mauritius, Lesotho, Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Mali. These programmes covered the following areas on WTO and Doha Round Negotiations - Agriculture, Services, TRIPs and RTAs (including Rules of Origin and WTO Plus Provisions), Anti-Dumping, Subsidies, Safeguards, Dispute Settlement.

c. A capacity building workshop was conducted by Invest India in January, 2013, for the benefit of investment promotion agencies (IPAs) in Africa at New Delhi, India. The workshop was attended by 23 participants from investment promotion agencies across 15 African countries.

d. Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has organised 'Training Programmes to strengthen Chambers/Industry Associations in Africa'. The first programme was held for 30 participants in March, 2012, at New Delhi. Under IAFS-II, the second programme was held for the benefit of senior representatives of Apex Chambers of Commerce/Industrial Associations from African countries, in March 2013. This was attended by 27 participants from 17 African countries (Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Mali, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe). The third programme is scheduled for 2014.

Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme

India has allowed Duty Free Quota Free (DFQF) access via the DFTP Scheme to Least Developed Countries (LDCs), of which 33 are in Africa. The scheme was launched in August, 2008, with tariff reductions that are spread over a period of five years.

India-Africa Business Council (IABC)

India-Africa Business Council (IABC) has been set up to enhance bilateral economic relations and also address outstanding issues towards that end. The 1st meeting of the IABC was held on March 17, 2012, in New Delhi in conjunction with CII-Africa Conclave and the 2nd India-Africa Trade Ministers Meeting. During this meeting, five Working Groups were setup to determine sector-specific opportunities and enhance collaboration for improving trade and investment relations:

i. Core infrastructure (including energy, oil and gas and construction)
ii. Agri-based and food processing industries & textiles
iii. Value-added manufacturing (including mines and minerals)
iv. Services including connectivity (air and sea), health, IT, telecom, banking and pharmaceuticals
v. Skills development

The 2nd meeting of IABC is scheduled between September 30 and October 1, 2013, in Johannesburg, South Africa, in conjunction with the Africa-India Trade Ministers Meeting.

India-Africa Investment E-Portal

India-Africa Investment E-Portal was launched by Mr Anand Sharma, Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, in Addis Ababa during the 1st Africa-India Trade Ministers Meeting in May, 2011. It provides detailed information on investment opportunities and the overall investment environment in India and Africa.

INDIA INC: COMMITTED TO AFRICA

What is your view on the future of Indo-Africa trade relations in general in the coming years, and how improving trade relations can benefit both economies

To me, India and Africa are natural allies and their partnership adds immense value to South-South economic cooperation. I am confident that the economic engagement between the two partners will deepen further in the years to come and contribute to the well-being of their respective populations.

— **Sunil Bharti Mittal**
Chairman and Group CEO, Bharti Enterprises and Co-Chair, India-Africa Business Council

With their rich histories and cultures, Africa and India have been the cradles of two of the world's greatest civilisations. Our societies have evolved very differently from those of the West. But despite our slow start as the economies open up, I am confident that in the next few decades, the world will see the potential of the 2 billion people who live here - the world will see that the people who built the pyramids and the Taj Mahal can also build economic powerhouses of the 21st century.

— **Anand G Mahindra**
Chairman and MD, Mahindra & Mahindra Group

The regulatory framework in Africa is highly conducive for business. I feel that business in Africa is highly sustainable, profitable and offers great potential for growth, as can be seen from the Dabur example. And so, further improving trade relations between India and Africa can benefit both economies.

— **Amit Burman**, Vice Chairman, Dabur India

Africa's potential will reward commitment, engagement and a right business model There is a very real opportunity for the pharmaceutical industry in Africa. This will require long-term commitment and willingness to navigate the complexities and the investment to build the path to market. We are committed to it.

— **Arun Sawhney**, CEO and MD, Ranbaxy Laboratories

The Indo-Africa partnership has gathered unprecedented momentum in the last few years. The bilateral trade between India and Africa has crossed the US$ 46 billion mark and expected to achieve US$ 70 billion in bilateral trade by the year 2015.
India is one of the leading investors in African countries. The Indian investments, made in joint ventures and wholly owned subsidiaries, touch the US$ 34 billion mark and cover diverse sectors like oil & gas, pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals, IT, fertilisers and infrastructure among others. Africa has emerged as India's sixth largest trading partner, and the number will grow exponentially in the near future.
Information technology has been a critical tool that has enabled governments to broaden the reach of services. Indo-African trade relations have been excellent with active support from the respective governments. With increased trade, investments and travel, it will enable both the countries to collaborate and develop as the growth poles in the business space, in the 21st century.

— **P R Venketrama Raja**
Vice Chairman & MD, Ramco Systems

India and Africa have always had close relations with shared heritage and history. Now, with the economic opportunities opening up, this could also lead to a much stronger relationship in the future.
Being energy dependent, India is importing much more energy from Africa today than a decade earlier, and is also making suitable investments in this sector.
However, for sustainable and durable ties with African nations, India must move beyond trade and increase the level of investment beyond energy. Today, India is involved in building critical rail and road infrastructure in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Uganda. Africa is also becoming a key destination for Indian investments in software, education, telecom, and financial sectors. More investments in these areas – backed by strong bilateral support - will help in creating an enduring partnership for the future.

— **Pawan Munjal**, MD and CEO, Hero MotoCorp

India and the African nations have been building strong and mutually beneficial associations since long. As emerging economies, India and Africa have a lot in common – rich natural resources, similar demographics and large domestic markets. This provides a natural synergy for building partnerships. The concerned stakeholders should adopt more proactive initiatives to strengthen the bilateral relationship to the benefit of all.

— **R S Agarwal**, Joint Chairman, Emami Group of Companies

We believe that Africa is clearly the next frontier of growth and a strong foundation in the region today will yield tremendous dividends in the coming decade. We look forward to more partnerships between the Indian and African country governments, aimed at making trade more open and beneficial to both regions in the long run.

— **Vivek Gambhir**
MD, Godrej Consumer Products

The IT space will see a boom in the trade relations. Many IT companies in the space of software development are setting/have already set up offices in Africa as they see good potential. Similarly, world class state-of-the-art training and education will also see growth, and hence there would be investments made by Indian companies in these areas. These investments would mutually benefit both India and Africa.

— **Ninad Karpe**, MD and CEO, Aptech

The India-Africa relationship is distinctive and owes its origins to a common past that they share -- a past that witnessed a struggle against colonialism, poverty and illiteracy. India and the African nations have been building strong and mutually beneficial associations. Africa offers diverse opportunities for trade and investments. Africa is one of the fastest growing regions in the world, and we are happy to be participating and contributing in the growth story.

— **Qimat Rai Gupta**, CMD, Havells India

The growing inter-dependence between India and Africa can be a key dynamic, which will shape trade and investment between the two countries. Given an enabling environment, both are well positioned to address the opportunities and challenges, which, in turn, would propel sustainable economic growth in Africa.

— **Rajendra S Pawar**
Chairman and Co-Founder, NIIT

India and Africa have a shared history, amply spoken about at various junctures. We have had similar experiences and today are fighting similar battles. In the recent past, due to the work done by organisations like CII and FICCI and the leadership provided specifically by Minister Anand Sharma, we have converted some of the shared goodwill into economic ties. But these ties are still at a nascent stage. They need the push and support of stronger political will and greater private sector interface. India has experiences to share with African economies that may help them to skip a few stages of development and leapfrog into the next level. The imperatives of both India and the African economies will be better served if partnerships are strengthened, experiences are shared and progressive dialogue continues.

— **Sanjay Kirloskar**
Chairman & MD, Kirloskar Brothers

The proximity between Africa and India, as well as their long history of trade, has played an important part in nurturing this relationship. Trade between them has grown exponentially during the last decade, with some reports suggesting it could have more than tripled in this time. With the growing focus on South-South trade, rather than just with the more mature markets, this is expected to reach an even more significant volume, with some reports suggesting it will be worth about US$ 90 billion by 2015. Both regions have a remarkable lot to complement each other through trade, and there can be numerous benefits, especially in terms of mutual learning for infrastructural projects and for gaining an improved understanding of and access to the Bottom of the Pyramid consumer segment in both markets.

— **Karl Slym**, MD, Tata Motors

A large consumer base in India and Africa, especially, with a growing middle class, indicates the potential for a flourishing bilateral trade. India could leverage this opportunity by increasing its exports to the African continent and improve trade balance.

— **H M Nerurkar**, MD, Tata Steel

Business Standard

Tata-led Neotel, NIIT in educational partnership in S Africa

Press Trust of India | Johannesburg September 18, 2013 Last Updated at 14:45 IST

The Tata-led Neotel telecoms consortium in South Africa has teamed up with the NIIT and a South African community centre network to boost IT skills capacity in the African country.

The partnership, which was first announced at the recent BRICS summit in Durban, was officially launched at Neotel's head office on Monday.

"We are trying to address one of the most significant socio-economic issues in South Africa, which is education," said Sunil Joshi, managing director of Neotel.

"NIIT brings the skills and the content and the capability necessary, along with our infrastructure, to provide meaningful services", he said.

Joshi said the programme would initially be rolled out in Gauteng province, the economic hub of South Africa, and expanded to the rest of the country after assessment and any corrective changes that might be necessary.

"Our partnership now with Siyafunda Community Training Centres helps us take it to the communities where it will become possible for communities to leverage global education, as well as courses and curriculums which are established and will give back to the communities and to South Africa," he said.

Joshi said Neotel's commitment to developing skills in South Africa was part of Tata's principles of always giving back to the communities in which it operated.

Rakesh Misri, vice president of National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT) and head of its South African branch, said the new partnership was part of his company's aim of developing people across the globe.

"This partnership will help build a pool of skills among South Africans that can then take up the challenge of assignments from all over the world," Misri said.

Ahmed Ismail, who started the NGO Siyafunda several years ago, said the initiative had been welcomed by local government agencies across the country to the extent that they were regularly opening community training centres to provide ICT training opportunities at low or subsidised cost for underprivileged communities.

"The renowned programmes of NIIT, coupled with the broadband reach of Neotel across the country, will make these quality educational initiatives even more accessible to these communities," Ismail said.

http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/tata-led-neotel-niit-in-educational-partnership-in-s-africa-113091800461_1.html

http://www.youtube.com/niitcareers