

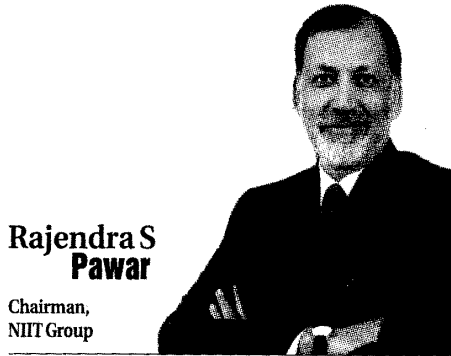


NIIT in the News

January 2008



CORE CONCERN



**Rajendra S
Pawar**

Chairman,
NIIT Group

EDUCATION ALONE CAN HELP INDIA BECOME A SUPERPOWER

2008 is poised to be another year of high economic growth. As we enter the last quarter of FY 2008 — the fourth consecutive fiscal when India has witnessed over 8% growth — we find India's manpower shortages aggravate even further. Just as growth has been multi-sectoral, so have the manpower deficiencies.

There is scarcity of skilled manpower in every industry — from good carpenters and plumbers to factory workers, doctors and scientists. The banking industry, which employs 900,000 people, is expected to add 600,000 more over the next three to four years. Similarly, the IT and ITeS industry will need around 850,000 additional skilled manpower by 2010. And, the retail industry will need nearly 2.5 million skilled professionals by 2012.

Not only are jobs within India on the rise, the developed world too is facing manpower shortages, which are expected to rise to 40 million by 2020. This shortfall can be met by India, where both educated unemployment and the number of people joining the workforce are on the rise. In short, the opportunities before India are huge, provided our education sector gears up to take these on.

The good news is that the government is paying heed to this challenge. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is geared towards achieving useful and relevant elementary education for all children by 2010. This movement is showing results. The number of out-of-school children in the 6-14 years age group has dropped from 13.4 million in 2005 to 7.06 million in March-end 2006. Similarly, the Universities Grant Commission has announced a new budget with promising initiatives and better funds for universities.

While these initiatives are welcome, they are unlikely to solve the sheer magnitude of the problem. Manpower shortages are both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The task is a lot bigger.

We need to take a fresh look at the education sector. It's time we encourage, engage and motivate both not-for-profit and profit-making institutions to set up educational institutions

We need to take a fresh look at the education sector. It's time we encourage, engage and motivate both not-for-profit and profit-making institutions to set up educational institutions. Whoever wants to contribute to this sector must be encouraged to do so. There is a role for everyone. There is too much to be done.

In 1991, India opened up several sectors to foreign investment. The liberalisation policy unleashed enormous energy in India's corporate sector. Since then, several Indian companies have gone global and earned a name in the global marketplace.

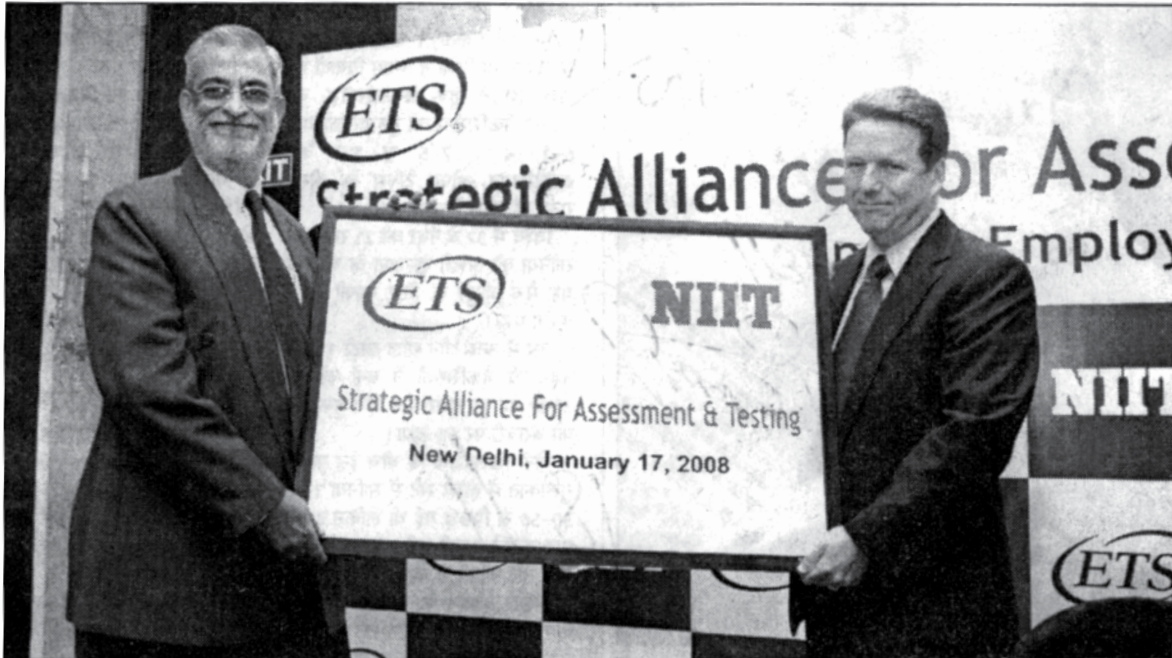
We need similar type of 'policy reforms' in the education sector. Players in this sector must be given the freedom to enter, operate and exit. India needs more universities. While Japan has 4,000 universities for its 127 million people and the US has 3,650 universities for its 301 million, India has only 348 universities for its 1.2 billion people. India can't afford to lose more time on debates. In Japan, 75% of all higher education institutions are private. We need to pass the Private Universities Bill that has been pending in Parliament since 1995.

India needs 'curricular reforms'. In today's world, where technological knowhow is evolving with each day, educational institutions need to be granted the freedom to engage with the industry and change the curricula as and when required. Educational institutions must teach what the industry needs.

And finally, the education sector also needs 'financial reforms', especially in higher education. The government should provide scholarships and loans to those who need it the most, and leave academic fee to be determined by market forces. That's what will make our Educational institutions relevant and self-sustaining. The need of the hour, therefore, is to rapidly implement this three-pronged reform process — policy reforms, curricular reforms and financial reforms.

A knowledge economy like India runs on the back of its educated workforce. Today, our chances of emerging as a super power squarely rest on our education system and how well it responds to meeting domestic and global requirements for talent. It is an opportunity India just cannot afford to lose.

Mahamedha
New Delhi
January 18, 2008



नई दिल्ली : एनआईआईटी के सीईओ वीके थाडनी और ईटीएस के सीओओ, प्रेस कांफ्रेंस के दौरान दोनों कंपनियों के बीच गठजोड़ की घोषणा करते हुए। प्रेस

Assam Tribune
Guwahati
January 18, 2008

NIIT signs agreement with ETS

NEW DELHI, Jan 17 (PTI): Global talent development corporation NIIT today signed a three-year agreement with educational measurement and research organisation Educational Testing Service (ETS) for offering tests to evaluate communicative English skills.

As per the partnership, NIIT would have exclusive rights to offer ETS's TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication), TOEFL Practice Online (TPO) and Criterion Online Writing Evaluation Service in India.

TOEIC, which is offered in about 60 countries around the

world, is a global standard for communicative English ability in the international workplace.

"We are in talks with the leading retailers, IT and BPO firms, banking for endorsing the test, NIIT Chief Executive Officer Vijay K Thadani said adding that NIIT would start conducting the test through their 250 centres across the country from early next quarter.

The new initiative would enhance employability and provide competitive advantage to Indian organisations in the global market place, he added.

The test would be of three-three and half hours duration and would be divided into 3-4 sections like reading, writing and listening. The fees for taking the test would be less than Rs 1,000.

"This agreement will provide companies, institutions and individuals in India with greater access to key ETS products such as TOEIC test, TOEFL Practice Online and Criterion to help them succeed in the world of education and business," ETS Global Division Chief Operating Officer and Vice President David Hunt said.

Financial World
Chandigarh
January 18, 2008

Sentinel
Guwahati
January 18, 2008

NIIT Inks Strategic Alliance With ETS

FW BUREAU
New Delhi, Jan 17

NIIT Ltd today entered into a three-year strategic alliance with educational evaluation and research organisation Educational Testing Service for offering tests to gauge English communication skills of individuals.

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The Economic Times
Hyderabad
January 18, 2008

NIIT in pact with ETS to conduct English tests

Our Bureau
NEW DELHI

NIIT on Thursday entered into a strategic alliance with Educational Testing Service (ETS), the world's leading educational measurement and research organisation. NIIT will now have exclusive rights to offer ETS's TOEIC test (Test of English for International Communication), TOEFL Practice Online (TPO), and CriterionSM Online Writing Evaluation Service-in India. The company said it would start conducting TOEIC test, which is a global standard for communicative English ability in the international workplace, at its 250 centres across the country from early next quarter.

NIIT inks agreement with ETS

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Mr Smarajit Dey, President (Strategic Initiatives), NIIT, (left) during the launch of new courses in Visakhapatnam branch on Thursday. Also seen is Mr N.P. Kishore, Centre Head, NIIT-Vizag. — C.V. Subrahmanyam

NIIT launches banking, finance courses

Our Bureau

Visakhapatnam, Jan. 17

The NIIT has tied up with Institute of Finance Banking and Insurance (IFBI), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and ICICI Bank to offer job-oriented courses in banking and finance.

Mr Smarajit Dey, President (Strategic Initiatives), launched the courses at the Vizag branch here on Thursday.

He said there was a huge shortage of professionals in banking and insurance sector. The demand for qualified professionals in banking alone was estimated at six lakhs and an equal number would be required in the insurance sector

in the next five years.

NEW COURSES

NIIT Imperia - management programmes is for working professionals and IFBI course that offers PG Diploma in Banking Operations (PGDBO) is for students who have completed their graduation, Mr Dey said.

The two new courses were launched in October 2006 in the six metros and during the last 12 months they were launched in Ahmedabad, Pune, Nagpur and Bhubaneswar. He said Vizag has become the 11th city to offer the courses. It would be followed by Chandigarh and by the end of next year, the plan is to take

the tally to 30 centres at 25 locations all over the country.

He said that the PGDBO is a six-month full-time course being offered by IFBI. It includes three months of classroom work and three months internship at ICICI Bank. Graduates in any discipline with a minimum of 50 per cent marks and up to 26 years of age can apply for the course.

ADMISSION PROCESS

Candidates would be selected through an admission test and interview. All candidates selected for the course would be given an offer of appointment with either ICICI or HDFC Bank. On successful completion of the course, the candi-

dates would be employed by these banks.

Mr Dey said that the starting salary would be a minimum of Rs 2.75 lakh per annum and in six months they would become assistant managers with a salary of Rs 10 lakh per annum.

The NIIT Imperia programme offers synchronous learning through remote classrooms connected to the IIMs and the IMT in Ghaziabad. Candidates could interact with the faculty of those institutes through video conferencing. Applications can be obtained from the NIIT Vizag Centre located at Asilametta or from the Web site www.ifbi.com.

NITAT on Jan. 20

The country's largest IT aptitude test will be held in 160 cities

K. SRINIVAS REDDY

The National IT Aptitude Test (NITAT), which enables students and graduates to gauge their aptitude and potential for a career in the booming IT industry, will be conducted in 160 cities across the country on January 20. The country's largest aptitude test is conducted by NIIT, country's largest trainer.

Those desirous of taking the test should register online on www.niiteducation.com/NITAT or at the nearest NIIT centres.

The test will comprise of objective type test of reasoning, comprehension, data interpretation skills and behavioural traits. Every student who takes the test will receive a scorecard with their interpretation, along with his nationwide and zonal ranking.

The assessment is expected to be of particular benefit to graduating engineers in deciding the careers that they should take up.

The test is aimed at enabling graduates and students pursuing their studies in engineering, arts, commerce and science streams to gauge their aptitude for a career in the IT sector, identify skills further required, if any, and thus systematically charter their career into the IT industry.

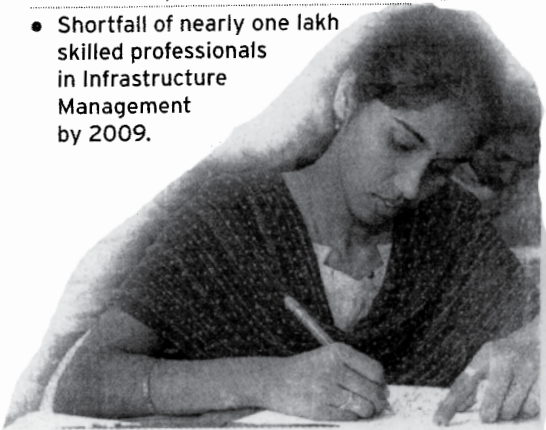
The talent trainer company will put up the list of candidates under categories of 'Promising IT professionals of the future', 'Very High', 'High IT Aptitude'. The list will be put on the NIIT website, which is accessed by prospective employers who include leading technology companies.

Certificates

According to an NIIT press release, special recognition certificates to toppers will be invited to attend a special placement fair at several locations across the country.

Flagging off NITAT 2008, president, (Individual Learning Business), NIIT, G. Raghavan said, "The Indian

- Gauge your aptitude for a career in IT sector.
- students of engineering, arts, commerce and science streams can take the test.
- Objective type test of reasoning, comprehension, data interpretation skills and behavioural traits.
- Score card with interpretation; national and zonal ranking to be given.
- Adobe, EMC, Microsoft, Oracle and Sun Microsystems agree to support NITAT.
- 8.5 lakh software professionals and 40 lakh ITES-BPO professionals needed by 2010.
- Shortfall of nearly one lakh skilled professionals in Infrastructure Management by 2009.



IT-BPO industry continues to be a lucrative career destination for the youth.

In addition to software development, other areas such as infrastructure management; development for the web, mobile & interactive media space are also offering tremendous opportunities for Information Technology career aspirants."

8.5 lakh professionals

As per NASSCOM, there is a need for 8.5 lakh software professionals and 1.4 million ITES-BPO professionals by 2010. Additionally, there is a requirement for 3 lakh digital media professionals by 2008.

A recent IDC survey has also cautioned the industry about a possible shortfall of nearly 1 lakh skilled professionals in the infrastructure management space, as against the need for 3.75 lakh skilled professionals by 2009.

Global technology majors such as Adobe, EMC, Microsoft, Oracle and Sun Microsystems have expressed

support to NITAT 2008.

Over 1.70 lakh candidates have tested their skills in the earlier three tests conducted by NIIT.

NIIT starts National IT Aptitude Test

■ Business Bureau

NIIT, Asia's largest IT trainer, has come up with India's largest IT aptitude test called as National IT Aptitude Test (NITAT) 2008. The test would enable students and graduates to calibrate their potential and aptitude for a career in the booming IT industry.

'NITAT 2008', will be simultaneously conducted by NIIT, in over 160 cities. The test will be held on January 20. Students can check their aptitude for IT and can appear for NITAT 2008 by registering online on www.niiteducation.com/NITAT. A list of 'promising IT professionals of the future', including names of those with 'very high' or 'high IT aptitude' will be announced by NIIT and made avail-

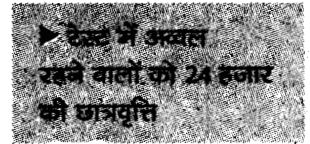
able on www.niiteducation.com/NITAT. This identified resource pool can be accessed by prospective employers including leading technology companies for their manpower needs. NIIT will award special recognition certificates to merit list candidates. Toppers will also be invited to a special 'Placement Fair' at key locations, across the country. Last date for procuring the hall tickets is Jan 19.

Details can be had at NIIT centres located at third floor 'Mangalam Arcade,' above Venus Book Depot, Dharampeth (Ph: 2544663); third floor, Bajaj Wing, Mangalwari Complex, Sadar (Ph: 6563250) or at Keshav Bhavan, Gurudeo Nagar, next to Bank of Baroda, Nandanvan (Ph: 6556541).

Divya Himachal
Chandigarh
January 17, 2008

युवाओं की आईटी योग्यता परखेगा निट

धर्मशाला, शिमला व
हमीरपुर में एपीच्यूड
परीक्षा 20 को



नगर संवाददाता

धर्मशाला - सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी के क्षेत्र में युवाओं के बेहतरीन भविष्य के लिए शिक्षा दे रहा संस्थान निट चौथी मर्तबा राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर आईटी 'एपीच्यूड' परीक्षा का 20 जनवरी को आयोजन करेगा। इस परीक्षा का आयोजन प्रदेश के धर्मशाला, शिमला व हमीरपुर शहरों में किया जाएगा। धर्मशाला स्थित एनआईआईटी संस्थान के निदेशक सचिन शर्मा व दिनेश शर्मा तथा केंद्र प्रमुख राजेश राणा ने बुधवार को आयोजित पत्रकार वार्ता में यह जानकारी दी। उन्होंने कहा कि इस परीक्षा का आयोजन देश के 160 शहरों में किया जा रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि परीक्षा में हिस्सा लेने वालों के लिए शैक्षणिक योग्यता 12वीं रखी है। परीक्षा में भाग लेने वाले विद्यार्थी संस्थान की

वेबसाइट डब्ल्यूडब्ल्यूएनआईआईटी.एजुकेशन.डॉट.कॉम के माध्यम से अप्लाई कर सकते हैं। इसके अलावा संस्थान में भी संपर्क साध सकते हैं। उन्होंने बताया कि परीक्षा में भाग लेने वालों को बाद में प्रमाण पत्र भी दिया जाएगा, जो कि विभिन्न कंपनियों के पास भी मौजूद रहेगा। उन्होंने बताया कि उक्त परीक्षा के माध्यम से विद्यार्थी को यह पता चल सकता है कि वह आईटी के विषय में कहां स्टैंड कर रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि जिन छात्रों का आईटी एपीच्यूड बेहतर रहता है और वह कोर्स करना चाहता है, तो संस्थान द्वारा 24000 हजार तक की छात्रवृत्ति भी दी जाएगी। इसके अलावा एजुकेशनल लोन भी मुहैया करवाया जा सकता है। जाहिर है कि निट समय-समय पर इस तरह की परीक्षाओं का आयोजन करता रहता है।

The Times of India
New Delhi
January 28, 2008

RESPONSIVENESS AWARD

NIIT has been conferred the Avaya GlobalConnect Award 2007, in the Customer Responsiveness in Educational Institutions' category for the third consecutive year. The award, instituted by Avaya GlobalConnect (AGC), is aimed at honouring companies that have fared exceedingly well in their customer responsive policies and practices. Aimed at taking the customer responsiveness movement to new heights, in India, the award was launched in partnership with *The Economic Times* in 2005. This year, the awards were presented to 17 of the 160 participating organisations that have shown a commitment to customer responsiveness and measured high on a stringent evaluation procedure drawn by leading business intelligence and market research firms in the country.

The Hindu
New Delhi
February 2, 2008

Award for NIIT

NEW DELHI: NIIT has been conferred "Avaya GlobalConnect Award-2007" in the category "Customer responsiveness in educational institutions" for the third consecutive year. The award, instituted by Avaya GlobalConnect, aims at honouring companies that have fared well in their customer responsive policies.

Navbharat Times
New Delhi
January 30, 2008

निट को अवॉर्ड

एनआईआईटी को हाल ही में अवाया ग्लोबल कनेक्ट अवॉर्ड 2007 से नवाजा गया है। संस्थान को यह अवॉर्ड कस्टमर रिस्पॉन्सिवनेस इन द एजुकेशनल इंस्टिट्यूशंस कैटेगिरी के लिए दिया गया है। जानी मानी रिसर्च एजेंसी एसी नील्सन द्वारा किए गए एक सर्वे के मुताबिक एनआईआईटी को पहला स्थान प्राप्त हुआ। निट के वेस्ट जोन के हेड ई वेंकटेशन ने यह अवॉर्ड ग्रहण किया।

DNA
Mumbai
January 17, 2008

Shared synergies

Technological exchanges and corporate ties are driving a revival of Sino-Indian relations



Tarun Khanna

There are some telling signs of economic rapprochement between China and India. During wintry mornings in Gurgaon, home to call centres, offshore software companies and luxury high-rises near New Delhi, dozens of busy Chinese 20- and 30-somethings rush off to work in software companies and manufacturing facilities.

This is extraordinary. There were no Chinese in Gurgaon just a few years ago. As I grew up in Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore, the only Chinese I met were those who ran (excellent) restaurants. Indians did not use polite terms while referring to the few Chinese in their midst, and Chinese elsewhere reciprocated with disdain. Now Gurgaon's Chinese are part of the local fabric. A similar scenario is unfolding in China. Scarcely any Chinese treat Indians as unusual in Hangzhou, the centre for India's software companies in China. My Indian passport used to provoke a second look by Chinese immigration officials; now it barely registers.

But this is not the first time that Hangzhou, a couple of hours drive from Shanghai, has linked China and India. Sixteen hundred years ago, a monk from India built the Lingyin Si Buddhist temple here. On the walls of the temple today, I recognised a rock inscription of the 'Om' symbol, an invocation in many Indian prayers. These examples of religious and technological exchange, separated by many centuries, illustrate a sometimes forgotten history of Chinese-Indian cooperation. More than 1,500 years ago, a sizeable Buddhist translation bureau was set up in Luoyang in western Henan Province, at the mouth of the Silk Road by the Emperor Yang.

"The mechanics of translation were not easy," says Tansen Sen, a Sinologist in New York. "Translation often involved up to four people. One reciting the Sanskrit texts, one translating, one scribe and then the fourth proof-reading. It was very ritualistic, involving big entourages of monks that were housed in monasteries, and survived on patronage, both from merchants and monarchs."

As business patronised the translation bureaus needed to bring Buddhist texts to China, Buddhism lubricated the wheels of commerce. The Chinese-Indian symbiosis was so successful that the Peking University philosopher Hu Shih,

in China represent the beginning of an economic rapprochement that might well offset decades of animus. Admittedly, there is still ample suspicion. But the main story is the growing entrepreneurship in both countries, and their recognition that they can help each other develop economically. Buddhism is, of course, symbolism. But symbols are powerful. It is part of the common language that will continue to improve Chinese-Indian relations. Why else would astute politicians tap into this common vein?

Sino-Indian relations are now based on corporate rather than religious ties. China's telecom equipment giant Huawei, a thorn in Cisco's side, taps into hundreds of software engineers in southern India, and India's Mahindra and Mahindra combines design expertise from Nasik in western India with efficient manufacturing in a plant in Nanchang in China, to ship tractors from Phoenix to Houston to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. India's NIIT runs dozens of software training programs across the length and breadth of China. In the ultimate irony, the state-owned oil and gas enterprises of both countries are learning to cooperate in their search for energy resources around the world, shifting the focus of historically warring countries to economic cooperation.

The belief that China and India will borrow from the West as they accumulate power is erroneous. Much of their borrowing will be from each other, as it was centuries ago. Appreciating this mutual learning is crucial to understanding how these resurgent nations will exert their newfound influence.

Tarun Khanna is the Jorge Paulo Lemann Professor at Harvard Business School.

-IHT

The IT connection

India's NIIT runs dozens of software training programmes across China

speaking at Harvard University in 1937, chose as his subject the 'Indianisation' of China, calling it as massive a case of cultural borrowing, by the Chinese from Indians as the Christianisation of Europe.

The Indian prime ministers, PV Narasimha Rao and Atal Bihari Vajpayee started their tours in 1993 and 2003 respectively in Luoyang, where Buddhism first arrived from India to China. The Chinese prime minister, Wen Jiabao, and President Hu Jintao, in subsequent visits to India, alluded to centuries of Buddhist interaction then and to software now. And at the annual conference of India's software industry association next month in Mumbai, numerous Chinese delegations are signed up to be present.

The Chinese in India and the Indians

The Time of India
East Delhi Plus
January 5, 2008

NIIT toppers felicitated

By A Correspondent

At a glittering function, Rhythm 2008, organised by NIIT Vivek Vihar centre, toppers of the graduating batch of 2007 were felicitated for excellence in academic performance during the year. Chief guest Dr. (Mrs.) Neera Jain, principal, Vivekananda College, University of Delhi, and Mr. Rajendra S. Pawar, chairman, NIIT, addressed a large gathering of students at the event held at PSK Auditorium, Preet Vihar.

Dr. Jain and Mr. Pawar highlighted the growing career opportunities for students across various sectors of Indian economy and urged students to contribute to the country's economic growth through innovation, hard

work and determination.

During the function, which blended seriousness with joy, Dr. Neera Jain congratulated the students and gave away medals of honour and awards to 12 top performers pursuing GNIIT programme at NIIT Vivek Vihar centre. Mr. Pawar also presented the Distinguished Alumni

Award to Suhail Kapoor, currently working with HCL Great Britain, whose proud parents received the honour.

The award ceremony started on a colourful note with students from NIIT Vivek Vihar presenting a cultural programme, followed by award presentation ceremony and song and dance competitions. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, parents and senior academicians from the region.



Students from NIIT Vivek Vihar presented a cultural programme

The Indian Express
New Delhi
January 2, 2008

NIIT felicitates its toppers

At a function titled Rhythm 2008, NIIT, Vivek Vihar, felicitated its 12 toppers of 2007 batch for excellence in academic performance, on December 29. Chief Guest Dr Neera Jain, Principal, Vivekananda College, and Rajendra S Pawar, Chairman, NIIT, addressed the gathering.

Maturity at Last?

The fortunes of the IT training segment are strongly coupled with the overall fortunes of the IT industry. Post the dotcom bust, the IT training industry went through a wave of consolidation with the merger of SSIL and Aptech. Some units closed down while others changed hands.

The total IT training market is estimated to be about Rs 2,600 crore showing a growth of around 20% per annum. The industry has seen sustained growth over the last few years and is poised for both domestic and overseas expansion in the coming years.

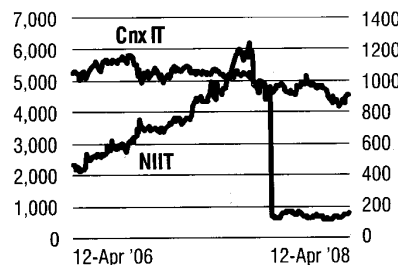
There are a number of listed IT companies including NIIT, Aptech, Jetking Infotrain, SQL Star, among others, with NIIT and Aptech leading the pack.



NIIT: Strong Show

NIIT is one of the leading global talent development companies and offers learning and knowledge solutions to more than 5 mn students across thirty-two countries. NIIT's learning business offerings includes GNIIT, Integrated ANIIT for engineers (IAE), Advanced Technology Programs for IT professionals, Imperia, center for advanced learning, executive management education programs in association with Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), Institute of Finance Banking & Insurance (IFBI), computer-based learning to over 5,000 government and private schools, Corporate Learning Solutions, and Element K. For the second quarter ended on September 31, 2007, the consolidated revenues stood at Rs 270.2 crore, compared to Rs 203.1 crore for the same quarter previ-

ous year, a growth of 33%. Similarly, consolidated net profit stood at Rs 21.1 crore compared to Rs 16.1 for the previous year same quarter, a growth of 31%. The pending order book as on September 30, 2007 stood at Rs 541 crore. The company's Individual Learning Solutions recorded a 31% growth in net revenue in the Q2 over the same period last year, with career segment revenues growing at 37%.



During the quarter, NIIT added four new centers in tier-2 cities totaling fourteen centers across eleven cities. NIIT Imperia partnered with Institute of Management Technology (IMT), Ghaziabad to offer long and short duration programs in management. NIIT's IFBI partnered with HDFC Bank for the Banking program and with ICICI Securities

Consolidated Financials

Particulars	Quarter June '07	Quarter June '06	Growth (%)	Year Ended March 31, '07
Sales	270	203	33	390
Other Income	-5	-2		14
Net Profit	21	16	31	32
Share Capital	33	19		32
EPS	1	8	-	2

Note: All figures in Rs crore unless indicated otherwise. All figures are rounded-off

for the Financial Planning program. IFBI also commenced its insurance training in partnership with ICICI Prudential. The NIIT Education Society has set up first-of-its-kind Model District Learning Center at Chhindwara. NIIT has also set up Minimally Invasive Education (MIE) Playground Learning Centers (PLCs) in different villages of Chhindwara to promote computer education among school children in the district. Similarly, NIIT bagged the 'Best Learning Solutions Partner Award' and 'Best School Solutions Partner Award' from Microsoft. The stock currently trades at Rs 153.1.

NIIT Q3 net rises 30% on growth of individual learning segment

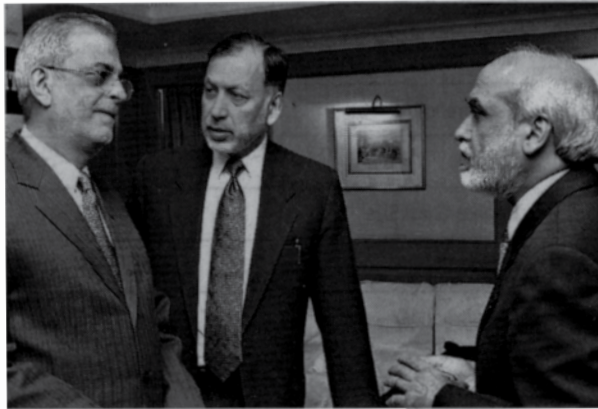
Our Bureau

New Delhi, Jan 21

NIIT Ltd on Monday posted a 30 per cent year-on-year rise in net profit during the third quarter ended December 2007 to Rs 13.9 crore, bucking a seasonally weak quarter for education segment. The growth in PAT was driven by strong growth in individual learning segment and improved profitability of US-based Element K.

The net revenue at Rs 238.8 crore was up 6 per cent over Rs 225.1 crore in the year-ago period. "If the currency had remained at similar levels, the revenue would have grown 14 per cent. However, we have been able to protect the currency impact on the bottom-line. We typically hedge 12-18 months and this quarter we have seen substantial currency gains," Mr Vijay K Thadani, CEO, NIIT, said at a conference here.

The company posted an operating profit (EBITDA) of Rs 22.8 crore, representing a 28

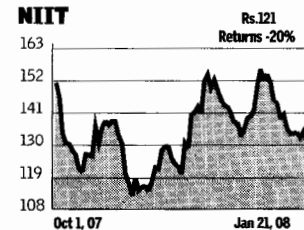


Element K also helps: Mr Vijay K. Thadani (left), CEO, NIIT; Mr Rajendra S Pawar, Chairman; and Mr P. Rajendran, COO, at a press conference, in the Capital on Monday. - Kamal Narang

per cent growth year-on-year and an operating margin improvement of 164 basis points. NIIT's new businesses – IFBI and Imperia – grew 199 per cent during the quarter.

NIIT's corporate learning

division added 10 new customers across the US, Europe and India, and an order intake of \$39 million which represents a 37-per cent growth over the last quarter. "The individual learning solutions recorded a 30-per cent



growth in net revenue year on year, with global enrolment growth at 28 per cent. In the same period, India career enrolments growth was 29 per cent year on year and China enrolments were up 56 per cent," the NIIT Chairman, Mr Rajendra S Pawar, said.

Strong order intake of Rs 28.3 crore in school learning solutions was driven by successful launch of a range of new offerings, Mr P Rajendran, COO of NIIT, said. Non-Government school revenue grew 22 per cent year-on-year with addition of 79 schools.

DNA
Mumbai
January 16, 2008

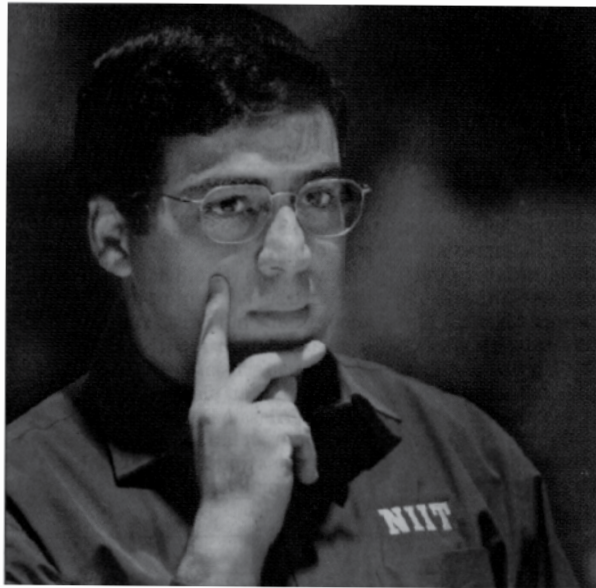
The Hindu
Chennai
January 17, 2008

NIIT buys 47% in Evolv

Mumbai: NIIT has acquired controlling interest in Evolv Management Services Pvt Ltd (Evolv), a provider of English language and communication training, in Noida. NIIT has signed share purchase-cum-subscription agreement to acquire 47.87 per cent of share capital in Evolv Management. Evolv has over 100 employees and has a pan-India presence. *BS Reporter*

NIIT acquires equity stake in Evolv

GURGAON: NIIT has acquired a controlling interest in Evolv Management Services Pvt. Ltd. (Evolv), a leading provider of English language and communication training, headquartered in Noida. Evolv has over 100 employees and has a pan-India presence and delivery capability. — Corporate Reporter



Successive wins: Viswanathan Anand

Back in form, Anand wins again

● **Indo-Asian News Service**
Wijk Aan Zee, January 21

VISWANATHAN ANAND roared back into full flow as he shot down all ideas coming from Bulgarian Veselin Topalov to register his second successive game in the 70th Corus Grandmasters chess tournament late on Sunday.

The win from a Sicilian-Najdorf in 40 moves and on the dot of the first time control saw Anand move up to tied fourth place in the elite Group A from the lowly position he occupied after the first few rounds.

Anand now has 4.5 points and is now only one point behind leader Magnus Carlsen, after becoming the only winner in the eighth round.

In Group C, Parimarjan Negi, who has not drawn a single game, notched up his fifth win in eight rounds, beating Chinese-born Dutch player Peng Zhaoqin. Negi has five points and moved to tied third, one point behind leader Fabiano Caruana from Italy. Negi took 63 moves for the win from Sicilian Paulsen.

In Group B, both Pentala Harikrishna and Koneru Humpy drew their eighth round games. Humpy played

a good draw against leader Etienne Bacrot of France in a marathon 123-move game in Queen's Gambit declined.

Hari also went a long way to 66 moves against Erwin L'Ami of the Netherlands in Four Knights opening for a draw.

There was an incident in Group B, when Ivan Cheparinov of Bulgaria refused to shake hands with Nigel Short before the game. With a handshake being mandatory, Cheparinov, who is a second for Topalov, with whom Short has had run-ins before, was deemed to have forfeited the game. But the game has gone into appeals and if Cheparinov apologises in writing, the game will be held again.

In Group A, the Anand-Topalov match was the big clash. The game was expected along the Sicilian Najdorf. Topalov made his signature moves and also tried a new idea on the 11th move. It was clearly with a plan to trade the dark square bishops.

But Anand was comfortable with that idea—though he did say after the game he would need to analyse that line more for the future. Within the next few moves, Anand found a way to consolidate his position for an edge.

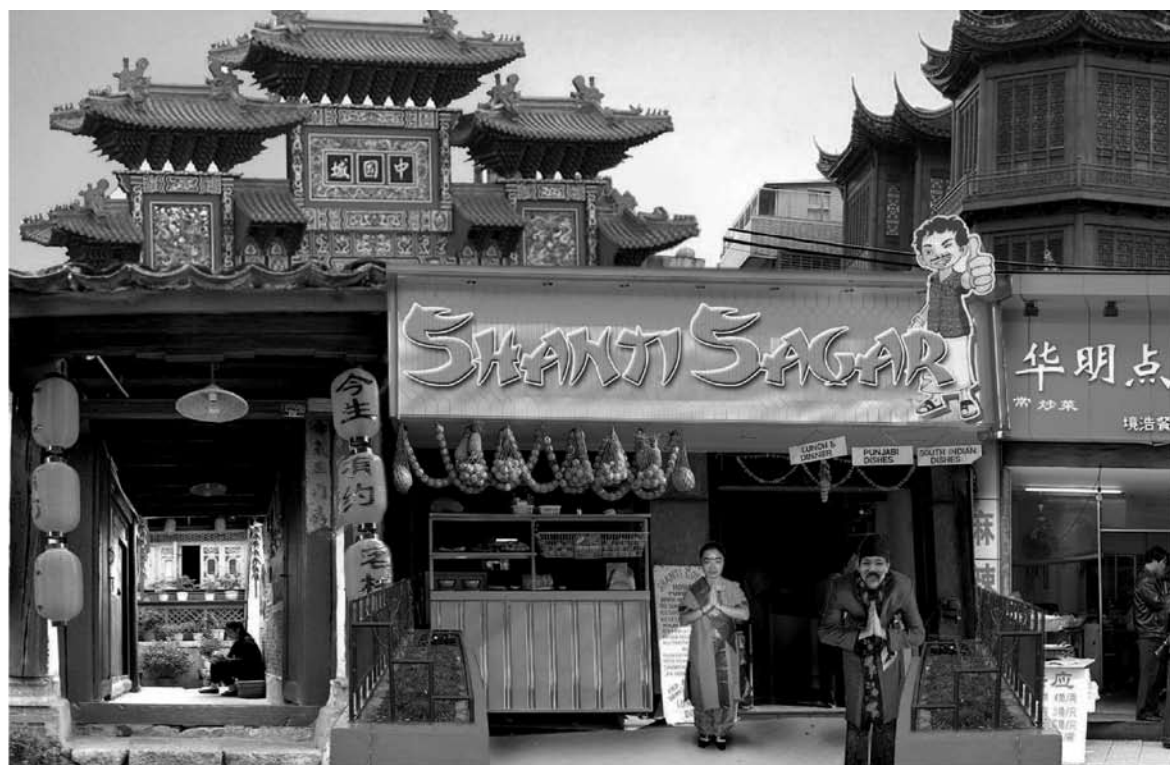
Sino-Indian relations are on an upswing — but can Indian consumer brands make the most of it? Not many of our marketers have tried, so here's a beginner's guide from the few who have scaled the Great Wall and successfully cracked that market

Rajiv Banerjee

IT'S been more than three decades in China for Moonswamy Nanvelli. Though no one in China knows him by that name, his nom de guerre is 'Anthony'. Nanvelli realised early on that getting the Chinese to pronounce his name will be quite a mouthful. So, he used his Christian college name and broke the barrier. "Moonswamy Nanvelli" was absolutely impossible for them to comprehend and pronounce. It would have got me nowhere," laughs the 57-year-old business man who has built a \$75-million enterprise with interests in restaurants, branded spices and pastes, and construction in China.

In 1997, NIIT entered China with the first centre in Shanghai. Given that private education was a virgin territory, it was both an opportunity and challenge. It was Deng Xiaoping's famous 'cat theory' which helped NIIT make the first breakthrough. 'It doesn't matter whether you are a black cat or white cat. What matters is whether you are a smart cat,' NIIT's campaign line read. Prakash Menon, president, NIIT China, still remembers the hordes of Chinese who thronged the centre to enroll, so much so, the network crashed. "We could have used any other line to announce our entry. But using Deng's words to communicate our intentions was the best beginning," he recalls.

WHEN in Rome, do as the Romans do, goes the old adage. Today, all one needs to do is remove the word 'Romans' and insert 'Chinese'. The most populous nation in the planet, an economy growing at a scorching pace and a country with an insatiable appetite for goods — brand-



PHOTOS: BHARAT CHANDIA; IMAGING: GETTY IMAGES; RAJ KAPOOR

THE Great CALL OF China

ed or raw materials — ought to have Indian companies salivating. But the ground reality is Indian consumer brands have negligible brand recall in a market where Western brands have forayed with varying degree of success. One of our greatest exports to the West — Bollywood — is still restricted to Raj Kapoor with 'Awaraz hoon' hummed by the average Chinese. Shahrukh Khan is unheard of, and Aishwarya Rai and Madhuri Dixit just about register. Mention any familiar Indian consumer brands and one gets a blank stare and an apologetic smile.

Indian brands looking to target the domestic Chinese market have to condition themselves for a long stay at the crease. Entry into China requires enormous amounts of patience and 'Guanxi' (which means 'connections' or 'rela-

tionships' in Mandarin). It's an unwritten rule that Guanxi gets things done as well as earns trust, which is the foundation of a long-term relationship. "It will be a long haul for Indian companies to crack China. The first lesson is accepting things with an open mind, even if you don't like it," says Nanvelli. Part of the relationship building is participating in social eating or drinking with local partners. "One has to drink till one is absolutely sloshed. One cannot avoid it," says Nanvelli. Menon of NIIT, who's spent a decade in China, states that companies looking to do a quickie should banish the thought completely. "China is a commitment. One has to learn the language and understand the culture. The real gap is cultural," he remarks. He adds that though the Chinese know about big brands from India, their expo-

sure is minimal. Kishen Singh, senior VP — North Asia & Australia, VFS Global, a visa processing company, realised the importance of Guanxi as he went about creating a network for VFS in China three years back. "One may have a 100-page agreement, but things still won't move. And in some cases, work gets done even without any agreement. That's the contradiction one has to operate in," he explains. Like India, China is seen as many countries within a country, with laws and regulations changing from province to province. A local brand popular in one province may be a non-entity in another. It is within this framework that VFS built offices across 12 provinces involving 12 different partners, says Singh.

CHINESE WHISPERS

- Project a global brand image
- Partner with a local vendor and develop 'Guanxi'
- Think of a suitable Chinese name for your brand
- Societal & political correctness is important. Taking potshots at elders, even lightheartedly, is frowned upon
- Invest through local franchisees and recruit Chinese. It helps create a positive image
- 'Retro' does not carry appeal. It is considered to be dated
- Television is the biggest platform. But mobile and internet offer cost effective solutions

HINDI-CHINI BUY BUY PG 2 ➔



HINDI-CHINI BUY BUY

← THE GREAT CALL... FROM PG 1

While Indian consumer brands are non-entities, the Indian IT majors have made their presence felt. The entry has been aided by the fact that China considers India an 'IT superpower' and is keen to replicate the model. So they are familiar with names like TCS, Satyam, NIIT and Aptech. Girija Pande, executive VP & head — TCS Asia Pacific, admits that the company didn't expect instant recognition when it entered China in 2002. While recognition among students came as a pleasant surprise, Pande says, "The customers and government were not aware. We are not a consumer brand. Our clientele is large institutions and MNCs. So we had to address brand building keeping in mind that environment," he explains. So, public announcement of deals and alliances — a \$100-million deal with Bank of China, for instance — were the way forward, along with participation in seminars and conferences to project TCS as an innovative technology company that brings value. "The key was to project TCS China as a Chinese company, though we are from India. To that extent, employing a majority of Chinese employees with a local leading the team helped create a positive brand impression," he adds.

Even for Satyam Computers, brand building involved earning enough equity within the industry. Raghavendra Tripathi, GM — Satyam Greater China, who has been at the helm of China operations for six years, says initiatives like building relationships with universities and colleges formed part of the initial effort. "They don't believe in off-shoring, nor does the 50,000 head count in India matter. What matters is your experience in China, the business, clients and employees," he insists. Pramod Khara, CEO, Aptech, says it is very difficult for any entrepreneur to make an impact independently. "We have seen the example of some other vendors who have not been able to make a dent," he says. "Taking a cue, instead of partnering with private companies, we formed a joint venture with Beida Jadebird IT, an affiliate of Beijing University, making our courses available in Mandarin."

In China, brand recognition for products is through its Chinese name. Stores and supermarkets abound with branding in Chinese, with even international brands adopting dual language — Chinese and English



CHINA IS A COMMITMENT. ONE HAS TO LEARN THE LANGUAGE AND UNDERSTAND THE CULTURE
PRAKASH MENON

THE FIRST LESSON IS ACCEPTING THINGS WITH AN OPEN MIND, EVEN IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT
MOONSWAMY NANVELLI



ONE MAY HAVE A 100-PAGE AGREEMENT, BUT THINGS STILL WON'T MOVE. SOMETIMES WORK GETS DONE WITHOUT ANY AGREEMENT
KISHEN SINGH

— for communication. Shanghai-based Nishi Suri, managing partner — international clients, O&M China, says that the language challenge starts with something as basic as naming in the entire development process. Delving into the psyche of the consumers, Suri says that it's only in the last few years that exposure to brands and branding has taken place. "In a supermarket, it's striking to see the amount of time that people spend reading back-of-pack labels. People are curious for information. They like to experiment until they feel they have found the right solution," she says. Beverage brand Sprite has a Chinese name which, when literally translated, means 'Ice Green', conveying the impression of a refreshing, liberating feeling. Similarly, Mercedes is known as 'lansa' (quick in Chinese) while Microsoft is known as 'Weiren', which simply means 'Microsoft'. Menon says brand names have to incorporate the element of sound and meaning — though NIIT escaped the mandatory name change as the name meant nothing, while sound-

ing right on the Chinese tongue. Given that NIIT is now a decade old with 178 centres, Menon says the company may, in time, do away with Chinese branding completely. Nanvelli aka Anthony didn't face any such hurdles though when, in 1994, he launched his restaurant venture Indian Kitchen. With 21 Indian Kitchens across China, Singapore and Macau, Nanvelli says the Chinese have gradually accepted and acquired a taste for Indian cuisine, with *parathas* and *roomali* becoming the showpieces. From restaurants, Nanvelli realised the potential of importing spices and pastes. He then launched his own brand of curries and pastes under the Indian Kitchen brand which are retailed in supermarkets in China.

On marketing of service brands like Indian Kitchen, Nanvelli says that merely investing huge sums in television advertising may not get desired recall. The Chinese consumers, like their counterparts across the world, rely on touch and feel to approve. "Once that is achieved, advertising on television gets acceptance," explains Nanvelli. Praveen Ramachandra, MD — south, Millward Brown India, says that the primary tool is television, which takes a lion's share of the ad budget. Another important aspect is the high cost of media. Suri of O&M says that media reach is much more fragmented in China, even compared with India. And the sheer cost is perhaps three to five times more expensive, depending on the media mix. Agrees Ratan Malli, director — strategic planning, JWT Shanghai. "The media cost per person reached is significantly higher, comparable to Western countries. Given that cost efficiency of media is much more, brands coming into China now should have deep pockets." However, the rapid rise of mobile telephony and internet — with web users in China surpassing the US — provides marketers new platforms. "The new cost effective mediums cannot replace television. There is still a high status association with brands that advertise on TV, making them seen big and prestigious. But digital marketing can be a fantastic support. It could even be the entry medium for brands as they build scale," explains Suri.

Also, advertising on television means brands have to be rational in communication, citing the consumer benefits upfront; in China, concepts like 'creative communication' or ads with 'emotional connect' is still at its infancy. "The proportion of ra-

tional advertising is higher because exposure to advertising is recent. However, emotional connect and creative freedom is slowly seeping in," says Malli. The reason for rational advertising is rooted in the social fabric of the Chinese community. "It goes back to the fundamentals of the education system. It's very logical with clear and connecting links, and is very problem-solution driven," explains Suri.

Today, average Chinese consumers, particularly the youth, place a high premium on brands, particularly world class ones. Brand consciousness in China, say observers, is at an all time high, and Indian companies have to be on par to create a positioning. Menon of NIIT states that the theme right now is aspiring for a better lifestyle. NIIT, he explains, is also riding on the lifestyle phenomenon reflected in its catch line 'Your success, accelerated'. "The youth are particularly ambitious and upwardly mobile. So communication which imbibes aspiration and need will connect," he says. Also, considering that cost of entry into China is higher compared to say 10 years ago, Indian brands should look at regions beyond Beijing and Shanghai. "Work on a bottom-up strategy. One can look at tier II or tier III provincial capital cities in China and work their way upwards," advises Ramachandra of Millward Brown. Apart from looking at second tier towns and cities, Malli of JWT is of the opinion that Indian brands stand a better chance if they are able to segment and look for niche categories. Citing the example of Nippon Paints Singapore, which entered China when the construction boom took off, he thinks Indian companies have to look for similar opportunities. "The environment is different — organised retail is well entrenched compared to India. So if one is not with them, there's no chance of survival. There has to be a definite brand proposition," explains Malli.

Playing the India card can be a gamble. Portraying an Indian image in IT or cuisine may work favourably, but when it comes to consumer goods, an India image for products with zero exposure may prove detrimental. Menon believes that Indian companies have to put the 'best global brand' tag for the Chinese to buy them. "They are looking at the best brands, irrespective of nationality," Malli says that brands have to play by the ear to arrive at the right positioning. "When it comes to selling computers, cars or technology products, Indian positioning may not work. But if one can highlight the ruggedness of driving, say a car in India, one can pitch in the India image," he says.

There are similarities and differences. However, the elephant and the dragon are almost destined to do the tango. The question is whether the elephant can say 'Gambel!' and get the dragon to shout 'Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai!'

rajiv.banerjee@timesgroup.com



I heard about it (the welcome given to the cricket team). It would be interesting to see what kind of reception I get when I come to India by the end of this month (October).

**VISWANATHAN
ANAND, WORLD
CHESS CHAMPION**



'Images 2007'

NIIT Brand Ambassador Viswanathan Anand received a royal welcome by NIIT students upon his return to the country, after winning the World Chess Championship in 2007. The picture of his Royal Cavalcade at IIT Delhi Campus was carried in the year-end special issue of India Today.

The Telegraph
Kolkata
January 8, 2008

Clash of sharp minds



Winners of the NIIT chess meet. Picture by Bishwarup Dutta



Rupee impact: Mr Arvind Thakur, CEO & Joint MD, NIIT Technologies Ltd, (right), with Mr Rajendra S. Pawar, Chairman, at a press conference in New Delhi on Friday. — Ramesh Sharma

NIIT Tech net profit flat at Rs 34.7 cr in Q3

Our Bureau

New Delhi, Jan. 18

Hit by sharp appreciation in the rupee, IT solutions company NIIT Technologies Ltd on Friday posted a flat consolidated net profit for third quarter ended December 2007, at Rs 34.7 crore.

The consolidated revenue for NIIT Technologies, which added 213 professionals during the quarter, stood at Rs 233.8 crore, representing a marginal growth of one per cent year-on-year and two per cent rise over the previous quarter.

"The company continued

to extract efficiencies from operations and notched half per cent improvement in operating margins, in spite of the appreciating rupee. The quarter also witnessed an intake of \$59 million of fresh business," Mr Arvind Thakur, CEO and Joint Managing Director, NIIT Technologies said.

Europe, which logged four new customers, continued to provide maximum share of business, representing 49 per cent of total revenue, Americas improved its contribution to 31 per cent and rest of the world contributed 20 per

cent.

"To mitigate the long term impact of the rising costs and strengthening of the rupee, the company has accelerated the pace of transformation towards non-linear business. Intellectual property asset based services contribute a sizable 11 per cent of revenue," Mr Rajendra S. Pawar, Chairman, said.

NIIT Technologies' headcount at the end of December 2007 stood at 5,002.

The shares of the company dropped 6.9 per cent on the BSE to Rs 187.15, against the previous close of Rs 201.15.

NIIT Tech net at Rs 34.7 cr

BS REPORTER

New Delhi, 18 January

Juggling the impact of strengthening rupee and wage inflation, NIIT Technologies today reported stagnant profits on a year-on-year basis at Rs 34.7 crore for the quarter ended 31 December, 2007. The revenue of the company saw a marginal rise of 1 per cent to reach Rs 233.8 crore this quarter as compared to Rs 231.5 crore in the corresponding quarter in the previous fiscal.

On a y-o-y basis the company reported a drop of 10 per cent in its operating profit from Rs 49.1 crore in the same quarter last year to Rs 44.4 crore this quarter.

"To mitigate the long term impact of the rising costs and strengthening of the rupee, the company has accelerated the pace of transformation towards non-linear business," said, Rajendra S. Pawar, Chairman, NIIT Technologies.

ONE-TO-ONE

Talking technology



L. Balasubramanian

Schools in small towns and villages can also offer computer education to their students at a fraction of the cost

President, NIIT – School Learning Solutions

the cost of computing?

Today's computers are very powerful and a majority of the applications only use a small fraction of the computing capacity. Our partner, NComputers, has tapped the unused capacity, which can be shared by multiple users. Software has been designed that enables a single PC to be shared by many users. Each user's monitor, mouse and keyboard are connected to



schools, this technology can also be used in business organisations and government offices.

What are the results of this initiative?

Many schools have adopted the new technology. We have requested the government to approach schools so that they can also introduce it to their students.

a small but highly reliable access device, which is then connected and shared by the PC. This new technology allows as many as six users to access the capability of one PC.

What are the advantages of this new technology?

It sharply cuts down the cost of installing, maintaining and upgrading computers. Counting the plus points, it should be stressed that in addition to the lower initial costs, the support cost is also minimum. It also reduces electricity consumption by up to 95 per cent. Besides

Cara Gupta Sarkar

NIIT has recently joined hands with NComputers. What is the tie-up about?
We have recently entered an alliance with NComputers and the joint initiative will offer low cost computing for schools across India. Keeping in mind that one computer is shared between two students, which is often the case in schools. We aim to reduce the cost of computing in schools by 50 per cent. As a result, schools in small towns and villages can also offer computer education to their students at a fraction of the cost.

What is the technology behind reducing

Gwalior now education hub

Umesh Singh
Gwalior, January 7

GWALIOR, known for its forts, may no longer boast of its industries, but the loss has been compensated as the city is steadily shaping into a prominent educational hub.

The government and private colleges here have been attracting more and more students since 1995 from across the country. After Delhi and Kota in Rajasthan, Gwalior is fast emerging as the favourite centre for professional and physical education courses.

Technical institutions like NIIT, Aptech, CDEC offering various courses here attract a sizable number of students from Gwalior and satellite towns and cities.

NIIT centre head Raju Ghosh says that nearly 1000 students are pursuing various courses like Futurez, CATS and SWIFT at the centre and the fee structure is almost at par with those in the metros.

A key factor behind Gwalior's growing as an educational centre is its easy connectivity rail, road and air connectivity. Late Madhavrao Scindia as Railway and Human Resource Minister was instrumental

in providing better rail connectivity to and from the city to other major destinations and setting up institutions of national repute such as IIITM, and IITTM here.

According to Jiwaji University Registrar DS Chandel, the improved school level education has also boosted the growth of education at the higher level. Many reputed boarding schools like Bharatiyam, Little Angels, Kiddy's Corner, Delhi Public School, Oxford, Carmel Convent, Kushal Vidya Peeth, Wood Stock, Silver Bell, St. Paul, and Airforce have come up in the past few years. Earlier, only a few schools such as Scindia School



GWALIOR APPEAL
GOOD RAIL, road and air connectivity with all parts of the country
IMPROVED SCHOOL level education
REPUTED TECHNICAL institutions offering host of courses
OVER 100 private hostels
CHEAP FEE structure at university and private institutions

Fort, Scindia Kanya Vidyalaya, AMI Shishu Mandir offered boarding facilities.

Moreover, comparatively low cost of living and a peaceful atmosphere draw many students. Low-cost hostels provide accommodation for as cheap as Rs 500 per month.

According to a rough estimate, nearly 500 students from the northeastern states—Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh—are pursuing higher education at the Jiwaji University and other private institutes. They spend around Rs 3500 to Rs 4000 per month on an aver-

age. "There is not much difference in the expenses when compared to Manipur," says Binod Chandra Konthaiyam, a MSC previous year student at Jiwaji. The city has over 100 private hostels to accommodate students from outside. Moreover, good entertainment facilities are another factor luring the students.

For Ms Panorama, a postgraduate in English from Jiwaji University, her Gwalior experience had been satisfactory.

Jiwaji University Registrar D S Chandel attribute this growth to the city's rich cultural background, good school level education, cheap fee structure both at the university and private institutions and a healthy competition among various institutions.

An enviable track record of the Jiwaji University with no Zero Year has helped create confidence among students from UP and Bihar.

"With the signing of a memorandum of understanding between Special Area Development Authority and Manipal University and Amity for setting up an institution here, the education sector is poised for a big leap forward," says

Chandel.

Currently, about 9000 students are pursuing various courses in 229 colleges (government and private) affiliated to Jiwaji University. The fee structure varies for traditional, self-financing and distant education courses.

Besides, private institutions are offering a variety of courses through the centres of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and Bhoj University. Nationally reputed institutes like the Atal Behari Vajpayee Indian Institute of Travel and Tour Management (IITTM), NCC college for women officer training, Laxmibai National Institute of Physical Education (LNIPE) a deemed university, Jawarharlal Nehru Agricultural College, Ayurvedic Homoeopathic Colleges (private), pharmacy institutes, nursing institutes, Cancer Research Institute, Birla Institute, Gajra Rajee Medical College and Madhav Institute of Technology and Science (MITS) offer a variety of courses.

With no eve-teasing incidents on the campus, girls move around fearlessly. And what is more heartening is that the campus is free from drug abuse evil.

NIIT

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