

NIIT profit surges in Q3 on US boost

Our Bureau
New Delhi, Jan. 17
Information technology education provider NIIT Ltd on Friday reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 1.2 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2013. This is an over 150 per cent increase from Rs 50 lakh in the corresponding period last year.

Executive Officer, NIIT Ltd, said. The company said its pioneering 'cloud campus' initiative has now expanded to cover 92 courses across 210 centres with a cumulative enrolment of over 53,000 students. Placements during the quarter stood at 8,117 students. Revenue from the Corporate Learning Solutions Centre

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK

NIIT University launches a new forum to improve our understanding of Asia. By Mridu Rai



founder, NIIT University, The Asian Lens Forum will act as a platform for faculty members as well as students of NIIT to undertake research about challenges, achievements and roles of Asian societies in the globalised world. Explaining the need for such a forum, Daswani says that the history of colonisation in the continent resulted in "Asians having an under-standing of themselves from the perspective of western writers. Historians, and thinkers. The subtle idea of 'the West as a dominant power' is deeply ingrained in our consciousness. The forum will help us understand the Asian reality."

ASIA'S FUTURE The Imagining of Asia Through Asian Lenses

NIIT University, the Asian Lens Forum will act as a platform for faculty members as well as students of NIIT to undertake research about challenges, achievements and roles of Asian societies in the globalised world. Explaining the need for such a forum, Daswani says that the history of colonisation in the continent resulted in "Asians having an under-standing of themselves from the perspective of western writers. Historians, and thinkers. The subtle idea of 'the West as a dominant power' is deeply ingrained in our consciousness. The forum will help us understand the Asian reality."

Bridging the skill divide at last

TRAINING GROUND The allocation of ₹1,000 crore to the National Skill Development Trust, as announced in the Interim Budget, will help corporates scale up their skilling programmes.



India is a rapidly growing economy. The government has announced a massive investment of ₹1,000 crore in the National Skill Development Trust (NSDT) to bridge the skill divide. This move is expected to help corporates scale up their skilling programmes and create more jobs for the youth.

Education, public or private, MUST LEAD TO GOOD

With over 100 universities in India, only 50 per cent of graduates are employable. Can this gap be bridged? Experts say employability can be improved if corporates collaborate with universities.



The gap between education and employability is widening. With over 100 universities in India, only 50 per cent of graduates are employable. Experts say that this gap can be bridged if corporates collaborate with universities to provide practical training and internships to students.

NIIT UNIVERSITY CALLS FOR ADMISSIONS

Hyderabad: Taking education to the next level, NIIT University in Hyderabad, Rajasthan is looking for the University of the Future. With a sprawling campus, it is equipped with state-of-the-art technology-enabled teaching methodology that has a strong research-focused curriculum. NIIT draws from the legacy of NIIT, which has been a leading education provider for 30 years. NIIT University is dedicated to fostering great careers. Students have been bagged internships in prestigious organisations in India & abroad. The campus



NIIT University is looking for the University of the Future. With a sprawling campus, it is equipped with state-of-the-art technology-enabled teaching methodology that has a strong research-focused curriculum. NIIT draws from the legacy of NIIT, which has been a leading education provider for 30 years. NIIT University is dedicated to fostering great careers. Students have been bagged internships in prestigious organisations in India & abroad. The campus

IT aptitude test

Global Talent Development Corporation (NIIT) Limited will be holding the country's largest IT Aptitude Test - the 10th National IT Aptitude Test (NIITAT) - on February 15. This test will enable students and graduates to assess their aptitude for a career in IT. The test is designed to assess the aptitude of students and graduates in the field of IT. The test is designed to assess the aptitude of students and graduates in the field of IT.



Global Talent Development Corporation (NIIT) Limited will be holding the country's largest IT Aptitude Test - the 10th National IT Aptitude Test (NIITAT) - on February 15. This test will enable students and graduates to assess their aptitude for a career in IT. The test is designed to assess the aptitude of students and graduates in the field of IT. The test is designed to assess the aptitude of students and graduates in the field of IT.

NIIT in the News



NIIT Q3 net up over two-fold at ₹1.2 crore

IT training solutions firm NIIT reported over two-fold growth in its consolidated net profit at ₹1.2 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2013. The Gurgaon-based firm had posted a net profit of ₹50 lakh in the year-ago period. Consolidated revenues, however, rose marginally to ₹233.6 crore in the October-December quarter this fiscal from ₹232.7 crore in the same quarter of 2012-13 fiscal. Commenting on the performance, NIIT chairman Rajendra S Pawar said: "The margin growth of 279 bps points to the underlying revival in business. Despite Q3 being a weak quarter, the performance is good. Total placements in third quarter stood at 8,117 students."

The Financial Express
Chandigarh, January 18, 2014

NIIT net profit rises two-fold to ₹1.2 cr

HT Correspondent

* letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: IT training solutions major NIIT on Friday reported an over two-fold growth in its net profit to ₹1.2 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2013 against a net profit of ₹50 lakh in the year-ago period.

The Gurgaon-based firm's revenues rose marginally to ₹234 crore in October-December from ₹233 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal.

"The margin growth of 279 basis points to the underlying revival in business. Despite Q3 being a seasonally weak quarter, the performance is good," said Rajendra S Pawar, chairman, NIIT Ltd.

Hindustan Times
Kolkata, January 18, 2014



NIIT profit surges in Q3 on US boost

Our Bureau

New Delhi, Jan. 17

Information technology education provider NIIT Ltd on Friday reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 1.2 crore for the third quarter ended December 31, 2013. This is an over 150 per cent increase from Rs 50 lakh in the corresponding period last year.

The net revenue also rose to Rs 233.6 crore during the quarter from Rs 232.7 crore in same period previous year.

"NIIT has been able to take advantage of the developing opportunities in the US market to record a 31 per cent year-on-year increase in order intake in its Corporate Learning Business," Vijay K. Thadani, Chief

Executive Officer, NIIT Ltd, said.

The company said its pioneering 'cloud campus' initiative has now expanded to cover 92 courses across 210 centres with a cumulative enrolment of over 53,000 students. Placements during the quarter stood at 8,117 students.

Revenue from the Corporate Learning Solutions rose by 34 per cent to Rs 105.9 crore, while the Career Building Division recorded net revenue of Rs 91.7 crore during the quarter, it said.

The company's shares closed at Rs 27.50 on the BSE on Friday, down 3.17 per cent from the previous close.

navadha.p@thehindu.co.in

Hindu Business Line, Kolkata, January 18, 2014



V Anand awards super achievers at NIIT

NIIT Mind Champion Viswanathan Anand recently felicitated the “super achievers” at NIIT at an event organised in Mumbai. Over 30 students and 18 faculty members were awarded. Anand addressed the students on “lessons from chess” and expressed his happiness over the fact that chess is now gaining popularity. Amitabh Lahiri, president, Career Building Solutions, NIIT, said, “These super achievers will carry forward the NIIT legacy of trust and innovation.”

The Financial Express, New Delhi, January 6, 2014



NIIT IMPERIA'S INVITES APPLICATIONS

NIIT Imperia in collaboration with Indian Institute of Management- Tiruchirappalli invites applications for one year – Post Graduate Certificate Programme in Brand and Advertising Management. The programme is designed to give new insights into the importance and value of a strongly differentiated brand and how brand and advertising can be used to build a strong and enduring business.

Executives in marketing/branding/advertising or those aspiring to take up these responsibilities and working professionals with minimum two years of experience can opt for the programme. The programme aims to gain knowledge and skills that may be applied immediately to leverage brand for increased customer loyalty, competitive advantage and profitability.

Eligibility: The applicant should be: Working professionals/self-employed Graduates/ Post Graduates in any discipline with minimum 50% marks recognised by UGC/AICTE/DEC/AIU

Minimum 2 years of work experience post completion of graduation is required as on Feb 1 2014

Selection Process: 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-Annexure I of the Application Form) based on the application form submitted.

How to Apply:

Visit www.niitimperia.com to fill the application form online.

Application forms can be obtained from local NIIT Imperia Centres as listed in www.niitimperia.com

ed Education Loan from leading banks to enable the participants to spread the repayment over a period of 36 months. However, the applicant shall be eligible for bank loans as per the concerned bank norms.

Last Date of Application January 10, 2014

Afternoon Despatch & Courier
Mumbai, January 8, 2014

Admission open

NIIT University invites applications for full-time MBA programmes in Strategy and Leadership, Marketing, Finance, Operations Management, Human Resources and Information Systems. The applicant must be a graduate from a recognized and reputed Board or University in India or abroad with minimum 60 per cent in class X and class XII and 50 per cent. Students appearing for final year examinations also eligible to apply. Applicants with previous work experience are preferred.

The Statesman, New Delhi, January 9, 2014



Information-driven leadership conference

htpacenotes

The educational technology area of NIIT University, in association with Ahlcon International School, Mayur Vihar, hosted a conference on information-driven leadership that was attended by 25 school principals and mentors from Delhi and NCR. The principal of Ahlcon International School, Ashok Pandey welcomed the audience to the sessions by the team from NIIT University, Professor Vijay Mandke and Dr. Shradha Kanwar. The vice-president of NIIT University, Prof. Parimal Mandke was also present on the occasion.



• Twenty five school principals attended a conference organised by Ahlcon International School, Mayur Vihar in association with NIIT varsity.

Hindustan Times, New Delhi, January 10, 2014



NIIT University: The university of the future

NESTLED in the foothills of Aravali, in Neemrana, Rajasthan, NIIT University (NU) is truly the University of the Future. Just off National Capital region (NCR), the picturesque 100-acre fully residential Green campus of NU is equipped with state-of-the-art technology-enabled teaching methodology that is backed by a strong research-focused curriculum.

NU draws from the legacy of NIIT, which has been a leading education provider for 30 years. The knowledge and experience of managing an education process that NIIT has built and more importantly the research in understanding best ways to learn have been distilled in this not-for-profit university.

The B.Tech program in Computer Science and Engineering, Electronics and Communication Engineering and Biotechnology imparts knowledge in technologies of the future through a cutting edge curriculum using the core prin-

ciples of providing industry-linked, technology-based, research-driven and seamless education.

The MBA programme at NU demands and encourages the student to explore and connect with the multiple dimensions that today's manager is required to deal with and therefore immerses the student into these multiple domains. The distinctive features of the NU MBA Program are 'The Mentorship Program' and 'The International Immersion Program'.

The M.Tech (GIS) program at the university focuses on the expanding geographic information system due to development in remote sensing and information technology and therefore enables better understanding of a variety of information by simulating geo-spatial visualisation.

The B.Tech, M.Tech and MBA Program at NIIT University are built around the core principles of seamlessness and industry-Linkage as the founda-

tion of its program design. Through a transformational process involving courses, projects, internships, leadership interactions, finishing school and other distinctive co-curricular components, the programmes seeks to create exceptional leaders trained to operate in today's complex business environment.

NU recognises the importance of a well-executed internship for a bright and rewarding career and therefore ensures that all its students of B.Tech, M.Tech and MBA are placed in highly reputed organisations for their respective industry practice (IP) modules.

NU is notified by the Government of Rajasthan u/a 5 of 2010 and covered u/s 2(f) of UGC Act.

Admissions Deadlines (Cycle 1) for B.Tech, MBA & M.Tech (GIS) Programmes - January 31, 2014.
For enquiries, call 1800-103-5050
NIIT University campus:
NH-8, Delhi-Jaipur Highway,
Neemrana, Rajasthan

The Telegraph, Kolkata, January 23, 2014



NIIT Tech looks to 'uplift service culture'

ITIKA SHARMA PUNIT
Bangalore, 1 January

In line with some of its peers, mid-sized information technology (IT) services company NIIT Technologies is undertaking an internal transformation to "uplift its service culture". Arvind Thakur, chief executive officer, NIIT Technologies, said the move would also help to align itself with the changing business environment, as clients begin to look beyond only cost advantage.

Among other things, the Noida-based company is working to make a cultural shift among its employees with a focus to provide "new ideas and more values" to clients. A few years ago, NIIT Technologies had narrowed its focus down to a few chosen business verticals.

"Cost is always important, but now clients are looking for value from the partnership. Accordingly, we need to change our mindset from doing what we are told to do, to identifying the opportunities where we can add value. So that's why there was need for a huge change in mindset or a cultural shift," Thakur told *Business Standard*.

"If you look at the (IT servic-



The Noida-based company is working to make a cultural shift among its employees to provide "new ideas and more values" to clients

es) industry, it has been based on manufacturing principals, where quality means conformance to requirements. Whereas ours is a services industry, where conformance to requirement is just a basic."

Under the process, which was started at the beginning of 2013, the company has covered 30 per cent of its staff (including teams working with the company's top 10 clients) so far. The remaining employees would be covered over the next 12-18 months, Thakur said. To make this transformation affective, NIIT Technologies has hired services of thought-leader Ron

Kaufman, writer of best-selling book, *Uplifting services*.

NIIT Technologies' move is in line with several of its competitors such as Mindtree and Mphasis, which have also set out on an internal overhaul during the past two years to ensure growth among shifting market dynamics. From being generic IT services providers, both these Bangalore-based companies chose specific business verticals to focus on, and are in the process of re-aligning their teams and functions accordingly. The two companies have also been hiring from competitors to strengthen their management

teams in the new structure.

"We had done that change (of narrowing focus to fewer verticals) a little earlier. But because we have been growing well, we needed to expand our leadership to create more bandwidth. We have done that now," Thakur said. In last August, NIIT Technologies had brought Sudhir Chaturvedi as its chief operational officer from Infosys, where he was a senior vice-president and head of financial services business unit for Americas. In his current role, Chaturvedi is responsible for global sales and delivery for technology and business services of NIIT Technologies.

At the time of Chaturvedi's appointment, NIIT Technologies had said, his induction would bring fresh perspectives and enhance leadership bandwidth for the company, as it prepares for its next phase of growth with an eye to scale business to a billion dollars annually.

"We are now beginning to see recovery in the western markets and felt there is a need to strengthen our top leadership. It was a very focused and directed search we did to make sure we get the right person," Thakur said.

Business Standard, New Delhi, January 2, 2014

APTTITUDE TEST

NIIT Limited announced the 10th National IT Aptitude Test (NITAT)-to enable students and graduates to ascertain their potential and aptitude for a career in the IT industry. 'NITAT 2014' will be simultaneously conducted by NIIT in over 200 cities nationwide, on February 16, 2014. Students can find out the benefits of appearing in the 10th NITAT and register online by logging on to www.niit.com/nitat or by visiting the nearest NIIT centre.

The Times of India, New Delhi
February 3, 2014

NITAT 2014 TO BE HELD THIS MONTH

NEW DELHI: NIIT Limited, a global talent development corporation, has announced its 10th National IT Aptitude Test (NITAT), one of the largest IT aptitude tests in the country, for students and graduates looking for a career in the IT industry. NITAT 2014, will be simultaneously conducted by NIIT, in over 200 cities nationwide, on February 16, 2014.

The test has been designed

as an objective type test of reasoning, comprehension, data interpretation skills and behavioural traits.

Every student undergoing the test will receive a scorecard with their interpretation, along with her/his nationwide and zonal ranking.

Students can register online by logging on to www.niit.com/nitat or visit their nearest NIIT centre.

Hindustan Times, New Delhi, February 5, 2014



NIIT University: A new alternative for engineers of tomorrow

Nestled in the foothills of Aravali, in Neemrana, Rajasthan, NIIT University (Notified by the Government of Rajasthan u/a 5 of 2010 and covered u/s 2(f) of UGC Act) is truly the university of the future. Just off National Capital Region (NCR), the picturesque 100-acre fully residential green campus of NIIT University (NU) is equipped with state-of-the-art technology-enabled teaching methodology that is backed by a strong research-focused curriculum.

Set up with the vision of being the leading centre of innovation and learning in emerging areas of a knowledge society, the University is dedicated to building great careers and ensuring exceptional job opportunities to its students.

NU draws from the legacy of NIIT, which has been a leading education provider for 30 years. The knowledge and experience of managing an education process that NIIT has built and more importantly the research in understanding best ways to learn have been distilled in this not-for-profit university.

The green campus of NU encourages closeness with nature, and undertakes initiatives such as use of drip irrigation, air tunnels to provide natural cooling, rain water harvesting, water recycling, containing illegal mining of rocks in the Aravallis and control soil erosion, to create a sustainable environment.

The NU B.TECH PROGRAMME

NU is committed to imparting cutting-edge curriculum, through its futuristic B.Tech programmes in: Biotechnology, Computer Science and Engineering; Electronics and Communication Engineering.

The B.Tech programme at NU uses the university's core principles of providing industry-linked, technology-based, research-driven and seamless education as a foundation of its programme design. Through a transformational process involving courses, R&D project, six month industry practice for hands on experience with industry professionals and other co-curricular components, the programme seeks to create exceptional leaders trained to operate in tomorrow's complex technology-oriented business environment.

The research-driven NU B.Tech programme offers courses like 'Problem solving', 'Design of experiments', 'Research methodology and Scientific method to its students. NU B.Tech students are involved in various research projects on future technologies such as 'Handwritten digit Recognition', 'Experimental WiFi Campus Network', 'Measurement of EAT parameters using a sensor network'.

NU recognizes the importance of a well-executed internship for a bright and rewarding career for its students. NU ensures that its students are



placed in highly reputed organizations as summer interns. NU B.Tech students get the opportunity to work in leading organizations such as Bell-Labs Research, IISc Bangalore, Juniper Networks, HCL, AT & T, Singapore Management University, Microsoft Research, among others.

Highlights

- 100% placements for last year's founding batch in companies like Makemytrip, On ramp wireless, Go IBIBO & Allegis software
- 10 X increase in the number of students currently enrolled on campus
- Unique partnership with Microsoft for an 'innovation centre' on campus
- Extensive focus on research & innovation with students having bagged a prestigious research project from DRDO & other esteemed organizations
- Summer internship opportunities in renowned companies & institutes abroad
- NU offers a student-centric admission process that facilitates early admission of meritorious students in its cutting-edge B-Tech programmes on the basis of their performance in 10th and 12th standard examinations
- NU has students from over 15 Indian states currently enrolled on campus

Admission details

NIIT University accepts JEE scores and offers various scholarships basis a student's JEE ranking. Students with an aggregate score of 80% and above in Class X can apply to avail various scholarships offered under the 'Scholar Search programme'.

The admission to the B.Tech programme is based on class X and XII marks and Personal Counseling Interaction (PCI).

Early admission mode

NU offers an early admission to students who

have scored >60% in class X exams into its prestigious B.Tech programme for the batch 2014-2018 under an 'Early Admission Mode (EAD)'.

This is offered to applicants who are appearing for their Class XII Board Examinations in March-April 2014 as also to those who have taken their Class XII Board examination not earlier than March-April 2012.

BENEFITS OF EARLY ADMISSION TO NU'S

B. Tech course:

- An early admission ensures that the student can be stress free and can focus on doing well in their Class XII Board examinations.
- Students who have scored between $\geq 60\%$ and $< 80\%$ in class X have a chance to earn a scholarship based on their marks in Class XII or their rank / score in an entrance examination as specified in the NU Scholar Search Programme policy
- Students who have taken an early admission also get access to an exclusive 'Head Start programme' at NU, enabling them to get an early start into the B. Tech programme
- There are limited seats for which admission is being granted under the 'Early Admission Mode'. The admission will be granted on a first come first served basis to only those applicants who meet all the admission criteria.

Important application dates for academic session 2014-2018:

Early admission (EAD) - January 31, 2014

Regular admission (RAD) - June 30, 2014

Campus: NIIT University, NH-8, Delhi-Jaipur Highway, Neemrana.

Admissions Office: NIIT House, 85, Sector 32, Institutional Area, Gurgaon 122 001.

For any queries, visit www.niituniversity.in or call us at : 1800 103-5050

Hindustan Times, Lucknow, February 1, 2014



IT aptitude test

Global Talent Development Corporation NIIT Limited will be holding the country's largest IT Aptitude Test — the 10th National I.T. Aptitude Test (NITAT) — on February 16. This test will enable students and graduates to ascertain their potential and aptitude for a career in the IT industry. 'NITAT 2014', will be simultaneously conducted by NIIT, in over 200 cities nationwide.

NITAT aims at fulfilling the need of IT industry by identifying a ready talent pool for immediate absorption by the industry. The test has been designed as an objective type test of reasoning, comprehension, data interpretation skills and behavioural traits. Every student undergoing the test will receive a score-

card with their interpretation, along with her/his nationwide and zonal ranking. The assessment is expected to be of particular benefit to graduating students in determining their aptitude for IT careers as well as the IT domain that they should take up.

Students who will appear for NITAT will receive an assessment score card & personalized career counselling from NIIT. NIIT will also award special recognition certificates to the top 30% merit list candidates and encourage their pursuit of a career in IT.

Students can find out the benefits of appearing in the test and register online by logging on to www.niit.com/nitat or by visiting the nearest NIIT centre. — TNS

Tribune, New Delhi, February 5, 2014



Education, public or private, MUST LEAD TO GOOD

With over 100 universities in India, only 50 per cent of graduates are employable. Can this gap be bridged? Experts say employability can be improved if corporates collaborate with universities

KAVIYA SANJEEVI | CHENNAI

India is the second-largest populated country and we have the third largest education system in the world. Both public and private players in the education sector play a role in shaping young citizens. At the conclave, we had panelists who analysed these roles in a session titled 'Private education leads to public good', and all of them agreed on the need to reform the current education system.

Chairperson of the panel, V Raghunathan, CEO, GMR Varalakshmi Foundation, began by highlighting recent changes in education and stressed the need for a 50-50 partnership between the public and private sector. He explains, "There may be private players who are contributing enormously to public good and there are public players who have not completely understood their potential. Education certainly encourages people, builds skill and confidence, and enhances their economic activity. In that sense, we can say that any higher education leads to public good."

He also pointed that hardly anyone could deny the fact that private education leads to 40-60 per cent of public good that we enjoy today.

Suneel Galgotia, chancellor, Galgotias University, also agreed with Raghunathan. Citing the change that has taken place in the past 15 years, he said, "Due to private education, the geographical count of colleges has increased. They reach a large number of students. Private universities also provide a disciplined methodology of teaching. They are enabled with a quick curriculum and examination reforms, and they have better connectivity to industries. Private institutions also rely on technology, with specific emphasis on feedback," he said.

While both Raghunathan and Galgotia spoke on the pos-



From left: VPS Arora, Kaustav Sengupta, Vijay K Thadani, V Raghunathan, Suneel Galgotia and R Ravichander

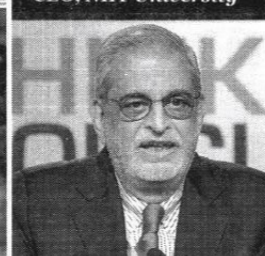


"We are now dealing with millennials (or Gen Y), who come with very different qualities and characteristics. They have specific lifestyles
— Vijay K Thadani, CEO, NIIT University

itives of private education, Vijay K Thadani, CEO, NIIT University, spoke on how both private and public sector needs to work together to provide quality education. As a beneficiary of public education who has now "joined the gang that provides private education", he brought perspectives from both worlds.

He warned that if the education system did not keep up with the changing needs of the job sector, we would be lagging behind. "We can't predict the kinds of jobs we will have in 2020. Plus, with the delay in changing curriculum, there is no way we will be ready."

Thadani also noted how the learner itself was changing. Elucidating, he explained: "We are now



dealing with millennials (or Gen Y), who come with very different qualities and characteristics. They have very specific lifestyles. It is enough to say that when you are preparing for the next day's class, the students have already read it and discussed on Facebook. So they could teach you by the time you get to class." He also advocated a change in methodology saying, "Online learning is here to stay."

Kaustav Sengupta, associate professor, NIFT Chennai, also spoke about the change seen in students and the need to tap their creative side. Suggesting a modification of the RTE, he said it could ideally be the Right to Creative Education, wherein learning would be creativity-based. "We would not

end up producing robots, but create students who have clarity on what needs to be done. Schools should also deliver experiential learning, which will enable students to take forward something that they learnt in life. Open-minded and appreciative teachers would be more inspirational, he says. Research and education should also be an integral part of the primary school, he says, pointing out ways to enrich the learning experience.

Another speaker, VPS Arora, speaking from his experience of heading both a public university and a private one — having been the vice-chancellor of Kumaun university, and currently heading Supertech University — spoke on how there are certain obstacles

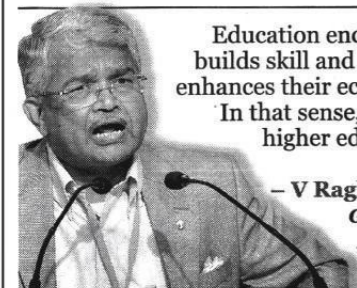
universities. He said, "If we need education to be a game changer that leads to prosperity and brings in social and cultural transformation, we need to look beyond intellect."

Arora also touched upon the quality of teachers that private institutions produce, and said the system should be able to produce teachers with scientific thinking.

R Ravichander, group president, Business Development (South), Yes Bank, concurring with title of the topic, pointed out that it was private education that had become synonymous with the standards set for current generation of educators to follow.

— kaviya@newindianexpress.com

The New Indian Express, Chennai, February 10, 2014



Education encourages people, builds skill and confidence, and enhances their economic activity. In that sense, we can say that higher education leads to public good
— V Raghunathan, CEO, GMR Varalakshmi Foundation



NIIT University: The university of future

Nestled in the foothills of Aravali in Neemrana, Rajasthan, NIIT University (NU) is truly the University of the Future. Just off National Capital region (NCR), the picturesque 100 acre fully residential green campus of NU is equipped with state-of-the-art technology-enabled teaching methodology that is backed by a strong research-focused curriculum.

NU draws from the legacy of NIIT, which has been a leading education provider for 30 years. The knowledge and experience of managing an education process that NIIT has built



and more importantly the research in understanding best ways to learn have been distilled in this not-for-profit university. The B. Tech programme in Computer Science and

Engineering, Electronics and Communication Engineering and Biotechnology imparts knowledge in technologies of the future through a cutting-edge curriculum using the core principles of providing industry-linked, technology-based, research-driven and seamless education.

NU recognises the importance of a well-executed internship for a bright and rewarding career and therefore ensures that all its students of B. Tech, M.Tech and MBA are placed in highly reputed organisations for their respective Industry Practice (IP) modules.

Hindustan Times, New Delhi, February 12, 2014

School in the cloud

India's first 'School in the Cloud' was launched recently in the Government Girls School in Kalkaji, Delhi by professor Sugata Mitra, Newcastle University who was the winner of TED Prize 2013. He was the chief scientist at NIIT where he set up the first 'hole in the wall' 15 years ago. He first tested the idea of unsupervised learning using computers by carving a hole in the wall that separated his office from the adjoining slum. Now it is to become India's first link into the School in the Cloud, a learning lab where children can explore and learn from each other by tapping into online resources. The Kalkaji facility is the first of five new self-organised learning environment (SOLES) to open in India and has been described as 'undoubtedly a doorway to 21st century learning skills which should be introduced in all school in the near future', by staff at the school. The primary aim is to improve children's reading comprehension and search skills and develop their confidence.

Pioneer, New Delhi, February 12, 2014



NIIT Tech expects more revenues from mobile, cloud

OUR BUREAU

Mumbai, February 13

NIIT Technologies, a mid-size IT services provider, expects to generate five per cent of revenues from the emerging areas of social, media, analytics and cloud services products (SMACS) in the next two years.

Going forward, the company expects its clients in the financial services, logistics and travel space to increase their spend on these digital technologies, said Arvind Thakur, Chief Executive Officer of the Noida-headquartered company. Currently, the company gets around one per cent of revenues from this space, he added. SMAC acronym has become important for companies as they seek to monetise the vast quantities of

data generated by the proliferation of mobile devices such as notebooks, tablets and smart phones. SMAC is a sunrise space which is said to have an overall revenue potential of between \$70 billion and \$200 billion over the next two years. Many analysts believe that the increasing adoption of SMAC points to a technology shift that happens once in a decade.

Separately, Thakur said that NIIT Tech will not add any new verticals to its mix immediately.

"Our strategy has always been to offer differentiation to customers. Hence, its better to not get into areas where we cannot achieve this goal," he said. In line with this strategy, the company had exited the retail vertical a few years ago.

Hindu Business Line, Bangalore, February 14, 2014



Bridging the **skill divide** at last

TRAINING GROUND The allocation of ₹1,000 crore to the National Skill Development Trust, as announced in the Interim Budget, will help corporates scale up their skilling programmes

Harini Sriram
harini.sriram@hindustantimes.com

Consider this: According to NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Services Companies), each year over three million graduates and postgraduates are added to the Indian workforce. However, of these only 25% of technical graduates and 10% to 15% of other graduates are considered employable by the IT and ITES segments. This is true of other industries, too, including manufacturing, telecom, retail and so on, clearly pointing towards a skill gap across sectors. To combat this issue, the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) was set up by prime minister Manmohan Singh in the year 2008. NSDC works with partnering companies and institutions to develop training modules for employees across sectors. Which is why finance minister P Chidambaram's recent decision (in the Interim Budget) to transfer ₹1,000 crore for the year 2014-2015 towards the NSD (National Skill Development) Trust has been lauded by corporates and training partners alike.

EMPHASIS ON TRAINING CS Raghavan, head, education India, ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) says, "NSDC has sector skill councils under its banner which help different sectors spell out their requirement in the next five years. So, while businesses can focus their attention on strategic planning, the skill requirements can be met by the various partners of NSDC and other organisations. Similarly, this can be developed and implemented at the school



■ Companies are grooming talent and giving more opportunities to high-potential employees.

IMAGESBAZAAR

and college level to make students industry-ready." He adds that the announced fund is expected to get deployed through the NSDC and would be channelised through NSDC partners.

Many corporate companies in India have forayed into skill development to improve the quality of their workforce, says Balaji Thotadri, finance head, Talentedge, a vocational education service provider. "IL&FS Skills Development Corporation Limited is a joint venture between IL&FS and NSDC focused on building skill development centres across India. Future Learning was set up by the Future Group with the aim of providing quality knowledge and skills to individuals and companies," he adds.

Thotadri points out that the finance minister's recent

announcement has helped his own company scale up its skill training exercises across the country. He says, "We have added more domains like retail and electronics. We are working closely with our partners across states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Delhi, etc. We will also drive our presence across the country, primarily in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities."

A SAVVY WORKFORCE

Raghavan of ACCA also believes that this move will give impetus to the economy and contribute to a more savvy employee pool. "Many Indian organisations have started integrating professional qualifications like ACCA into their training exercises. These qualifications help corporates to not only groom talent but also give more opportunities

to high-potential employees," he adds.

A spokesperson from the British Council says that the move will certainly benefit employees across sectors and result in increasing employee engagement. "The Indian and UK governments have helped foster partnerships between training providers, assessment bodies and Sector Skills Councils through the UK India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI), a programme managed by the British Council on behalf of other governments. To date, the initiative has supported 56 skill travel grants, 44 institutional capacity-building partnerships and 11 sector skill collaborations," says the spokesperson, adding that UK has been working closely with NSDC since 2009 on various learning and develop-

REALITY CHECK

■ According to NSDC data, net enrollment in vocational courses in India is about 5.5 million per year compared to 90 million in China and 11.3 million in the United States

■ A mere 2 per cent of Indian workers are formally skilled

■ Experts estimate that India has the capacity to create 500 million skilled technicians by the year 2022

■ The training capacity would have to rise to nearly 40-50 million incrementally over the next 10 years to achieve this target

ment programmes in corporate workplaces, and plans are on the anvil to scale up and expand these programmes as more funding would be available.

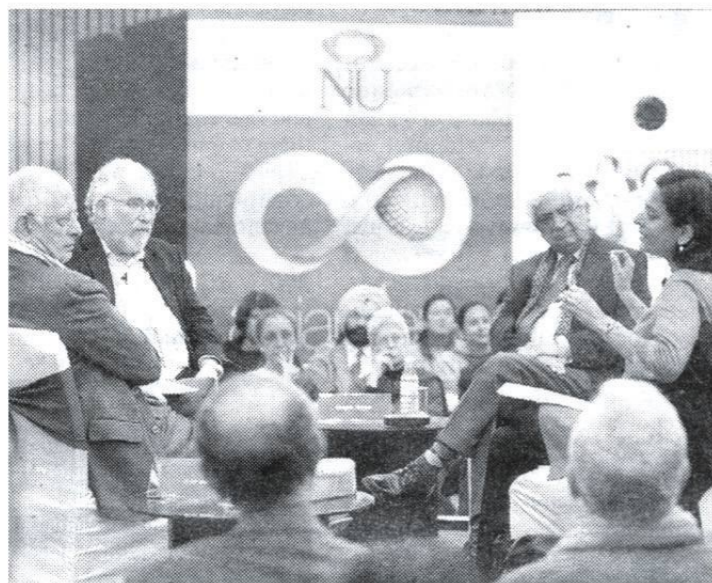
Sanjay Bahl, president, skill building solutions, NIIT, says, "The initiative will improve the employability and productivity quotient of the youth and help us in ensuring that more youngsters are job-ready." NIIT Yuva Jyoti (NYJ) is a joint venture of NIIT and NSDC aimed at enhancing skills and employability for youth across India. "NYJ aims to offer skill development courses at over 1500 locations during the next six to seven years. The idea is to provide industry and job-specific training to around 70 lakh young Indians by 2022, thus helping create a pool of job-ready workforce for the service industry," says Bahl.

Hindustan Times, New Delhi, February 25, 2014



NIIT University launches Asian Lens Forum

NIIT University, Chennai, has launched a new initiative — The Asian Lens Forum, which will enable faculty and students of the university to undertake research and disseminate knowledge about challenges, achievements and roles of Asian societies in the globalised world. The launch event was attended by Pallavi Aiyar, author and award-winning journalist, Arun Maira, member of the Planning Commission and former India Chairman of Boston Consulting Group, and Deepak Nayyar, former vice-chancellor, University of Delhi. Also present at the event were Rajendra Pawar, founder, NIIT University; members of the NU Board including Harpal Singh, Chairman Emeritus, Fortis and Rajendra Pandey, President, NIIT University.



(Clockwise from left) Arun Maira, Jean-Pierre Lehmann, Emeritus Prof, IMD Business School, Lausanne, Switzerland, Deepak Nayyar and Pallavi Aiyer

The Indian Express, February 24, 2014



NIIT UNIV LAUNCHES ASIA LENS

NIIT University, Neerana, has launched 'Asia Lens Forum,' an initiative to sensitise the young generation to Asian heritage. The forum will act as a launch pad for faculty and students to under-

take research on Asian societies. "The rich heritage of Asia is second to none. However, owing to centuries of dominance by the West we seem to have forgotten our legacy," said Rajendra Pawar, Founder, NIIT.

Mail Today, February 25, 2014



ASIA'S FUTURE

The Imagining of Asia Through Asian Lenses



Rajendra S Pawar

Asia is a continent as old as the hills. Home to some of the world's most ancient civilisations, Asia has made an immense contribution to global thought, culture and religion, helping shape life as we know it.

While Asia remained the dominant force in world history until the early 1700s, accounting for the bulk of its population and wealth, the tide began to turn after the dawning of the industrial revolution. The balance of power then shifted to the West, which became the cradle for political, intellectual and business discourse.

Between the 18th and 20th centuries in particular, many Asian countries were colonised or otherwise subjugated by the West. The Asian mosaic of civilisation was severely damaged, if not completely overwhelmed by western imperialism. This dominance extended to every arena of economic, social and cultural life in a way that the Asian view of the world and, indeed, of itself, was distorted by what one may call the western lens. It would not be an overstatement to suggest that much of what Asians know of themselves is from the prism of western writers, historians and thinkers.

But since the turn of this century, one is witnessing the emergence of a new global reality: the resurgence of Asia. Over the last few decades, the wheel seems to have turned full circle. Asia is once again in the news, dominating the headlines and positioning itself to assume leadership status, before the middle of the 21st

century. The rise of Asia is expected to create a paradigm shift within the global economy, based on its burgeoning markets, innovation and consistent, rapid economic ascent.

Despite these economic upheavals and the emergence of the East on the horizon yet again, the world is still viewing life through the omnipresent western lens. The western view of how things are and ought to be, still rules. So dominant is the western lens that even Asians are using it to study their individual societies and develop an understanding of a broader Asian regional context. The proliferation of Asian Studies centres, departments and institutes throughout America, Australia and Europe (trained to think and research by the use of the Western lens) are, if anything, accentuating the distorting effect and preventing truer contextual understanding of Asian realities. They are, simply, reiterating the generally accepted western world-view.

So, the need of the hour is to set up comparable entities in Asia that study the region through Asian eyes. The rise of the Asian juggernaut requires this. Asians and citizens from



other geographies must, in future, have the opportunity to know about Asians from fresh and alternative lenses, as they reflect and think about what kind of future they would like to build for themselves and for the global community.

For this, they need to prepare themselves and their future generations, to build lasting solutions to existing problems that will, in turn, take Asia towards success and pre-eminence. Asian lenses will help young Asians better understand themselves, their societies and those of peer nations and find answers to their own needs.

Asia and India could have been in an advantageous position had it been able to build on its rich heritage of learning. Global shifts, however — both economic and cultural — have prevented India, as well as Asia itself to lose knowledge power, especially in higher education, to the West. Indian universities in particular, have remained low-key on many counts, especially in the crucial area of research, a prerequisite for innovation. Clearly, there is a need to revisit the Indian higher-education sphere.

The creation of Asian lenses will help Asia attain the position that prevailed prior to western imperialist dominance. It will regenerate the concept of an Asian space that promotes the exchange of ideas and learning, laying the foundation for a platform that provides cultural, intellectual and scientific pickings for future generations of Asians and one from which even non-Asians can profit. This exploratory exercise will hopefully lead to the creation of many more Asian lenses, enabling people of this continent to play their rightful role in building a just and successful 21st century society.

The writer is Chairman, NIIT and Founder, NIIT University

The Economic Times, March 17, 2014



OUTSTANDING UNIVERSITIES
OPINION

Forging Asia's universities of the future

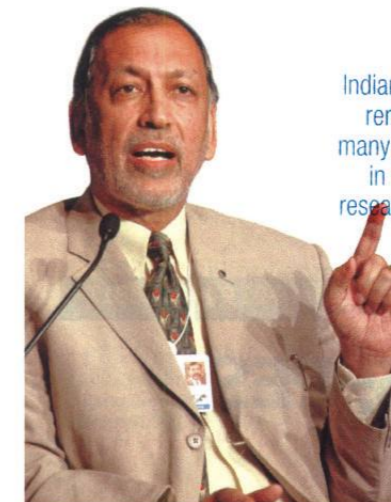
Founders of India's two up and coming universities speak to Career360's Abhay Anand about their vision to make a paradigm shift in India's higher education system

Indian universities have remained low-key on many counts, especially in research, a prerequisite for innovation. We need to begin the work for building more and more ground-breaking universities.

NIIT, I must add, has tirelessly worked towards the creation of such a school of learning—the not-for-profit NIIT University (NU). Our core principles reflect the changing paradigm of learning. Today, learning needs to be industry-relevant and job-oriented, technology-based, driven by research and innovation and seamless and boundary-less and this is exactly the thinking that NU thrives on.

Research, the building block for quality and creativity, has been accorded priority at NU. We ensure that we hire faculty—especially PhDs—who are best equipped to nurture thinking minds.

NU's breakthrough initiative - Asian Lens - therefore comes at an opportune time. It is my belief that it will not only impart NU with its biggest differentiators in the global market, it will also help Asia attain the status quo that prevailed prior to Western imperialist dominance. ■



Indian universities have remained low-key on many counts, especially in the crucial area of research, a prerequisite for innovation

RAJENDRA S PAWAR,
FOUNDER,
NIIT UNIVERSITY

Careers360, March 2014



Interview | Shampi Venkatesh, chief people officer, NIIT

Best practices of 2014 are about talent attraction & engagement

CAREER CLAUSE

SHISHIR PARASHER

THE global talent development company, NIIT, has been ranked 4th in "Best places to work for in India — 2013-14" by Great Place to Work Institute®. The firm, that has 4,000 employees in the country, has set up in 1981 to help the nascent IT industry overcome its HR challenges.

■ **Tell us about Hats off, your R&R mechanism.** Hats Off is a structured rewards and recognition programme. It focuses on creating high standards of work ethics, enhancing teamwork and rewarding outstanding contributions in building the organisation. There are various awards related to high performance, behaviour at the workplace, teamwork, long service through on-the-spot recognition, monthly and quarterly awards, individual and team awards, including the annual awards that are declared on NIIT day. For NIITians who receive three awards of excellence, we dedicate a conference room to them. NIITians get Hats-Off

points, which can get accumulated and redeemable on a benefits portal. All such awardees also get recognised under a hall of fame hosted on our portal iNIITian.com

■ **Should performance be the only benchmark of reward and recognition? If not, what are the other key points that should be considered?**

Performance is an important yardstick and must be considered while rewarding an employee. However, it is not the only yardstick. At NIIT, our R&R programme is a 360-degrees framework that not only covers rewards related to performance but also recognises desirable behaviour at the workplace, high performing teams, innovation, customer centric behaviour, and exceptional performance in line with the strategy set for that year. We have a unique way of recognising reporting managers and leaders as well. This is a process of nomination and polling by the NIITians and conducted worldwide.

■ **A lot of organisations these days are moving away from the practices of one-size-fits-all when it comes to offering benefits. A lot of new types of benefits have been introduced by them, as per employees' choices and preferences and soon the traditional benefits structure will become obsolete. How important is it for organisations to be flexible when it comes to giving benefits to their employees? What is**



One of the critical elements of stay interview is to take appropriate measures before issues become serious

NIIT doing in this domain?

We too believe that one size does not fit all and hence we had redesigned our compensation structure way back in 2006 to introduce flexi basket, thus giving NIITians complete flexibility to choose salary components which are important to them and matter them the most. Over the time, we have introduced benefits as per NIITians' choice such as work from home, maternity benefits for adoptions and surrogacy; sabbatical, Little NIITian care leave etc. We try and participate in the critical life stages of our people. Every year we come up with a new category of necessary time-offs and have hence introduced "Take A Break" scheme to encourage NIITians to go on a vacation to rejuvenate themselves.

■ **India Inc has hit upon the concept of stay interviews to help sustain retention better. Discuss the elements that make a stay**

interview impeccable.

This concept is gaining popularity as a tool to reduce staff turnover and increase employee engagement. One of the critical elements of stay interview is not just to discover issues and concerns but to take appropriate corrective actions before it becomes a serious matter. Matters of engagement, support from reporting manager, learning and career growth need to be addressed.

■ **What will be the talent trends or practices of 2014 that will help corporate India to stay abreast of growth?**

The top-most practices for 2014 are all about talent — attraction and engagement! In the talent acquisition space, we need to identify ways to continuously reinvent ourselves; aggressively and intelligently source and attract talent; explore new social recruiting channels to leverage our brand, use analytics to integrate and

make informed decisions.

In the employee engagement space, the focus should be on building passion and creating a holistic work environment. Since millennials are the ones who we are attracting and engaging, we need to expand our horizon and look at employee engagement from their standpoint.

■ **What are some of the best practices which help in making work environment that focuses on encouragement, appreciation, learning and innovation.**

Appreciation is a way of life at NIIT. Our managers periodically recognise their teams by executing online e-WOW cards, which is a form of instant recognition. What's more, we have Hat's off points which NIITians can redeem using an internal e-shopping portal, NIIT-Flipkart.

In the domain of learning and development, it has been observed more than often that despite having a good programme design and content, the training is ineffective as the participants do not get an opportunity to practice the newly acquired skills. Which is why we have a Learning Clinique, an innovative session designed to help and guide our management development programme trainees to practice the learning. We have two half-day sessions and both the sessions are based on the relationship between reflection and action.

shishirparasher
@mydigitalfc.com

Financial Chronicle, New Delhi, March 10, 2014



NIIT Unnati to impart free IT training to students

KT NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, Mar 12: HPCL-NIIT Unnati took initiative of imparting free computer training to school going students concluded here in Jammu.



Under this scheme school children were given free computer training. This training was imparted by NIIT Jammu Centre in months of September, October & November. HPCL also donated Hardware to the school.

Teachers of the school were also given the training during this period.

NIIT Jammu centre and local branch of the HPCL jointly selected Oriental Academy School, Jammu as the beneficiary school to which HPCL provided five branded Computers and other Hardware. NIIT Jammu Centre imparted training for two months to 200 students.

On completion of the training program today a ceremony for distribution of certificates was held and besides staff of the School and NIIT Jammu HPCL was represented by Shri Munish Tandon, Senior Regional Manager of the Company.

Tandon while speaking on the occasion stated that his Company has tied up nationally with NIIT for this noble cause and has some more schools in pipe line under the scheme. He talked about the benefits of Computers in daily life & appreciated the assistance provided by NIIT in implementing the scheme professionally.

Earlier Rahul Sharma, Director of the NIIT Franchise Company Jammu, welcomed the guests and got the certificates distributed to the training students.

Kashmir Times, Jammu, March 13, 2014

NIIT UNIVERSITY CALLS FOR ADMISSIONS

Hyderabad: Taking education to the next level, NIIT University in Neemrana, Rajasthan, is dubbed as the University of the future. With a sprawling campus, it is equipped with state-of-the-art technology-enabled teaching methodology that has a strong research-focused curriculum.

NU draws from the legacy of NIIT, which has been a leading education provider for 30 years. NIIT University is dedicated to building great careers. Students have been bagged internships in prestigious organizations in India & abroad. The distinctive features of the 2-year

MBA programme are the 'The Mentorship Programme' and The 'International Immersion Program'. Those interested to apply can call on 1800-103-5050 for B. Tech, MBA and M. Tech (GIS) programmes and the deadline for accepting application is June 30, 2014.

—DC

Deccan Chronicle
Hyderabad, March 31, 2014



'Altering habitats will lead to human-animal conflict'

wayforward

KOUSTUBH SHARMA

Senior regional ecologist at Snow Leopard Trust and research associate at Nature Conservation Foundation

GURGAON: The forested patches between Delhi, Gurgaon and Faridabad constitute the green lung of the national capital region, popularly called the NCR. Mined until recently, most of the vegetation in the region is secondary growth but still home to a large variety of flora and fauna.

Any attempts to alter the habitat will lead to increased human-animal conflicts, reduced availability of groundwater, and increase in pollutants in the air for the citizens of NCR.

The area is also patchily connected with the Sariska Tiger Reserve, which is about 100 km to the south and Asola Wildlife Sanctuary, across the Gurgaon-Faridabad Highway.



It is crucial to declare the entire zone as an Aravalli Hills eco-sensitive zone. The zone that can be identified using satellite images, that is.

Given the presence of a sacred grove within the area, it is best that the entire forest patch be declared as a community reserve and a management plan be devised for it to ensure

no conventional development activities such as building of malls, artificial parks, apartments, multiplexes etc. take place there.

It should be made mandatory for the highways cutting across the forest patch to have underpasses along streams and ravines to allow animal movement.

This can be achieved by raising the road at specific places into short over-bridges.

The entire management plan, including demarcation of boundaries can be done in a collaborative effort.

The effort can include the participation of panchayats, district administration, forest department, scientists, and institutions such as Delhi University (DU) and NIIT University who have experience in restoration ecology.

The efficient use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) in the Aravalli region can be put to use to protect and conserve the flora and fauna in the region.

Hindustan Times, Gurgaon, March 17, 2014



Chinese state firms 'not blocking' Indian IT cos

ANANTH KRISHNAN

Beijing, March 18

A top Chinese official said on Tuesday that state-owned Enterprises (SOEs) were "not blocking" Indian IT companies, which have been struggling to get state sector contracts, and cited the success of other foreign firms.

"We do not pose any impediments for Indian software companies in entering into cooperation with SOEs," Yang Xueshan, Vice-Minister for Industry and Information Technology and one of China's senior-most officials in charge of IT policy, told *Business Line*. Yang was speaking on the sidelines of the third India-China Strategic Economic Dialogue (SED) here on Tuesday.

Yang's Ministry and India's Ministry of Communications

and Information Technology signed an MoU on "cooperation in the field of Information and Communication Technologies", an agreement described by officials as showing Chinese willingness to move things forward in the IT sector.

"The MoU essentially is a formal recognition (from China) that we want to promote Indian IT," said Planning Commission Deputy Chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia, who headed the Indian delegation.

So far, only Tata Consultancy Services has been successful in winning major contracts from SOEs and local governments.

One Indian official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Chinese bidding procedures were cumbersome and opaque,

and it was legitimate to complain of a lack of access. But he also said the success of TCS showed that companies needed to get their strategy right, and invest more in understanding China.

Yang, who earlier headed the IT division of the Policy Planning Department of the State Council, or cabinet, said he was aware of the "mutual complementarity" between India's software strength and Chinese manufacturing. "There are no obstacles for Indian companies. There are various (foreign) software companies that are engaging with SOEs today."

Prakash Menon, head of NIIT China, which is training over 10,000 Chinese every year, said there was "a change in how China is responding" to Indian IT.

Hindu Business Line, Bangalore, March 19, 2014



PROJECT SYNDICATE

THE WORLD'S OPINION PAGE

**Jean-Pierre Lehmann**

Jean-Pierre Lehmann is Emeritus Professor of International Political Economy at IMD, Switzerland, Founder of The Evian Group, and Visiting Professor at Hong Kong University and NIIT University in Neemrana Rajasthan.

Asia's Democratic Drama

FEB 11, 2014

GENEVA – Asia's political spectrum ranges from the brutal despotism of North Korea to the enlightened constitutional monarchy of Bhutan (so enlightened that it developed Gross National Happiness as an alternative measure to Gross Domestic Product), with many shades in between. But the old charge that Asia is ill-suited for Western-style democracy is being leveled again. Are the skeptics right?

In South and East Asia, democracies outnumber dictatorships by 17 to six. But democracies are facing turbulent times. Thailand's political impasse, amid massive anti-democracy demonstrations, has hit world headlines, and elections have also been violently contested in Bangladesh. There have been widespread human-rights abuses in Sri Lanka. Cambodians have suffered a brutal political clampdown. And political life in the world's largest democracy, India, is raucous and unruly.

Nonetheless, the notion of democratic exclusivity is both wrong and historically short-sighted. Although almost all Western countries are currently democracies, this has only been the case since the 1990's. Just a half-century earlier, one could count the number of Western democracies on one's fingers. And even these were imperfect: using the most basic democratic yardstick – universal suffrage – the United States could not be seen as truly democratic until the civil-rights victories of the 1960's.

Although Britain was a beacon of democracy in the twentieth century, it did not extend this principle to an empire that held sway over more people and territory than any previous world power. It suppressed independence movements in India and across the Middle East and Africa (though many of these movements' members willingly fought for Britain during both World Wars).

Similarly, the Dutch did not extend their democracy to Indonesia. Nor did France support free and fair elections in Indochina or in its Middle Eastern and African colonies. The Belgians were particularly brutal in Congo. The Spanish and Portuguese ravaged Latin America. And the Germans were not much better in Southwest Africa. Indeed, two of history's most terrifying ideologies, fascism and communism, were devised and embraced in continental Europe.

The fact that the word "democracy" derives from ancient Greek, and that one can discern the kernel of democratic thought in Greek philosophy, by no means implies that democracy is embedded in the West's political DNA. Only after centuries of absolutist rule, extremism, war, revolution, and oppression can the West as a whole reasonably claim to be free, democratic, peaceful, and prosperous – and even now there are exceptions. It is also debatable whether this so-called Western democracy was a cause or a consequence of peace and prosperity.

The West was not always the world's most politically advanced region. When Jesuit missionaries came to China in the seventeenth century, they enthused about how much Europeans could learn from the country's enlightened political philosophy, Confucianism. The enlightenment philosophers Voltaire and Kant did just that.



Confucian concepts such as the "mandate of heaven" seemed infinitely more just than that of Europe's "divine right of kings." The Nobel laureate economist Amartya Sen traces the origins of Indian democratic dialogue to the third-century BC Buddhist Emperor Ashoka. He also contrasts the religious tolerance preached and practiced by the Muslim Emperor Akbar in the 1590's with the Inquisition, which was hounding heretics in Europe at around the same time.

Our assumptions about the relative prosperity of Asia and the West should also be reconsidered. As recently as 200 years ago, Asia accounted for 60% of global GDP. However, following the industrial revolution in northwestern Europe, the colonization of much of Asia, and the Opium Wars in China, their relative positions switched. By the 1950's, Asia's share of global GDP had fallen to less than 20%.

In his 1968 work *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*, Swedish economist and Nobel laureate Gunnar Myrdal considered the words "Asian" and "poor" to be synonymous. But, over the past three decades, Asian prosperity appears to be within reach once more.

It is of course impossible to say how Asia might have developed had Western imperial powers stayed away. There is no reason to suppose that the region could not have found its own path to peace, prosperity, and democracy. Socially and economically, Asia now stands roughly where Europe was at the start of the twentieth century; and one can only hope that its democratic journey will be shorter and less violent.

Crucially, that path has already been taken by South Korea. Despite 35 years of brutal Japanese colonization, three years of civil war, military dictatorship, and a lack of natural resources, the country has emerged from extreme poverty to become – in a volatile neighborhood – a stable, prosperous, and vibrant democracy. Its neighbors could surely follow in its footsteps.

Democracy is not a Western product; nor is it for Western citizens alone. Asia has enough historical experience to suggest that even its six remaining dictatorships could, in time, embrace a fairer system of government – and the peace and prosperity that come with it.

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/jean-pierre-lehmann-disputes-the-widespread-view-that-democracy-is-a-western-invention>



THE NEW
INDIAN EXPRESS

Education, Public or Private, Must lead to Good

Kaviya Sanjeev - CHENNAI Published: 10th February 2014 06:00 AM Last Updated: 11th February 2014 02:03 PM

India is the second-largest populated country and we have the third largest education system in the world. Both public and private players in the education sector play a role in shaping young citizens. At the conclave, we had panelists who analysed these roles in a session titled 'Private education leads to public good', and all of them agreed on the need to reform the current education system.

Chairperson of the panel, V Raghunathan, CEO, GMR Varalakshmi Foundation, began by highlighting recent changes in education and stressed the need for a 50-50 partnership between the public and private sector. He explains, "There may be private players who are contributing enormously to public good and there are public players who have not completely understood their potential. Education certainly encourages people, builds skill and confidence, and enhances their economic activity. In that sense, we can say that any higher education leads to public good."

He also pointed that hardly anyone could deny the fact that private education leads to 40-60 per cent of public good that we enjoy today.

Suneel Galgotia, chancellor, Galgotias University, also agreed with Raghunathan. Citing the change that has taken place in the past 15 years, he said, "Due to private education, the geographical count of colleges has increased. They reach a large number of students. Private universities also provide a disciplined methodology of teaching. They are enabled with a quick curriculum and examination reforms, and they have better connectivity to industries. Private institutions also rely on technology, with specific emphasis on feedback," he said.

While both Raghunathan and Galgotia spoke on the positives of private education, Vijay K Thadani, Co-Founder, NIIT University, spoke on how both private and public sector needs to work together to provide quality education. As a beneficiary of public education who has now "joined the gang that provides private education", he brought perspectives from both worlds.

He warned that if the education system did not keep up with the changing needs of the job sector, we would be lagging behind. "We can't predict the kinds of jobs we will have in 2020. Plus, with the delay in changing curriculum, there is no way we will be ready."

Thadani also noted how the learner itself was changing. Elucidating, he explained: "We are now dealing with millennials (or Gen Y), who come with very different qualities and characteristics. They have very specific lifestyles. It is enough to say that when you are preparing for the next day's class, the students have already read it and discussed on Facebook. So they could teach you by the time you get to class." He also advocated a change in methodology saying, "Online learning is here to stay."

Kaustav Sengupta, associate professor, NIFT Chennai, also spoke about the change seen in students and the need to tap their creative side. Suggesting a modification of the RTE, he said it could ideally be the Right to Creative Education, wherein learning would be creativity-based. "We would not end up producing robots, but create students who have clarity on what needs to be done. Schools should also deliver experiential learning, which will enable students to take forward something that they learnt in life. Open-minded and appreciative teachers would be more inspirational, he says. Research and education should also be an integral part of the primary school, he says, pointing out ways to enrich the learning experience.

Another speaker, VPS Arora, speaking from his experience of heading both a public university and a private one — having been the vice-chancellor of Kumaun university, and currently heading Supertech University — spoke on how there are certain obstacles that restrict the actions of private universities. He said, "If we need education to be a game changer that leads to prosperity and brings in social and cultural transformation, we need to look beyond intellect."

Arora also touched upon the quality of teachers that private institutions produce, and said the system should be able to produce teachers with scientific thinking.

R Ravichander, group president, Business Development (South), Yes Bank, concurring with title of the topic, pointed out that it was private education that had become synonymous with the standards set for current generation of educators to follow.



SCHOOLING INDIA FOR TOMORROW

http://www.newindianexpress.com/education/edex/Education-Public-or-Private-Must-lead-to-Good/2014/02/10/article2043999.ece#_UvoRXmKSWS4



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