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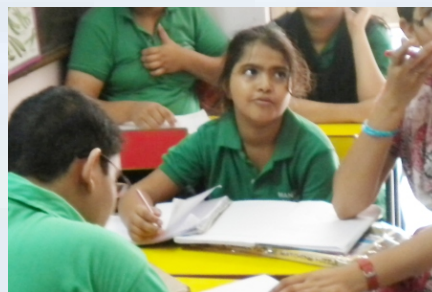
The India education landscape update

August 16, 2012

Manovikas Community College



I-DAY SPECIAL



A model in making for higher education needs of
MENTALLY CHALLENGED

News

Google India's
"Students on the web" study

CBSE sets up
New Research Centre

Anti-Ragging Web Portal
www.antiragging.in

Special Series

INDIA SKILLS

Challenges for vocational
skill providers

Columns by:

Manish Sharma (Ncomputing), R C Dalal, JD Inst of Fashion Technology

Interviews: Ninad Karpe, Mrinmoy Purkayastha

Editorial: So, what am I supposed to do? Pankaj Agrawal by GenNxtEduserve

Introducing
Your career
questions
answered

The Network "n + i" of Graduate schools for an International Master in Engineering.

Online Application Process Opens in September 2012

"n+i" Engineering Network is a non-profit making association run on behalf the Official Body CDEFI (Conférences des directeurs d'écoles françaises d'ingé,ieurs) representing all French Engineering Institutes under the Ministry of French Higher Education. In 2012, Network "n+i" brought together more than 70 French Grandes Ecoles of Engineering in all fields of science and technology (from agriculture to telecommunications, and including civil engineering, mechanics, informatics, biotechnology, chemistry, materials, electronics, environment, etc). The "n+i" Network is a unique interlocutor that represents more than 30 000 student engineers of which 7 000 graduate each year and 250 research laboratories spread over 40 cities and 18 Regions of France. The strengths of the training school of engineering: high scientific level, excellent practical training through Hands and projects, many courses in business, ease of jobs after Diploma.

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For further information : Contact Mrs Golda MALHOTRA, India Coordinator '-n+i' Engineering Programmes Tel : 00 11 30 41 00 08 / 00 Email: g.malhotra@nplusi.com Website: www.nplusi.com


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Manovikas Community College

A model in making for higher education needs of

MENTALLY CHALLENGED



IGNOU's scheme of community colleges (launched in 2009) has provided many a philanthropists/activists a window of opportunity to address the longstanding and

unfulfilled demand of vocational and higher education needs of the mentally challenged youth. Among the 50 odd IGNOU recognized community colleges out of over 400 (till end of 2010) that have started vocational programs for disabled students, Delhi-based Manovikas community college holds a promise of a model

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Only 21% MBAs employable

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toilets

GURUKUL- THE SCHOOL, NOIDA

A primer school rooted in Indian values with international outlook



LOCATED ON NH-24 GHAZIABAD AND SPREAD

Over sprawling 6 acres, the beautifully designed traditional huts named as KALANGAN & RANGSHALA, the school aims at providing an environment where the child can think rationally and contribute significantly to the society and prepares not just to make their living but to make their lives. The five core values RHCFR (i.e. Respect, Honesty, Compassion, Fairness and Responsibility) are the basis for every relationship between all the stakeholders at school. Academic Rigour, Professional Excellence, and Extraordinary Care for the Welfare of Each Child are three operational imperatives that guide the School's efforts and resources in achieving excellence as a world class leader in education. The School challenges and addresses to adopt a new paradigm of education for 21st century through interdisciplinary, integrated and project based curriculum called the GPEP (Gurukul Progressive Education Programme).

. The school is the proud recipient of the International School Awards 2012-15 by the British Council. The campus is fully WIFI with dedicated ERP system installed. The school offers a fully air- conditioned pre-primary department and a rain - effect enabled splash pool. The Senior School is well equipped with hi-definition audio-visual rooms, air conditioned activity studios, well equipped science labs, state of the art Library and the king size Auditorium with dolby digital surround sound system. Teachers share excellent

resources on pedagogy through community on Google created by the school. The school's website, www.gurukultheschool.com is completely dynamic where online MCQ assessment modules are available for students of different grade levels for which every student is provided with a log in ID for access. To augment school's academic rigour and support the visionary 21st century's curriculum, the school has integrated the implementation of 'Robotics', initiated School Cinema, Personal Attention Classes, field trips,

etc.

The school offers an array of rich clubs of which every student is a part of. The students of specific club get specialized training in the respective area and learn the nuances of the skill. Koffee@Gurukul offers its students to have an interactive coffee session with eminent personalities from various walks of life. In order to fulfill the quest to reach the desired goal, the school provides vivid indoor and outdoor sports with latest sports ware and scholarships to deserving sportsmen.

Gurukul The School has adopted community service as an integral part of value education programme. Interact Club at Gurukul partnered with Rotary International, NGO Goonj and Help Age India extends the services ranging from blood donation to distribution of stationery to sensitize the students towards the needs of the lesser privileged society and learn to contribute constructively right from the school days. Students are encouraged to 'think globally and act locally' to be able to extend meaningful help to the nearby marginalized sections of the society.

Gurukul-The school's mission has always been to transform school building to 'nerve centers', with walls that are porous and transparent, connecting teachers, students and the community to the wealth of knowledge. One of the major goals of the institution for its students is to find joy in learning and take them into a world of knowledge generation and inquiry.



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EVER SINCE, WE BEGAN TO EXPLORE THE POST-NSDC SKILLS

development initiatives landscape supposedly for school and college dropouts aimed at fulfilling the huge skilled manpower demand of economy, some things are becoming clearer. The hullabaloo around the initiatives is 'hallow'. The providers are finding it hard to realize targets matching 'on-paper' boardroom projections. In this edition, field expert and our advisory member, Navin Bhatia, has analyzed the issue with great detail and even offered some useful advice. Then there are some entities like Jindal Education Initiatives of Jindal Steel conglomerate, who boast of their adaptation of state ITIs in Chhattisgarh with the American parter Montgomery College as revealing PPP models, but when we called the place and requested the director there to share the intervention and results, she failed to supply us any. Even though the corporate India is the greatest beneficiary of public educational and training institutions like ITIs and engineering colleges, it is doing little to support their transition. Same is reflected in its approach to the skill development mission. The Government, which has been gradually withdrawing from social sectors over the years, is just not playing its part either. Some time back, I happened to meet Prof. Manjit Rai Agnihotri, emeritus professor, School of Planning & Architecture, Delhi. Shockingly he revealed that India's architectures were humiliated during the Commonwealth Games 2010 as none of them was trusted or involved in the infrastructure development for the games. India needs optimal hybrid solutions to its human development challenges particularly if these are rooted in time. Someone once said that India lives in centuries pointing to regional imbalances. Our public institutions do have people, who can do research work before mega interventions aimed at development of education are undertaken. But then, who cares for evidence-based policy interventions in the Government, where bureaucrats and self-styled civil society experts call the shots? In the next edition, we'll provide a perspective on skilling of menial workers based on a study paper we have received from Prof Madan Paul of JNU and hope, this will motivate more researchers to scrutinize the skills development story of India and share some of it with us.

Disability is a reality of human society and it is indeed a matter of satisfaction that in the last decade, several strides have been taken in the country in ensuring their rights and dues thanks to sincere activism and support by UPA leadership. As we reported last time, a new department has been created to these citizens under the ministry of social justice and empowerment. We thought it befitting coinciding with 66 Independence Day to feature one success story where mentally challenged have stood on their feet and have started earning respectable livelihood. That is our cover story about Delhi-based vocational Manovikas community college.

This issue also carries a detailed report on the 'Chess Movement' that G M Viswanathan Anand is spreading in association with NIIT. We have also started a career counseling column and in this we'll be supported by a renowned training company in Delhi. We also look at interesting events across campuses in India. Do keep writing your comments and feedback. We'll continue to bring to you India Education Story.

Belated Happy Independence Day!

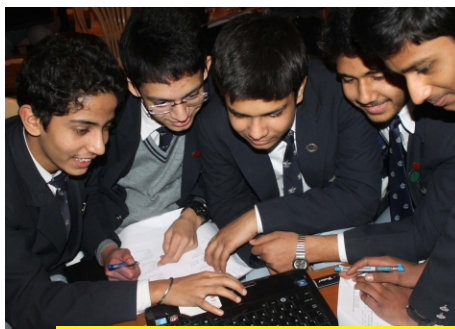
So, what am I supposed to do?

Encouraging values of Leadership, Responsibility and Teamwork in children!

I STARTED MY WORK LIFE ABOUT 15 YEARS ago. Circumstances landed me in this company where the MD wanted to meet the team of some 20 newly hired sales executives. The company was out of stock, sitting on a pile of pending orders, with hundreds of irate customers. “So why hire a sales team?” is what most of us thought but none said! Obviously - who wants to question their own *raison d'être*. It was much easier to just lumber along and ask “so, what am I supposed to do?”. The responsibility for decisions passes on to the boss and you just do what you are asked to. Many people fortunately grow out of this but many don't, for the rest of their lives... always looking for instructions, hiding from responsibility and therefore giving up their chance of taking a Leadership role. This is a shame but does it really have to be this way?

As Seth Godin says, If you do a job where someone tells you exactly what to do, he will find someone cheaper than you to do it. And yet our schools and colleges are busy churning out kids who are stuck looking for jobs where the boss tells them exactly what to do. Every year, we churn out lacs of workers who are trained to do 19th century style labor. Training kids to become better factory workers as adults has set us on a race to the bottom. Some people argue that we ought to become the cheaper, easier country for sourcing cheap, compliant workers who do what they're told. Even if we could win that race, we'd lose. The bottom is not a good place to aspire for, even if you're capable of getting there really fast!

I am sure we can all see that the modern work place and indeed the world around us has changed. We do not any longer expect people to wait for orders to implement. Instead we expect them to take responsibility and find solutions along with the ability to take risks and face challenges. I feel that our education system should encourage Leadership and Responsibility in children (you cannot churn or factory produce this). This would prepare



Leadership comes with independently exploring solutions

them to face life later at work or in the modern society as contributing mature adults. Maybe a good starting point is to encourage them to solve their own problems and not look up to us for readymade answers. Maybe we could just shut up next time when a child asks: “So what am I supposed to do?” Let them find their own way. Stepping back as a parent or a teacher and desisting from offering a solution on a platter.

Shouldn't we rather be thinking of small problems that we can put in their path, letting them find solutions and watching from the sidelines where we can intervene if things go

horribly wrong but not before? This can manifest in really simple and mundane daily tasks. For e.g. sometime back, my wife and I realized as parents that we were responsible to make sure our child would wake on time, get dressed, have breakfast and catch his bus to school. If he missed the bus, it was our fault! We would tell him to wake up, do this, do that, do it like this, not like that blah blah..till

one day we gave up and told him to figure out how and what he wanted to do. Boarding his school bus was his responsibility! We fought for a while about this, but luckily for us, he took the responsibility and has mostly lived up to it. Small victory but a big step forward! What would we do if he repeatedly missed his bus, or if his grades suffered etc. Honestly I don't know but if anything horrible like that happened, we would intervene in some way wouldn't we?

Is restraint more difficult than forthright action? I sure think so, and that's why I should not even be suggesting this to you. Find your own way to develop Leadership & Responsibility in your children, but first find within yourself the courage to step back and not intervene unless you feel it is absolutely necessary to do so. Only you can decide when that level has been breached but my tip is to set the bar as high as you possibly can. It will be directly proportional to the self-confidence that you want to see in your child later.

- Pankaj Agrawal (CEO GenNxtEduServe Pvt Ltd)



Prof Pant's Conversations On Matters Educational

“Education is more about continually questioning the answers.”

IF SUCCESS HAPPENS WHEN preparation meets opportunity, then for education to lead to success, we have to anticipate opportunities in the future and then design the educational experience to suitably prepare our products to benefit from them. In the recent past we have seen this principle work for the IITs and IIMs and many other institutions that have developed a great brand. In the earlier times, there were well known Universities that prepared their graduates to become civil servants. Even well known schools acquire a reputation based on the qualities they instill in their learners. It was said that 'the battle of Waterloo was won on the playfields of Eton'. We have also seen Nalanda, Takshila and Vikramshila disappear as equally ancient Universities like Oxford, Cambridge, Bologna and Paris continue to survive for almost a thousand years.

In this era of rapid change, it is important to gaze at the crystal ball, apply modeling and prediction techniques and develop insights to identify the knowledge skills, attitudes and values that all learners would need to have to succeed, prosper, flourish and thrive in the future. Education is increasingly not so much about knowing the right answers to a set of questions, but more about continually questioning the answers. And therefore asking the right questions is the first and most important step.

I am listing for immediate reflection, a list of 10 skills which Harvard University and 12 that Princeton University believe their graduates must

possess in addition to the academic learning and course credits acquired by them.

Harvard's list of abilities is as follows:
 define problems without a guide;
 ask hard questions which challenge prevailing assumptions; quickly assimilate needed data from masses of irrelevant information; work in teams without guidance; work absolutely alone; persuade others that your course is the right one; conceptualize and reorganize information into new patterns; discuss ideas with an eye toward application; think inductively, deductively and dialectically; attack problems heuristically.

PRINCETON'S LIST:
 Think, speak, and write clearly; reason critically and systematically; conceptualize and solve problems; think independently; take initiative and work independently; work in cooperation with others and learn collaboratively; judge what it means to understand something thoroughly; distinguish the important from the trivial, the enduring from the ephemeral; familiarity with the different modes of thought (including quantitative, historical, scientific, and aesthetic); depth of knowledge in a particular field; see connections among disciplines, ideas and cultures; pursue life-long learning.

Mail Bag

A big thanks for such a comprehensive cover story on ITIs. It was nice scoop. Keep it up!
Surinder Singh, Ghaziabad

Please refer to you editorial on Urdu language. I fully agree to your view that self-serving Muslim intellectuals and media houses are exploiting the situation for their own good. I hope lovers of the language will rise and expose them.
Yusuf Khan, Delhi

Article on overseas education was comprehensive analysis. Look forward to see more of such stuff.
Sahil, Mumbai

Useful Sites

APPitic (www.appitic.com) is a website that is a compilation of almost 2000 educational apps. APPitic is a directory of apps for education by Apple Distinguished Educators (ADEs) to help you transform teaching and learning. These apps have been tested in a variety of different grade levels, instructional strategies and classroom settings. Do explore this site and peruse the variety of information available. Many sites use the popularity of an App to rank it. This may not be pedagogically sound. Our effort is to build a system of ratings by actual practitioners and users. Because in the huge number of ostensibly 'educational' apps it is not easy to choose suitable ones. Hopefully our Educational Apps Eco-system will help facilitate learners, teachers and parents to save their time and money with the help of our collective suggestions and recommendations.

THE SMART Preparing for a CAREER

When people say that career options have multiplied in a world of newer opportunities, which get complex by the day, an expert counsel is increasingly becoming inevitable. However, India still doesn't have the required numbers of such experts and it is only a handful of them who do it by way of newspaper columns or occasion sessions in schools. To fill in this gap and provide widespread professional counseling services, in September 2011, a livewire team of edupreneurs in Delhi started a coaching cum counseling company by the name of **Smartprep**, which in a short span of less than a year has grown to six locations in Delhi NCR region.

CHOOSING A CAREER IN yesterday years was not a big deal. Fathers, uncles, relatives, family friends, neighborhood opinion leaders, teachers etc decided for the young man or woman readying to step into real world post-secondary education. And then, the options were also few! Then family status, prestige, prized dowry built such expectations that the individuality of the student became irrelevant in career decisions. This forced decision in most cases is a mismatched preposition and often results in job dissatisfaction, midway career changes and importantly waste of talent and potential.

The second most challenge for today's youth is the fierce competition for limited number of seats in professional colleges and even in jobs. The level and quality of assessment have also gone up several notches, and requires mentoring rather than mugging up the contents. And in coming times, the scenario is not going to get any easier. So, mentoring, coaching and staying informed is critical for success.

To turn these challenges into a business opportunity with a cause, Nitesh Gupta, an engineering graduate from Nagpur University, who after a stint with a software development company got into education sector in the test prep segment and became a founding director of Career Shapes, in 2011, started a new company called Smartprep Education Services P Ltd in

Delhi. “Our decision to enter this space was based on a huge demand that exists. Education is indeed a top priority for most Indians, there is scarcity of counseling, the numbers of good counselors is less and explaining long-term career prospects requires analytical and highly informed professionals. Then, we clubbed it with test preparation courses of non-JEE IIT, AIEEE, PMT exams,” says Gupta. Functioning from six full capacity centres in the national capital Delhi and other neighbouring towns, Smartprep is making its presence felt and has already helped 500 aspirants to clear various examinations. “Anybody can aspire for anything, but there are two things that are crucial in reality. One, the capacity or say the talent of the person and second predictable future of a career option. We help the student realize this through assessment and detailed counseling. For instance, many students are heartbroken when they fail to make it to IIMs as they don't know there are another 150 or so top B-schools after IIMs also,” he adds.

Smartprep offers courses of various durations ranging from 45 days to one year (fees ranges from Rs 7000 to Rs 35,000) depending upon the nature of entrance or qualifying exam and the



Nitesh Gupta: CEO

stage at which a student approaches the centres. Currently, it offers coaching for BBA, BCA, Fashion Design, Law, Hotel Management & Journalism and Mass Communication for undergrads, MBA and MCA for post-grads. It has also plans to get into study abroad counseling. Apart from these academic programs, Smartprep also helps aspirants train for Bank PO, Staff Selection Commission, Civil Services and other government service examinations.

“Most of these exams are designed to test knowledge, analytical, logical & numerical skills in a short time. One needs to have accuracy with speed, so our courses basically fill in the knowledge and efficiency gaps through rigorous practice and expert teaching,” according to Gupta. Personalized attention, smaller class sizes, scientific learning plan, home assignments, extra classroom hours and certified and experienced faculty are some of the features of Gupta's offerings. Use of ICT, videos, guest faculty and mentors makes it more enriching and result-oriented. Dedicated teams for content development, course design and faculty training are continuously working to make Smartprep the most reliable place for successful and satisfactory career planning and preparation. As the dust settles, the company will spread to more cities and towns across India very near to you!

Your career questions answered

(please note we have arrangement with Samrtprep to answer your questions, do mail your questions at curriculum.mag@gmail.com)

Q. In the 12th, I have scored very less marks and have not got any admission in college, please suggest me some options?

A. Candidate can opt for graduation through correspondence or graduation from distance learning programmes of different universities. Other option is that one can always look at some job oriented courses like Computer networking, hardware, Accounting etc

Q.I want to study law, which is the best law college and what are the criteria? What are the career opportunities for studying law?

A. National Law School Bangalore. Admission to all National Law colleges is through All India Entrance Exam called CLAT. Apart from practising as a lawyer one can join solicitor/Law firms, LPO, Corporates-Legal departments, Indian judicial Services.

Q. Is there any course in event management and where is it located? Do you think it has any opportunities?

A. Yes, some good institutes like Ashoka Inlead (PG Diploma Approved by ITDC Govt. of India), Amity University (Masters Degree in PR & Event Management) Noida Campus, EMDI (PG Diploma) in

Gurgaon, National Institute of Event Management (PG Diploma) are situated in Mumbai.

Q.I want to study abroad in medicine. Can you tell me what are the criteria and the best universities abroad?

A. Depending on university and jurisdiction, these may be either undergraduate-entry (most of Europe, Russia, India and China) or graduate-entry programs (mainly United States). The admission requirements vary from university to university but, in general the admission requirements include a high school diploma or equivalent, with common course requirements such as English, Biology, Physics and Chemistry. There will be an entrance test at 10+2 level like SAT-I & SAT-II where as at graduate level it'll be GRE. Some universities may have an additional test for final screening.

Q.I want to become TV Journalist. Please give me more details on it?

A. To become TV Journalist one has to be a minimum graduate in Journalism from any UGC recognised university. Journalism itself is a vast term and there are number of specialisation e.g. News reporter, Anchor etc. so depending on interest

one can go for specialisation at PG Level and persue the career.

Q. What are the job options in studying bio-chemistry? Is there any scope in India?

A. After doing bio-chemistry one can become a Clinical biochemist, Biomedical Scientist, Forensic Scientist, Research Scientist (Life sciences), Clinical research, Toxicologist, Higher Education Lecturer, Science writer, Health & Safety inspector etc. In India it is one of the growing sectors owing to the growing healthcare sector & research for generic medicines.

Q. I do not want to pursue science or commerce. I am confused and want to know about by studying art, what is the scope and options available to me?

A. One can go for courses like design, animation, literature, travel & tourism, journalism. The trend has been that a good number of students are looking forward to doing courses which are not traditional and poses more challenges. Though for some of courses there has not been a significant changes at mass level in monetary rewards but there is a bright future for them.

Google India's "Students on the web" study

5 Out Of 6 Students Influenced By Online Resources

46% year on year growth in education related searches, India ranks at No. 2 after USA
7 out of 10 institutes don't have mobile-friendly sites and content

If you are an institution or service-providers in education services, this piece of information is vital to your business. India's predominantly young population is turning to Internet a great deal for viewing courses, faculty, and placement record before making their higher and professional education choices. According to a study by Google India (which according to it was prompted by a keenness to know what is driving the 46% year on year phenomenal growth of education related searches from India) released in New Delhi on August 8, 2012, over 60% of the students with access to Internet, use the web to research on educational courses & institutes.

Revealing the findings of a two phase study (compiled by combining Google search query patterns and an offline research conducted by TNS Australia on behalf of Google India), VP and managing director of Google India, Rajan Anandan said that the core objective behind compiling this study was to understand the impact Internet is having on this young population with regard to education related decision making by the students. With more and more users getting online everyday, Internet today is the biggest catchment area for youth. Currently, with over 120 million Internet users, India ranks third after China (550 million) and USA (250 million). Of these 120 million, a majority of 70 million are accessing

Internet through mobile phones while as the other 50 million are laptop and PC users. The percentage of users between age 18-35 years is 54% or 60 million. "This figure may represent only about 10% of India's population but it is very high even for a market like India. Remember that in year 2000 there were only 3 million Internet users in India and the penetration is growing at a rate of 38%. In education related search India ranked eighth in 2008, but by the end of 2011, it ranks at number two after USA," says Anandan.



The startling finding was that of all the Internet searches from mobile phones, 22% were education related searches. Of all queries on education, 40% were for higher education and institutes; 44% were on IT/Vocational courses; 40% for bachelor's degrees (predominantly engineering); 16% for masters (predominantly MBA). Among the top public institutions searched were IIT-Delhi, IIT Chennai, IIM-Ahmedabad, IIM-Bangalore, IIM-Indore while as in case of private institutions Sikkim Manipal/Manipal University, Amity, Nirma, Love Professional University, and Sharda university were top searched. The offline study was conducted by TNS (Australia-based market research

agency) in seven cities of New Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Bangalore on 2229 respondents (52% female, 48% male. Age group: (18-24 yrs) - 67%, (25-29 yrs) - 24%, (30-35 yrs) - 9%). When asked on the criteria used for researching/selecting institutes/courses, 60% said that Internet was the first place to search for education courses. Five in 6 were influenced by online resources including videos. While it takes about 6 months to take the final decision, 56% of the respondents looked at placement records as the criteria followed by 49% for faculty, 48% course content, 43% reputation and 41% for fees.

In terms of wish list, Students highlighted the need for educational institutes to have more mobile friendly websites as over 66% said they use their mobile phones to access the content. Video content also rated high with the students and they highlighted the need to have more video content on institution websites and other platforms with 46 percent respondents saying that they choose to watch videos as part of their research. In terms of type of video content, students also wanted to watch videos on career options/placements (56%), videos of the faculty (44%), videos of existing students and alumni (29%) and videos of classroom sessions (27%) to help them take more informed decisions.

CBSE sets up Centre for Assessment, Evaluation & Research with Pearson Charitable Foundation

The big aim of the initiative is to shift fascination of people (schools, teachers, parents, students) from improving marks to fascination for improved learning (read quality education). The research findings of the centre are likely to impact learning/teaching processes in 13117 cbse-affiliated schools and thousands of teachers in these schools.

ON AUGUST 9, 2012, THE CENTRAL board of secondary education (CBSE), the pan-India school board of the union ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) with 13117 affiliated schools launched the Centre for Assessment, Evaluation & Research (CAER) for supporting R & D in its core activities under public private partnership with Pearson Foundation. Cbse will provide physical infrastructure among other things, while Pearson Foundation will fund operational expenditure including salaries for the first two years. Thereafter, CAER is expected to generate its own financial resources through publication and other project works. Designated a not-for-profit organization, the Centre will function through an executive council headed by CBSE chairman.

In the initial phase, CAER will develop research and assessment capabilities and resources for CBSE, its affiliated schools and teachers. It will also provide professional development programmes, and publish a variety of support materials with the intention of taking CBSE's present practices to world-class levels with the help and expertise of the partner organization, Pearson education. "We have felt a need for research support to all our activities at CBSE for a long

time and it was after discussions spanning two years that we came up with this centre," says Vineet Joshi, CBSE chairman. While asked for need of partnering with a private company even though agencies like NCERT and NCTE were already working in the space, Joshi said given the volume of work, these agencies are not sufficient and that the new body will co-exist, partner and network with these agencies while not repeating their work.

CBSE's CCE (Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation), which was implemented in haste in 2009 without proper teacher training and is being widely criticized by teachers as a burden and Life Skills will be the focus areas of the centre in its early days. According to Joshi, the burden of CCE in more in teachers minds (psyche) and not in work. "We have done a small survey for class XI students and found that students performed better in all subjects compared to their peers before CCE. Those teachers who do it purposely find it worth, while others will find it burdensome," he adds. The success of the Centre will be measured by the extent to which its work continues to have a direct and positive impact on the nature of teaching and learning in school classrooms, as well as its achievement of financial sustainability as per the PPP



Vineet Joshi, chairman CBSE (right) & Kozehm Merchant of Pearson India at the signing ceremony

CBSE research centre

agreement. “This is the first such PPP be watched closely,” said Vineet Joshi, chairman of CBSE, which comes under the purview of the human resource development ministry. “If we achieve desired success, then it could be a model to follow for many such projects.”

Speaking for Pearson Jim Tognolini, senior vice-president, research and assessment at Pearson says that though it is for the first time that Pearson has entered into such PPP, the UK-based leading education company has rendered such services in Abu Dhabi, Australia, China, Mexico, USA and other places. “The idea is to bring best international practices and hire local researchers to amalgamate them with local conditions and requirements,” he adds. Schools will be given the feedback to help improve their performance. An international conference is planned in 2014 by the newly established CAER that will bring together experts from across the world and India to network and build upon the research work.

It may be noted that the Planning Commission has also backed PPP in education as a means of stepping up the investment that's needed to take advantage of the country's burgeoning human capital, which the government has also publicly accepted. However, it is also pertinent to mention that the fate 2,500 model schools with private participation is still unclear after these were announced two years ago. “This is the first such PPP be watched closely,” said Vineet Joshi, chairman of CBSE, which comes under the purview of the human resource development ministry. “If we achieve desired success, then it could be a model to follow for many such projects.” Let's wish you all the best Mr Joshi!

UGC PROPOSES SETTING UP OF FOUR Regional Centres of Educational Management

THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE of Parliament for the Ministry of Human Resource Development held on July 31 discussed the “Proposed National Mission on Teachers and Teaching”. In a presentation UGC has made two specific proposals with regard to teacher training. The first one is regarding Setting up of Regional Centres of Educational Management in the Indian Institutes of Management at Ahmedabad, Kolkata and Bangalore and in the National University of Educational Planning and Administration. The second one is regarding Establishment of Centres of Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education in leading national level institutions, namely Indian Institute of Science, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research etc. for development of specialized cadre of academy of teaching and teacher educators. The presentation also highlighted that Technology Enabled Learning can also play an important role in enhancing the capacity of teachers. Presently, under the National Mission on Education through ICT, up to March, 2012, Virtual Private Network and internet connections have been provided to 392 universities and 18189 colleges/polytechnics across the country. A number of projects have been sanctioned under the NMEICT scheme to various institutions of the country. For UG course, Consortium of Educational Communication (CEC) has been tasked for e-content generation. As regards training of teachers for polytechnics, the four National Institutes of Technical Teachers' Training & Research (NITTTRs) located as Bhopal, Chandigarh, Chennai and Kolkata have

been directed to organize 'Summer Schools' during the forthcoming summer for training 1,000 technical teachers of polytechnics by each NITTTR. They have further been advised to take action in this regard after consultation with the concerned State Governments so that they may nominate their participants in the programme. Kapil Sibal said that the final contours of the proposed National Mission and its operational features are under discussion. The Mission, however, would address, on the one hand, current and urgent issues such as supply of qualified teachers, attracting talent into teaching profession and raising the quality of teaching in schools and colleges. On the other, it is also envisaged that the Teacher Mission would pursue the long term goal of building a strong professional cadre of teachers by setting performance standards and creating top class institutional facilities for innovative teaching and professional development of teachers.

Speaking on the occasion, Members of Parliament, underlined the requirement of a Mission on Teachers, as the shortage of teachers is very marked in the country. MPs also expressed concern regarding inadequate quality of education in the country. Some MPs stated the need for greater use of ICT in imparting teacher education. MPs also underlined the need for adequate infrastructure to be in place in teacher training institution and also that while releasing funds, UGC could address manpower requirements ahead of infrastructure requirements.

Anti-Ragging Web Portal www.antiragging.in

Developed by the University Grants Commission (UGC) in collaboration with Ed.CIL (India) Ltd. and Planet E-Com Solutions, the ministry of HRD has launched an anti-ragging portal as a medium of managing complaints, follow up of complaints and escalation of unresolved complaints to regulatory authorities, enhanced communication with colleges and universities, developing various kinds of data sets, displaying status of complaints, displaying various kinds of reports, development of various data sets etc.

The web portal is a term being used for all background software development that is necessary for smooth functioning of the Ragging Prevention Program and comprises of the following components: All calls received by Anti-ragging

Helpline (18001805522) will be managed and followed up in a structured software system, Customized E-mail Management systems of the Call Centre, Complaints follow up, log creation and display system on the web. Students can see the progress of their complaint any time.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court in its judgment dated 8th May, 2009, while expressing great concern on the increasing incidences of ragging in educational institutions in the country ordered implementation of a ragging prevention programme comprising, inter-alia, setting up Toll-free Anti-Ragging Helpline /Call Centre, Database of institutions/students, engaging an independent non-government agency.

WCD Ministry Invites Comments on the Draft National Policy for Children 2012

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has drafted the National Policy for Children 2012 and is inviting comments from the general public. The draft Policy is placed on its website www.wcd.nic.in. The first National Policy on Children was formulated in 1974. The policy described children as a supremely important asset and made the State responsible for providing them equal opportunities for growth and development of all children. The policy primarily focused on health and education of the children.

The revised draft policy recognizes the new challenges regarding children that have emerged with the advent of globalization and development and seeks to address the new challenges. It defines a 'child' as a person below eighteen years of age, and acknowledges the inalienable and inherent rights of the child and aims to realize the 'full range of child rights for all children in the country'. According to the draft policy, 'a multi-dimensional, integrated and inclusive approach is necessary for the overall and harmonious development and protection of children, which acknowledges their heterogeneity and different needs'. The policy also states that 'children, especially girls, are free to express their views and their voices are heard and their opinions are respected in all matters affecting them in any way they are able to communicate, in particular judicial and administrative proceedings and interactions, in accordance with their age, maturity and evolving capacities'.

Amartya Sen is chancellor Naland univ & Gopinath Pradhan new IGNOU VC

Nobel laureate Amartya Sen has been appointed as the first chancellor of the upcoming Nalanda International University in Bihar by the board of governors. The process of recruitment of acclaimed and renowned faculty for the university will begin in July 2013 and the academic session of its two schools - historical sciences and environment and ecology - will start from April 2014. The university in Bihar's Nalanda district, about 100 km from here, will be fully residential, like the ancient Nalanda university. It will offer courses in science, philosophy and spiritualism along with social sciences.



Prof Gopinath Pradhan

Gopinath Pradhan is the new vice-chancellor of the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). After joining IGNOU in 1993 and he has been the director of the university's School of Social Sciences (SOSS) since 2010. A professor of Economics, Pradhan was associated with the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi, prior to his association with the IGNOU. He has contributed in the certificate programme launched by IGNOU in 2001 on

Involuntary Resettlement and Rehabilitation, Strengthening of Local Government in Madhya Pradesh.

NIOS's interactive podcast

Coinciding with the launch of its new NIOS website which has been designed in such a way that it not only meets the needs of its learners but is also disabled-friendly, the National Institute of Open Schooling, (NIOS) has launched Mukta Vidya Vani, a pioneering initiative of the for using Streaming Audio for educational purposes. Mukta Vidya Vani on the World WideWeb is a modern interactive, participatory and cost effective programme, involving an academic perspective along with the technical responsibilities of production of audio and video programmes, which are one of the most important components of the multi channel package offered by the NIOS. This will enable a two way communication with any audience having access to an internet connection, from the NIOS studio situated at its Headquarters in Noida. An MoU was also signed between the NIOS and the National Informatics Centre (NIC) with the objective of developing skill-based courses on web designing in accordance with the guidelines for Indian government websites. This will provide vertical and lateral mobility of learners from the school level in the web designing course.

Assam launches Vocational skills training in Schools

Government of Assam (GoA) and Pearson on July 29 announced a joint initiative to provide vocational skills training for young people in schools in Assam. This public-private partnership will serve as a platform for the introduction of the National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF), a more ambitious national program to integrate skills, training and qualifications in schools. The GoA-Pearson undertaking is without

precedent in India, making Assam a progressive leader in reforming education and learning, to improve employment opportunities for young people. Under this initiative, Pearson, will set up vocational skills centers in 10 specially-selected government schools, initially offering two training streams, in retail and computer hardware and IT. The design and implementation of the program has seen close collaboration between all stakeholders, from teachers, academic administrators, students, and trainers as well as officials from GoA. The courses will be introduced for students in standard IX in August 2012, before moving into higher classes with a wider portfolio. The program curriculum will be designed and administered by two Pearson operating companies: IndiaCan, which is one of India's best-known vocational skills providers, with wide experience of training young people; and Edexcel, the UK's largest qualification awarding body, recognized the world over for its rigorous accreditation of courses and students.

“Vocational education will allow young people to develop rewarding careers in multiple fields in our expanding economy, helping themselves as well as Assam.” said Himanta Biswa Sarma, Assam's education minister. Present on the occasion were Assam CM Tarun Gagoi and S Ramadorai, advisor to the Prime Minister on National Skill Development Council, who said: "Vocational education in schools will harness the potential of youth and give them many more avenues for employment as adults.”

Ministry of I&B Sectoral Innovation Council Recommendations

The Council has made 64 recommendations in seven areas concerning the media and entertainment

sector. Some of the key recommendations include a comprehensive policy media policy, that integrates all existing media segments and addresses the emergent issues. The council has recommended to bring out a National Media Policy that addresses the new media landscape. Like medical education and technical education, Media Education be regulated by a new organisation known as Media Education Council, to be a part of I&B. The academic course for media education should be in line with UK/ US Universities and Vocational courses as part of requirement of the industry. The Media Education Council should be assigned the task of setting up curriculum for all levels so that standardised curriculum with national accreditation becomes a possibility.

The Government must have a National Policy for Animation, Gaming and VFX. Film Institutes in the country may be upgraded to Centre of Excellence. In the long term, these Centres of Excellence could become part of a Central University of Films, Broadcasting and Animation by an appropriate legislation. The Government should go for co-production treaties in the animation sector to ensure flow of international projects to India. Ministry could also consider giving responsibility to the Children's Film Society and Doordarshan to produce animated content and create Indian IP.

The Sectoral Innovation Council was set up on 28th July 2011 as part of the Government of India's initiative of declaring 2010- 2020 as the Decade of Innovation. Accordingly, the Government set up a National Innovation Council with Shri Sam Pitroda as Chairman and 16 distinguished members. Government should regulate media education to

ensure orderly growth of the discipline as part of higher education. There is need to make IIMC, FTII and SRFTI into real centres of excellence.

50 centres for training and research

The Expert Committee constituted by the Ministry of HRD, based on the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Council, has suggested establishment of 50 Centres for training and research in frontier areas of Science and Technology. These centres will be a part of existing institutions with full functional, financial and administrative autonomy within the framework of the institutions. These centres will recruit additional faculty and invite experts from abroad for teaching and research. Areas identified are Biomedical sciences and modern biology; computational sciences with emphasis on new and emerging areas; complex system sciences and engineering; Nano science and technology; Electrical engineering and telecommunications; Transportation engineering; Atmospheric sciences including climate modeling; water technology; advanced materials science and technology; energy and environment; manufacturing sciences and engineering; and drugs and pharmaceutical science. The other details for launching the programme are being worked out by the MHRD with concerned departments for financial and administrative approvals.

80 Indian scientists in Higgs Boson research

Indian scientists are also involved in the research for 'Higgs Boson' (popularly known as 'God Particle'). A group of 80 Indian scientists including 30 Ph.D. students from 8 institutions are currently working on the Compact Muon Solenoid

(CMS) Experiment, which is one of the two experiments that have led the research on the Higgs Boson. These institutions are Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai, University of Delhi, Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay, Mumbai, National Institute of Science Education and Research, Bhubaneswar, Panjab University, Chandigarh, Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, Kolkata, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai and Visva Bharati, Santiniketan. Earlier, Indian scientists also participated in the construction of the massive particle accelerator at Geneva [viz. the Large Hadron Collider (LHC)], detector system for the CMS Experiment and the LHC Grid Computing System using which research on Higgs Boson is being carried out. This research falls in the domain of Particle Physics. It is the Higgs particle which imparts mass to all fundamental particles in the Universe. With this finding, therefore, a major milestone in the human understanding of the fundamental constituents of matter and their interaction will be achieved.

MPs Quota for Admission in KVs

Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), with the approval of Board of Governors has implemented a new scheme of Special Dispensation Admission for Members of Parliament in Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) with effect from 20.7.2012. Under the scheme, the dispensation admission quota on the recommendations for each MP has been raised to 6 admissions in an academic year. Such recommendations would be for admissions in Kendriya Vidyalayas located in his/her constituency only. In case there is no

Kendriya Vidyalaya in the constituency of the Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), he/she may recommend these admissions in the KVs located in any neighboring contiguous constituency. However, for Members of the Rajya Sabha, the state from which the Member has been elected would be deemed to be his/her constituency for this purpose. Nominated Members of the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha can recommend 6 cases for admission in any one or more KVs of the country.

Enhancing energy efficiency "crucial" for India's MSME sector

There are an estimated 26 million MSME units providing employment to nearly 70 million people in India and the sector accounts for about 45% of India's industrial production and 40% of exports. However, a large number of these MSME units are energy intensive, with energy accounting for up to 40% of their production costs. In many of these units, the adoption of energy efficient (EE) technology and best operating practices offer enormous potential for energy savings, reduction in CO₂ emissions as well as profitability enhancement. The Small and Medium Enterprises Energy Efficiency Knowledge Sharing (SAMEEEKSHA), a joint forum comprising The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), Embassy of Switzerland, India and Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, is helping MSMEs to become energy efficient. 582,000 tonnes of cumulative reduction of CO₂ levels in the MSME sector has been achieved till date. The goal is to reduce 1,000,000 tonnes of CO₂ in energy-intensive MSMEs by the end of 2014.

India Skills... SPECIAL

Manovikas Community College

A model in making for higher education needs of

MENTALLY CHALLENGED



About 1% of India's 1.2 billion-strong population is affected by developmental disabilities including autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation, learning disabilities and multiple disabilities. Traditionally and historically, most of these people have been deprived of a career choice largely due to absence of a sensitive and responsive vocational education system all these years despite the landmark legislation of The Persons With Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. However, IGNOU's equally path breaking scheme of community colleges (launched in 2009) has provided many a philanthropists/activists a window of opportunity to address the longstanding and unfulfilled demand of vocational and higher education needs of the mentally challenged youth. Among the 50 odd IGNOU recognized community colleges out of over 400 (till end of 2010) that have started vocational programs for disabled students, Delhi-based Manovikas community college holds a promise to emerge as a role-model for mentally challenged says **Autar Nehru** after visiting the place.

Housed in a modest residential building of an East Delhi colony, office of Manovikas charitable society is now also the address of its community college, which was set up in 2010 under the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) scheme of community colleges. Headed by the fiery and seasoned disability activist Vikram Dutt, who has been the consultant to the office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice, Government of India and also chairman of the Advisory Board of the Benaras School for the Deaf, Manovikas society was established in 1997 with the objectives of helping challenged people to lead an independent life. In that pursuit, this NGO has evolved from scratch to this level by consistency of purpose and realizing it through innovations, newer programs and partnerships.

“I was agitated when people would say that the only options for mentally challenged were making of agarbatis, brooms and candles. That was the ABC of vocational education and even careers for these people. And worse, some orthodox

Manovikas Community College

communities thought that this condition is the punishment of past birth and if it was challenged anyway, the person will have to undergo this suffering in the next re-birth as well. Those were the kind of challenges, we wanted to address in Manovikas in early years,” says Dutt, who himself is a spinal injured having motor dysfunction. Perhaps, he has an important point to make for all such parents. Mentally challenged have every right to choice, what they want to be. They need autonomy like anybody; they do have wishes,



Vikram Dutt: A Face in the crowd

preferences and potentials.

However, what has contributed to whatever success Manovikas has achieved or is set to achieve is the 24X 7 involvement of its youth managing secretary, Dr Alok Kumar 'Bhuwan' an alumnus of Osmania University trained in special education system, who was instrumental in setting up of disability cell at NIOS and has also worked on UNDP and UNICEF projects. “We started Manovikas from a basement and a time also came when the going became almost impossible. So, I wrote a mail to all our well-wishers that we are going to shut

Schooling of Disabled Persons

As per the Census 2001, there were a total of 21.9 million persons with disabilities in the country, out of which 10.8 million nearly 50% were reported to be literate. 6.5 million persons with disabilities were in the age group of 5-19 years, out of which 3.3 million which is also nearly 50% persons with disabilities were attending educational institutions. Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), out of the total of 31.49 lakhs children with special needs (CWSN) identified, 26.93 lakhs CWSN are enrolled in schools. SSA has adopted a zero rejection policy. This means that no child having special needs should be deprived of the right to education.

500 Scholarships under Two Schemes to be given to Students with Disabilities in 2012-13

National Handicapped Finance & Development Corporation (NHFDc) is implementing two Scholarship schemes — (1) 1000 Scholarships under Trust Fund & (2) 500 Scholarships under National Fund — on behalf of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India. These scholarships are for students with disabilities (with disability 40% and above) for pursuing professional courses during the academic year 2012-2013. 1000 scholarships under Trust Fund will be awarded in 2012-13 to students with disabilities for professional courses at Graduate and Post Graduate level. 500 Scholarships under National Fund will be awarded in the year 2012-13 to students with disabilities for higher academic/professional or technical courses Ph.D/M.Phil/PG Level/Graduate or at Diploma/Certificate level. Financial assistance can be given for computer with editing software for blind/deaf graduate and post-graduate students pursuing professional courses and for support access software for cerebral palsy students. A student must apply before last date i.e. 31.08.2012. The applicant has to apply online (www.nhfdc.nic.in) for both the scholarship schemes.

Dyslexia Screening Test Junior, India Edition

Pearson Clinical and Talent Assessment, has launched the India edition of their flagship screening test for the Indian market, the Dyslexia Screening Test Junior, India Edition (DST-JINDIA) for school teachers, special educators and psychologists across schools in India. The DST-JINDIA customized version for India is on basis of survey in 11 cities by Pearson. The DST-JINDIA consists of twelve subtests (Rapid Naming, Bead Threading, One Minute Reading, Postural Stability, Phonemic Segmentation, Two Minute Spelling, Backwards Digit Span, Nonsense Passage Reading, One Minute Writing, Verbal Fluency, Rhyme NEW, Vocabulary NEW) which focus to evaluate accuracy and fluency in reading, writing, and spelling. These subtests also assess motor coordination, attention span, reasoning ability and vocabulary skill which are vital for attainment of literacy skills. The Kit with 50 score sheets is priced at Rs 9700 +Vat. Dyslexia is a common disorder that affecting 10% Indian children. Identifying it is a major problem and often the parents come to know of it at a later stage where the scope of support and intervention is reduced. So, it should be identified early. The Pearson test can be applied from age 5.

Manovikas Community College



In the driver's seat: Dr Alok 'Bhuvan'

down. The next morning we got an 'angelic' call from Anil Lal of Home of Hope as to how much money was required by us. After this Dr. Nilima Sabharwal continued supporting us also so did the Hans Foundation and the VSO," tells Dr Bhuman. Manovikas began with rehabilitation services including psychological, neurological and functional assessments and gradually started offering speech therapy, diagnostic and therapeutic services, basic education, counseling and training for parents and caregivers, etc. Helping children with learning disabilities to mainstream them became a major program as scores of children were supported with special educators at the centre. Called Manovikas School for inclusion, the centre innovated a methodology in helping gauge the capabilities of the challenged children and then build on them to provide a mainstream school life. A 30-seat residential respite care centre was also established for prolonged care and offer a respite to parents. Learning self-care, self-reliance, self-respect and dignity is the core philosophy behind the hostel life in Manovikas . According to Dr Alok Bhuman, there

is a need to understand the difference between going by the opinion and self-research, "Often parents or guardians of such children go by the opinion, knowledge and experience of others rather than exploring what their child wants. If he can't tie laces, how he can go to college. They fail to realize that a person like Stephen Hawking can be a noted scientist without able to tie his button or walk." Manovikas education plan for mentally challenged works by identifying the strengths of the child and his needs. A customized education plan is made for every child and then taught in small groups.

So, while these activities are still going strong in the facility, the question of what next was answered by the IGNOU providing it the status of a community college. "While we could put children back in the schools, but the grown up children posed a challenge. In a way, it also motivated us to challenge parental and societal norms of deciding for mentally challenged and resigning to the notion that they need our life-long support. So, when the opportunity came, we made a presentation before the IGNOU committee and our work, facilities and intent fetched us the status of a community college," says Bhuman.

One batch of 30 students have already completed the certificate programs and 26 of them have been even placed in jobs. The college at present offers four job-oriented credit based certificate courses in Basic Business, Hospitality attendants, Office Attendants, and Retail Assistants Programmes. The curriculum,

examination and certification are provided by IGNOU in these courses. A person has to be above 17 years of age and also 8th pass equivalent or above. Among non-credit certificate programs are Personnel Management, communication program, computer program and Peer Sexuality Tutor. For non-credit courses, no entry criteria are needed. As per the community college scheme of IGNOU, the certificate course can be converted in to diploma, associate degree and then degree by adding the prescribed number of credits progressively. The college does offer other courses in disability education, psychology, health and human services, management courses. The course content of is supported by IGNOU's National Centre for Disability Studies.

The community college status and the programs designed as a result have started showing good results. Sharing case studies of two such students, Dr Bhuman emphasizes the importance of respecting the potential and choice of mentally challenged. In the first case, Gaurav, a youth, who at the age of 5 was abandoned by his parents but supported by his aged grandfather and lived in a gurudwara, after enrolling in the hospitality course and passing out, got a job at Haldirams as a regular employee with a decent salary and PF. His parents have accepted him back and he is happy in the family. Another boy (name not shared) was mentally challenged in a well to do family. He enrolled in the Office Attendant course and did well. He got a job in an office, but his family was not enthused

Manovikas Community College



Poonam Natarajan: passionate leadership

as it thought the work and low salary were not in sync with family status. But then they realized, what it means to the boy and in turn them, they supported his decision wholeheartedly and are proud today. “I think the thinking of special educators has to change. We may have to go around the skill, but let's not deny challenged children the opportunity to learn. We are oppressing them by thinking they haven't learnt this, so they can't be taught that. Our education system doesn't allow us to learn about our potential, in contrast, in a number of universities in the west, people design their own courses. We have to find skills that interest them, and also find livelihoods,” says Poonam Natarajan, chairperson National Trust, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment. With programs like that of Manovikas showing evidence that indeed inculcating the sense of belonging,

knowing choice and skilling mentally challenged youth can be supported, proves the argument that a vast majority of such children and youth can lead a community and social life. The RTE while bringing disability within the ambit of 25% reservation and making integrated education mandatory, also allowed education of mentally children to be done from homes. Without going into what activists think, it also means such parents need to become more aware and learn to do what is in the best interest of their children. While these children may need care and support of varying degrees in day today routines, there is merit in devising a personal program plan (research) in helping the child achieve a transition from school to college or from dependency to self-reliance. There may a need of some adjustments, modifications or restructuring but these can become clear only if we set objectives and goals. They need to be exposed to all aspects of student life and have access to career opportunities. If started early, the plan can be more successful. The motivation has to be not only sustained but reinforced around values. The differential learning principles have to be applied. Special schools are not for life, these should prepare children to

take next course of life, stand on their feet. Education of PWD must not be treated as a welfare activity rather it must be a right. In recent years the principle of Integration has been guidance for reforms in the field of disability care and special education and it should be now in our spirit..

“We have a moral duty to remove



Role Model: Stephen Hawking

the barriers to participation for people with disabilities, and to invest sufficient funding and expertise to unlock their vast potential. It is my hope this century will mark a turning point for inclusion of people with disabilities in the lives of their societies” said by Stephen Hawking.

Dutt sums up the state of education in challenged saying access to education, per se, is not the major problem, transport to reach the schools and places of study is. Lack of trained teachers and educator is also a big problem. And

there is need of greater sensitivity amongst educational managers and policy makers. However, in all fairness, giant strides have taken place; and are continuing. 'Have faith: in yourselves and your wards the sky can be the limit.' Disability is not the constraining factor to achievement



NIIT MindChampions' Academy completes 10 years

INDIAN CHESS MOVEMENT

Circa 2000. Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand whom NIIT Ltd had signed as its brand ambassador in 1999, was being felicitated on becoming world champion. Around the same time, Rajendra Pawar, chairman NIIT happened to meet Kirsan Nikolayevich Illyumzhinov, the then president of Kalmykia in the Russian Federation, who promoted chess in schools. Pawar shared the conversation with Vishy and in 2002 the two got together to start NIIT MindChampions' Academy (MCA) with the mission of bringing the game of chess back to its birthplace India. 10 years hence, 1.5 million children from 16600 schools have been initiated into the game.

IF RAJENDERA PAWAR IS TO be believed, Illyumzhinov, FIDE (world chess federation) president told him that in his state (Kalmykia, Russia) children were dropping out, the crime on streets was high and so were suicides. Chess like cricket in India was their pastime, so he made it mandatory for schools. Gradually, the attendance in schools improved and crime and suicide rates came markedly down. Pawar, who through the success of NIIT, created an incredible Indian success story, played it too well with Anand, who as a professional chess was more than inclined to partner and popularize the game. “Around that time we had also been in providing computer education to government schools in Tamil Nadu and other states, so started the game on computers as well and also provided chess boards to schools so that chess clubs could be formed. After this we gave the slogan that if you play well, you can play with

Vishy with the objective of bringing epicenter of chess back to India. And, Vishy literally toured many places including remote areas to encourage the initiative,” said Pawar.

MCA every year organizes a National Chess Master Tournament, which starts with school events, progresses through inter-school, inter-district & inter-state matches and finally, to the national level. Over the last 10 years MCA has organized 15,000 school level tournaments and 5000 district level tournaments. There have been eight annual Chess Masters since 2004 and eight national championships. Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand has personally travelled across the country, motivating school students to play the game of Chess.

“The status of chess has changed greatly with this intervention and by virtue of this initiative I happened to visit 6 to 7 states and interact with



children. There couldn't be a better way of satisfying a lover of the game. It is heartening to note that this legacy is already beginning to show, with young players like Karthikeyan M who is the world champion in the under 12 category. There are many such young talents like him who make India proud and I am confident that they will script greater success stories in the years to come,” added Anand, who was in New Delhi on July 20 to mark the 10th anniversary of NIIT MindChampions' Academy. The union HRD minister Kapil Sibal, who inaugurated the celebratory event said that with Akash tablet, chess can be brought closer to students. It may be mentioned that in 2010, to introduce and teach chess to youngsters IGNOU launched a certificate program with NIIT.

Pawar and Hemant Sethi, President, School Learning Solutions, NIIT made references to a India specific study on impact of playing Chess (by

NIIT MindChampions' Academy completes 10 years



Grandmaster with budding champs

MindChampions' Academy clubs on 11,000 school children across India), carried out by Foundation for Learning Research in Chess in 2010, that confirmed that there exists a strong correlation between the game of Chess and academic excellence.

The event was also marked by felicitation of MCA Chess Masters which included under-12 World Chess Champion with FIDE rating of 2329, Karthikeyan M; Hemant Sharma, an international rated Chess player and champion at Delhi State Open Rapid and Open Blitz Chess Championships 2012; Prabha Rajwade, a talented Chess player from the tribal belt of

Chhattisgarh; Bappi Deb, a FIDE 1742 rated player, who has secured leading position in the 2011 Senior State Chess Tournament, West Bengal and; Rajkumar Shrinjan Singha who is now a professional Chess player with a 1875 FIDE rating.

In words of Viswanathan Anand, "The launch of MindChampions' Academy has been a significant milestone in my association with NIIT. I feel privileged to be part of this movement that has not only enabled schools to use Chess as an academic tool but has also made it possible for me, personally, to take the legacy of Chess to the children in India."

Google Web Academy' in India

Google on July 20 introduced a comprehensive training program for young professionals in India in alliance with NIIT Limited. The program named 'Google Web Academy' (<http://www.niitgooglewebacademy.com/>), aims to bridge the digital skill gap in the country and help students and professionals capitalize on the emerging job market for the online industry.

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

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



Cloud computing: Education technology's new frontier

Technology solutions age so fast that what appeared the smart deployment yesterday is history today. Unlike other sectors, which are riding on the success of information technology and Internet, Education sector particularly in India has remained lukewarm to accept personalized and interactive learning using web-based technology solutions in place of classroom teaching. But with cheaper and effective technologies like cloud computer, tablets and mobiles in offing, the transition may well happen soon.

Autar Nehru interviewed **Mrinmoy Purkayastha**, AVP Marketing of Calsoft Labs, a wholly subsidiary of European engineering and technology consulting major ALTEN at the Cloud Computing Imperative India Summit held in Noida on Aug 2-3.

Cloud computing in education in the Indian context looks very apt; do you see it that way?



Of course. By 2020, aging of world economies would create a skilled manpower shortage of 56.5 million, while India alone will have a labor surplus of 47million. Compared to other countries as it has a relatively younger population with a median age of 25 years. Educating and skilling them is a huge challenge. There are issues of access or regional imbalance, equity and quality. Cloud computing solutions can have a defining role in coping with these challenges. Governments can realize the objectives of increasing reach efficiently to rural areas and with better management control. We in India have one-teacher or two-teacher schools for five primary classes, and faculty shortages across the education spectrum and there has to be technological solution. With 1 billion +

wireless connections (mobile penetration) soon a reality for India, the country can leverage it well to fulfill its education and skilling needs.

Could you please explain exactly is the nature and role of cloud computing?

Cloud computing providers like us provide the infrastructure and platforms on which the applications run through the Internet network. This means if you are an institution, you don't have to deploy computer resources and hardware for storage, separately install and pay for the software applications. You just have to list your requirements of applications and leave it there. The provider will provide you all that a subscription. You have saved on capital expenditure, operational cost, increased convenience to your staff and importantly as it is Internet-based, you can work anytime from anywhere. Similarly, for course content and other student services, cloud computing makes it possible to deliver these services over mobiles, ipads, tablets

and other devices. The only issue in this whole process is that of connectivity, which is getting better by the day and 4G is almost here.

Coming to Calsoft Labs, what are your company's offerings to education providers in India?

Virtual universities have become a reality across the world. Online classrooms create a more student centered environment for learning where students actively participate and discuss topics, ideas and receive them. We have solutions to that level.

For instance, we can provide interactive multi-screen and multi-device live learning sessions for classroom like experience of learning/teaching, then self-learning searchable sessions, whiteboarding capability, collaboration, user and content management etc.

The use of projectors, tablets by both students and staff, digital tools used by educators provide media rich information that encourages interactive learning, online forums allowing collaborative learning with improved student workflows for assignments submission, feedback, learning etc. is already happening, so cloud computing has a big role and impact.

And finally, what are your plans for India?

We are in discussion with some universities and schools. We are finalizing channel partners and in near future we make our presence felt. Initially, we'll focus on private education providers but later will talk to governments as well.



Manish Sharma

AFFORDABLE COMPUTING IS THE NEED OF THE HOUR

OVER THE YEARS THOUGH INDIA has earned its reputation of being an IT superpower, the irony of the situation is that it has been able to do little to bridge the great digital divide between the IT haves and have-nots. Hard to believe, but this remains the truth. Compare this. The overall teledensity of India is whopping 65% whereas the computer penetration rate stands at around 20% and that too, only in urban India. Amongst the major reasons for this dismal picture in India are lack of affordable computing, continuous availability of power, service and support infrastructure etc.

Surprisingly, while there have been many initiatives to increase the penetration of computers in the country, the education sector seems to have taken front stage in terms of increasing the use of computers in the country. However, even though there have been many initiatives pertaining to increase the penetration of computers in the sector, there is a long way to go and many state governments and bodies have taken positive steps to take these initiatives ahead.

Low-cost computing remains the key to increase the penetration of computers in the country and the

education sector also seems to have maintained this as the primary criteria for providing computer access to students. While the cost of computing infrastructure largely depends upon the choice of technology, it is also imperative to keep in mind that the technology also takes into account the other detrimental factors such as power consumption and ease of maintenance for successful penetration of computers in the Indian market. However, affordability reigns supreme.

The key to reduce the cost is to use innovative hardware-software combinations and share the machine with several users. Various innovative solutions are available to lower the cost. These include the use of zero and thin clients. Similarly, one can consider use of free open source software. It is essential to realise the quality and power of free software, which is usually faster and uses less memory space as compared to the priced versions.

Today's PCs are so powerful that the vast majority of people only use a fraction of the computer's capacity. This unused capacity can be tapped so that it can be simultaneously used by many people. Each person connects their own monitor, keyboard and mouse to a hardware device which is then connected to the shared PC. Each student gets a full PC experience. The solution is easy to deploy, rugged, and only uses 1 watt of electricity. The low electricity usage is critical because electricity in India can be expensive

and often unreliable.

Put simply, the future of affordable computing lies in doing more with less. The bottom line is to push for technologies that can lower the price, put smart and simple applications into use, and above all, push for a new marketing strategy that can make IT affordable. From a technological point of view, it will be quite a challenge to offer so many systems in one package to the people at an affordable cost.

We at NComputing tap the unused power of computers to create full-fledged computers, thus substantially reducing hardware and maintenance costs by 75%. It is a perfect solution to leverage power of cloud computing as well. Users need a small device to connect the virtual desktop unit to the host computers. NComputing server software and VSpace server provide the most efficient and highest density available on market today, allowing as many as 100 concurrent sessions on a single instance of a given operating system. Our unit uses only 1 watt of electricity compared to 110 watts for a regular PC.

The time seems ripe for both the government and non-governmental sectors to create a movement for affordable computing. We should perhaps also think of an index that can measure the social success of affordable computing. It is high time that rural India became a part of the Indian IT revolution.

The writer is vice-president (Asia Pacific), NComputing

SKILL DEVELOPMENT--Challenges for vocational skill providers



Even though the Government is fully aware of the opportunities and challenges in skilling India's youth (between 250 million to 400 million to be trained for entering into employment market by 2025) and has laid down enabling policy, incentives and institutional frameworks, yet we don't see the corresponding surge in skill training at grassroots.

Navin Bhatia, analyzes the whole issue:

IN RECENT YEARS THE GOVERNMENT of India gave skills education a big push by launching a National Skill Development Mission, announced a national policy on skill development and established National Skill Development Coordination Board (NSDCB), NSDC, etc. More recently with the idea of mainstreaming vocational education, it also announced NVEQF and the also brought the much delayed National Manufacturing Policy. And given the enabling framework and opportunity size, the vocational training or skills education should have become national rage. But unfortunately that is not the case. Curiously the big business groups are not interested. While there are many business plans on paper both funded and unfunded most ventures are struggling to make the first few institutes sustainable and discovering a profitable and replicable model. Where is the catch?

Let us consider the economics of this business and start with the revenues: a person looking for vocational skills is likely to be a 15-25 year old, lower to lower-middle class youth, with an educational background ranging from a school drop-out to a bachelors degree

from a tier-3 institute. The youth is probably barely employable in his/her current state except in jobs that entail manual labour or very low levels of value addition. Post vocational skilling, employment as a shop floor worker, a construction worker, a retail shop or hospitality/tourism industry employee, a trained employee is likely to earn wages in the range of R5,000 to R10,000 per month depending upon the nature and the location of the work. The youth's desire to pay for this vocational training then is dependent on the difference he/she sees between the compensation potential before and after being trained. And therein lies the crux of the issue. Are organisations able to see any value difference at all between employing an untrained youth versus one who has received formal training in a vocational venture? If yes, what is the quantum of the value difference and what compensation premium does it command? This will depend upon matching the demand and supply at many levels: nature of skills what is required by the organisation and what is the person trained in; quality of skilling and perceived value addition, geography the location of the vocational

institution and the demand.

Addressing this challenge calls for a strong industry-trainer partnership helping ventures understand local demand, in identifying skills requirement and in curriculum design, faculty training and internship provisions. Even a very strong educationist, if devoid of strong linkages with potential employers, will find it difficult to offer a 'value-for-money' proposition to its students. Today, this is a major weak link in the business model and many companies, in their individual capacities, do not see adequate payback from such a linkage compared to cost and control of doing it in-house. There is a clear case of conflict between individual objectives versus social benefits as with economies of scale and capability transfer of vocational institutions that can bring together corporate know-how and leverage government programmes and incentives to build scale and quality.

The other key issue on the revenue side is of facilitating affordability amongst potential students. There are various ways of ensuring this part payment by employer, widespread availability of vocational education loans or

Challenges for vocational skill providers

vouchers/coupons by the government. These do not exist today.

Now let's consider the cost side of the argument: even with a robust demand model, the fee structures are such that they demand cost consciousness while delivering robust quality. Real estate, infrastructure and its maintenance and teaching, faculty recruiting, training and compensation costs tend to be the highest costs for these institutions. Effective capacity utilisation on the infrastructure side, e.g. running multiple sessions in a day, shared premises, etc, are an imperative. For faculty management, local recruitment combined with more centralised hub-and-spoke models for training and curriculum development have the potential to reduce these costs.

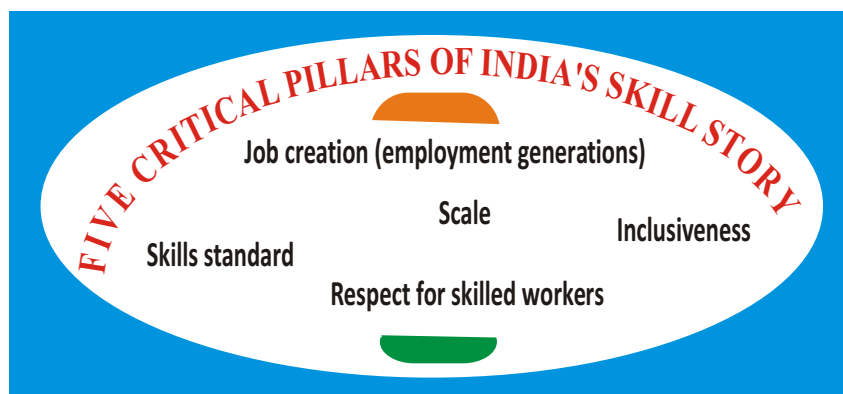
One key element that cuts across the revenue and cost side is the curriculum design: treading the fine balance between creating something relevant and value-adding without making it too long or complex to make it uneconomical. Disturbingly, many institutions look to foreign partners for easy access to curriculum design. In addition, a foreign partnership is a great marketing tool. However, given the student backgrounds in India, their

education levels, language constraints, computer literacy, etc, as well the needs of Indian corporatedegree of mechanisation, process complexity, etcforeign curricula may not be the best solution.

Considering the national significance of the issue, the government's role in the issue is worth consideration. Here moving away from an active player or a blanket subsidiser to an enablerthrough patient capital, increased tax breaks, student financing, assisting building of accreditation and quality control frameworks, and providing linkages between vocational and mainstream education can be powerful levers, roles which require more focus.

The stakes for India are high. The corporate need for a skilled force is critical. The opportunity for education entrepreneurs is large. Also, the agenda is quite clear for all three entities: educationalists, future employers and the government. All it requires is coordinated and concerted intervention from all. Not an easy ask. But when the prize is so big, the task rarely is easy!

(Author is MD Navkar Skills & advisory board member of our magazine)



Band Baja Baraat courses in real life

Hyderabad based-Rachnoutsav Events Academy has become the first institute in South Asia to offer integrated learning program in wedding planning along with event management. It has entered into an academic partnership with the Leeds Metropolitan University,UK for this purpose. Under the linkage, Rachnoutsav Events Academy would offer the Foundation as well as the Advanced Courses in Event Management, Sports Event Management and Wedding Planning programs at its campus in Hyderabad. Leeds Metropolitan University will support and assist in the structuring and implementation of the planned curriculum as well as developing joint workshops, staff training programs and assisting in overseas internships. The understanding will allow both organizations to identify opportunities for faculty training, academic cooperation, student visits to UK and sharing of experience and expertise. As part of the exchange program, students from Rachnoutsav will get an opportunity to visit UK at their expense for a brief period to give them global academic exposure.

It may be mentioned that event management is a multibillion dollar sunrise industry with many opportunities. It is growing at 14 to 15% nationally both in metro cities and in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. Advancements in technology are helping the industry in all the spheres production, multi-location, exhibitions and marketing. The industry is increasingly getting more professional and corporatized with a compounded annual growth of 14%, it is projected to be Rs. 5000 crores by 2015



R C Dalal,
Executive Director of JD Institute of
Fashion Technology, New Delhi.

INTERIOR DESIGNING HAS BECOME popular as a specialization only in recent years. Interior designing is one of the most creative and challenging design careers on offer today. It is a program which provides the cultural needs and aspirations of human living activities. Interior Designing is concerned with the range of commercial and domestic interiors starting from hospitality, entertainment, retail, transport industries to commercial offices and domestic interiors. The course covers areas like foundation art, furniture, building materials, cultural anthropology, design and communication, TRD (Technical representation of drawing), Auto CAD, 2D, 3D, Space planning, Graphic design, lightings, plumbing, interior services, climate, landscape, material specification and costing etc.

For making career in Interior Design one must have an understanding of building construction techniques and the way the services are integrated within the structure of a building. The knowledge of such techniques will enable a person to control and design all the factors that affect the internal space and layout. Therefore a course can help.

Career opportunities in Interior Designing

For instance in our case, course explores all aspects of the spaces in which people reside, work and play.

Career prospects: Interior Architecture delivers students with complete detailed knowledge in context of building of structures and understanding of load bearing walls. There are plenty of career options. As there is a dearth in this industry there is a high demand for interior architects. Career prospects range from starting one's own firm and taking projects to working as a designer for malls, hotels and design companies.

The scope of Interior designing has widened with increased awareness among the corporate companies and with changing attitude of people towards good living and fashion.

Job Prospects: In our country there has been massive increase in demand for professional interior designers in the areas like houses, bungalows, malls, apartments, villas, companies, etc. The demand is due to boom in the retail industry. The job opportunities are upbeat and positive for professional and trained architects. Interior Designers can get employment in architecture firms, builders, public works department, hotel and resort chains, hospitals, town planning bureau, regional and metropolitan development works, private consultancies, theatres and exhibition organizers. For getting well with this field one must be up to date with things and technologies which are new in market to bring about a blend of according to the clients requirement.

Scope: A candidate can work as a freelance, a junior designer, design

assistant, etc. They can also work as a designer with manufacturers of home elements such as kitchen and bathrooms in the interior design industry. Successful completion of the interior design courses in India can open up opportunities for self-employment as the market is ready to absorb more and more interior designers.

Eligibility: To do a degree course in Interior Designing, the minimum qualification is 10+2 in any discipline. The candidate should also have a sense in color, style, comfort. For being an interior architect one has to be very imaginative, creative, self motivated and good at listening.

Skills Required: In today's scenario every career involves expertise in the particular field which one is opting as their profession in the mere future. Therefore one who is undertaking this course should be creative and imaginative enough as these are the two very important as well as basic requirement to excel in this field. However this is such a field which also requires some in born qualities which can be polished further by nurturing it in institutions where interior architecture design is taught.

Remuneration: Interior design is an immensely rewarding profession. Earnings for interior designers vary widely depending on the type of design they do. Earnings for beginners can range from; Rs. 5000/- to Rs. 8000/- while established designers get Rs.50,000 to Rs. 75,000. A master of the trade can really earn a handsome amount after getting settled down.



**Aptech Ltd CEO & MD
Ninad Karpe Talks to
Curriculum Magazine**

Aptech's English language learning goes global

Aptech English is comparatively a recent entrant and is currently under a rigorous R&D process of segmenting needs. For example in a same geography, in similar socio-economic condition, two different professional groups, one say in customer satisfaction and another in community service, looking out for basic spoken English, would have two different needs to meet their professional requirements. So you can gather the opportunity segments across all combinations. Till now, we have serviced over ten thousand students which is our basic base of analyzing opportunities.

importance of English language there, as they are an economy majorly aiming at foreign markets and thus a common platform of negotiating communication is a need there. But India with, foreign service based industries (20% higher than China) revised education systems, focus on liberalized and competitive economy, rising percentage in world trade (approx 2% in 2011) is today, the fastest growing free market democracy. Hire purchase, Telemarketing, Direct shopping, Plastic card purchasing, Inclination towards modern lifestyles are new trends of the Indian market which is the best foster ground for an English teaching environment.

1. Aptech as a brand is known for animation education, in your view, how long will it take to it to reach the same reputation in English language teaching?

Aptech is no alien to several fields of education and it is but obvious that Aptech teaching English would be a wildfire lit by its own brand kindler. However the levels of teaching, the special attention paid to content, faculty and degree of customization, are bound to make it a huge player in English teaching environment and the reach would be beyond competition. Whereas teaching English is a more generic and united way of looking at it, we are actually using a language teaching method to propagate communication in a global perspective.

2. It is some years that Aptech ventured into this segment with takeover of English Learning Academy, how many students would have benefitted from your academy? As a business opportunity, what is the size of English language market in various segments like overseas education seekers, domestic BPOs & KPOs, purely domestic service industry needs?

3. You have also ventured outside India for teaching English in foreign countries, could you please elaborate on this?

25% of the world population speaks English and out of that maximum 8% speak English as their native language or uses it as the first language for communication, so the scope of untapped market is immense and beyond the capacity of saturation. English not only enjoys associate status but is the most important language for national, political and commercial communication.

4. As one of the largest English speaking countries in the world, what are our strengths, weaknesses and opportunities? Is China going to overtake us here, too?

The consciousness of the utility of this language is the biggest strength and opportunity today. China currently has about 10 billion population in excess of India with Mandarin being the most widely spoken language in the world. There is a definite awareness of the

5. English language in itself offers excellent career options, particularly as a teacher of this language, your thoughts?

The question is self-explanatory. As a teacher, it is a huge opportunity to utilize this market already laid out.

6. Finally, can you share with us the courses and options Aptech English Program offers to various categories' of aspirants?

We have five preparatory courses or say levels namely: General English Course Beginners, Spoken English Pre Intermediate, Spoken English Upper Intermediate, Business Communication. Then we have Test preparation for TOEFL, First level preparatory course in IELTS, Second level preparatory course in IELTS, Advanced preparatory course 1 in IELTS, Advance preparatory course 2 in IELTS

St. Xavier Mumbai's 3-day mega event 'Malhar' from Aug 17

'Malhar', the Inter-Collegiate festival of St. Xavier's College, will be held from 17th to 19th August, 2012. GETIT Infoservices Pvt. Ltd., the leader in directional advertising and pioneer of Yellow Pages in India, brings method to the mayhem as the official information partner for the festival. Malhar-Getit Helpline 4444-4444 will guide the 'trotters' of the 'Malhar Local' as they navigate their way through the 'Malhar Local', as the festival has been fondly named. From answering participants' generic queries about the festival to giving specifics about the sub-events, the helpline will serve as one-stop-platform for all the information related to the event.

XLRI's new brand equity

XLRI, the premier private B School in India, has unveiled its new brand identity. The new logo that has been developed is a modern and stylised representation of the traditional XLRI logo and it consists of two primary logos (horizontal name logo and shield logo) and a tagline. The original logo of the institute was developed in early 1950s by the founding fathers. Embedded in the new horizontal name logo, the refined category descriptor 'Xavier School of Management' seeks to underscore XLRI's standing as a more inclusive management education institution whilst retaining the name of the patron saint Saint Xavier. The tagline -'For the Greater Good'is a reminder of why XLRI exists.

On the occasion of unveiling the new brand identity Fr. E Abraham S.J., the Director of XLRI said 'The updated

brand identity of XLRI connotes the institution's futuristic outlook whilst retaining the old 'Jesuit Heritage. The new brand identity also represents the institute's clear focus and direction that allow greater freedom for the brand to grow nationally and globally'.

Ensure we get into Parliament fast

Participants of the first batch of India-Women in Leadership (i-WIL), a 10-week certificate course in political leadership for women at IIM Bangalore, visiting Delhi for field exposure, on August 7, made an appeal to the Indian Prime Minister to ensure expeditious passing of the Women's Reservation Bill.

“We are certain we are the cusp of history with the imminent passing of the historic Women's Reservation Bill that has seen the onslaught of Indian patriarchs. We take this opportunity to make a fervent plea to you to ensure this celebration of a historic reform happens soon,” the women said in a letter to Dr Manmohan Singh, which was unveiled at a press meet here.

“We strongly believe that gender equality in governance is a crucial step in achieving the vision of an equal and empowered society,” it further said.

MaGE, PNB to offer Banking Training Program

Manipal Global Education Services (MaGE), in association with Punjab National Bank, announced the launch of 'Diploma in Banking' program, a customised one year full time training program on various areas of banking and finance that is designed to equip students with necessary domain knowledge in Banking, and also enhancing competency and

skills. The program includes nine months of intensive campus training and three month internship at a branch of PNB. The first batch will commence in September 2012.

Besides domain knowledge, students will also undergo intensive grooming and soft skills training. On successful



completion of the program, students will be awarded a Post Graduate Diplomain Banking and Finance, awarded by Manipal University and will be absorbed in JMG Scale-I at the Bank. T

Seminars for prospective sports professionals

Pro4Sport Solutions (P4SS), pioneers in high-performance sports coaching at the grassroots in India, has initiated a series of seminars on sports courses and careers in education institutions to create awareness about the different sports related courses students can pursue, the best universities and colleges in India and abroad for pursuing these sports courses, as well as the varied career options students can choose from in the sports field. The initiative is part of P4SS's marketing drive to raise the profile of sports in India.

In P4SS's first of this series, it organised a seminar at the SGTB Khalsa College, Delhi University on 3rd



August. More than 50 participants from various colleges of the Delhi University and a number of working professionals attended the seminar. The seminar was a prelude to SGTB Khalsa College's highly popular short-term course on Sports Economics & Marketing. The classes for the course begin in the third week of August 2012.

Speaking about this initiative, P4SS Co-founder & Partner Aman Dhall said that this platform provides a great opportunity for the students to identify and plan for a sports career from an early age. "There has been a sudden surge in the number of people looking to make a career in the sports field. There is dearth of information on varied career options one can choose from within this field, as well which are the best colleges and universities in India and abroad that fit their needs and aspirations. The seminars will help prospective sports professionals to develop a better understanding of what the sports field offers for them."

INDIA CALLING: MRIS, Gurgaon holds an Inter School event to celebrate I-Day

Manav Rachna International School (MRIS), Gurgaon held Independence Day celebrations on the occasion of 64th



Independence Day amid cheers of students and the participating schools. MRIS organized INDIA CALLING, an Inter School Competition for children, with an aim to educate children more about India. Around 20 Schools across NCR participated in this competition which included students from Nursery till Grade XII.

The events were split into three days 7 to 9 August 2012. The creativity and enthusiasm of all the participants was astounding as they walked the ramp in different state costumes, wonderfully traced the monuments of India, portrayed various national symbols through their rangoli and amazed all with their knowledge about their country. This inter school competition, centered on the main theme of INDIA CALLING, was indeed a wonderful insight on what our children think of their country.

The activities planned included - Dressing Up as a National Symbol, Mama I Love You, Fancy Dress on the Tribes of India, Patriotic Song, Silent March, Fusion Dance, Street Play and Debate.

Dhriti Malhotra, Principal of the school said "These events will bring out our country's cultural spirit in children and also test their traditional values. Our leaders fought very hard and it was through them only that we are living a free existence today. We at MRIS took this initiative as a remembrance to their effort and their supreme sacrifice" she said.

Presidency Challenge Cup 2012



Keen to nurture the talents of the youth and provide them necessary exposure, the Presidency Group of Institutions, Bangalore holds a competition of the highest standards named Presidency Challenge Cup since 2008, the year of its inception. On 24-25 July more than 100 schools participated in various co-curricular activities resulting in the Presidency Challenge Cup 2012 NIMHANS Convention Centre, Bangalore. Competitions including Wordsmith (spell bee), Elocution (prose & poem), Quiz, and War of Words (Debate) were organized. Former Indian cricket star Javagal Srinath inaugurated while as Giri Balasubramaniam, who incidentally holds seven Limca records to his credit for achievements in the area of quizzing hosted the event.

Toyota Technical Training Institute (TTTI) on July 30, 2012 conferred academic degrees to 63 students the third batch - on the successful completion of its 3 year training course (2009-2012). Convocation ceremony was graced by Sudha Murthy, Chairperson, Infosys Foundation.



Only 21% MBAs employable

A nationwide study of marks secured by 2264 MBAs who sat for tests by recruiting companies found only that only 21% of them could make the grade. The previous study of 2007 by MeritTrac placed employability index at 25%. The students representing over 100 B-

Schools beyond the Top25, were tested by MeritTrac on standardised tests in Verbal ability, Quantitative ability and Reasoning on behalf of recruiting companies. Examination of 'AICTE Approval Process Hand Book: 2012-13' reveals that the number of MBA seats in India has grown almost four fold--from

94704 in 2006-07 to 352571 in 2011-12 resulting in a 5-year compounded annual growth rate of 30%. To benchmark the current state of employability of management graduates, MBAUniverse.com and MeritTrac teamed up to conduct the research. For purposes of this study, pre recruitment test scores of 2,264 candidates were analysed by MeritTrac to assess how they fared on the three tests in terms of the average percentage scores and pass-through rates. Overall average percentage score obtained by MBAs in Verbal ability, Quantitative ability and Reasoning was 52.58%, 41.17% and 37.51% respectively. "The results of 2012 employability report covering 2264 B-schools students from 29 cities are quite startling. This report clearly brings out the employability gaps across various competencies and highlights the need for scientific examinations and tests to align the candidate skills to employability metrics." says S Murlidhar, CEO and Director, MeritTrac Services. The MeritTrac MBAUniverse Employability Index study of MBAs will now be conducted once every two years.

4th International Conference by IIT Delhi on Excellence in School Education

For the first time since its inception in 1961, *Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi*, planned a conference in 2009 for school education with a belief that **"Higher Education cannot perform unless school system perform"**. The intention was to bring together the practitioners and researchers around the globe under one roof and give them a platform to disseminate their findings and initiate a reaction for further research and pedagogical developments.

And the response has been astonishing, what we can term as the convergence of the industry and academia. With 450 papers received, we witnessed a tremendous desire among domain experts to contribute to the school domain, with participation from around 700 schools, we found a similar desire among participants to absorb and incorporate the learning for the benefit of schools.

Unlike the 1st conference which had a broad underlying theme, 2nd and 3rd version of the conference in 2010 and 2011 respectively was more focused on the leadership and practices adopted by the schools

The 4th International Conference being organized by IIT Delhi to be held in November, 2012 focuses on "Systems and Processes". This conference takes off from the third international conference which focused on the theme of "Transformational Leadership". Leadership in education, as in most other domains, is the catalyst in an educational system.

This year the conference will have parallel workshops to sensitize the other two stakeholders viz. Teachers and Parents on the importance of working together and in synchronization with the school leader.

The conference is designed by Dr Harish Chaudhry, Professor, IIT Delhi. He is the pioneer of the movement on value education and good education practices which started as a workshop in IIT Delhi and now has touched more than 2500 school Principals from India and Abroad in the form of Principal Training Programs, International Study Tours and Teacher Training Programs.



To know more detail about the conference log on to www.educexcellence.org

University of Cincinnati Star



Out of the 1300 international applications received by the University of Cincinnati (UC), the Review Committee of the university which

annually awards over US \$1million for international undergraduate students has chosen Anurag Gogineni as the most deserving candidate. Anurag will receive a full tuition scholarship of US \$25,000, renewable for four years, for a



End Piece

total value of US \$100,000. He will be pursuing his Bachelor's degree at UC which commences in August 2012.

RTE Campaign

Swachha, a Delhi based not-for-profit organisation that has been working on environmental, social development and active citizenship issues with the youth is spreading awareness about RTE. The third phase of Swachha's Right to Education Campaign has been running successfully. The RTE campaign is spearheaded by college students, who have, in the past 2 years, enrolled over 100 children in government schools, conducted street plays and group discussions with marginalised communities, conducted surveys on government schools' conditions and filed cases regarding violations of the RTE Act with the DCPCR.

During the course of the campaign, the team of volunteers have been actively involved in raising awareness about the RTE act through street plays across communities in Delhi, conducting advocacy oriented work and reaching out to Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) and local authorities to fully enforce the Act, and carrying out admissions of disadvantaged children to basic and elementary schools.

Bio-Digester based Eco-friendly toilets

One lakh bio-toilets will be installed in about 300 backward Gram Panchayats of the country in the next two years to make them open defecation free. According to Rural Development minister, Jairam Ramesh, the project will entail a cost of 150 crore rupees in the first phase. Similarly, railways will adopt bio-toilets in all new railways coaches and to share half the cost of retrofitting all existing 50,000 coaches in the next four to five

years. A MoU has been signed between DRDO and Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation for Bio-Digester based Eco-friendly toilets developed by DRDO. The Minister said there are three dimensions to sanitation challenge in India and the solution must be found with an obsession to tackle the same. Referring to the fact that 60 percent of all

open defecations in the world happen in India, Ramesh promised to make the country open defecation free in the next ten years. He said, 11 million passengers travel every day by train and at present waste is dumped directly on to the tracks because of the existing toilet system in trains. The Minister said the third aspect of the sanitation problem is that there are still 15 lakh in-sanitary



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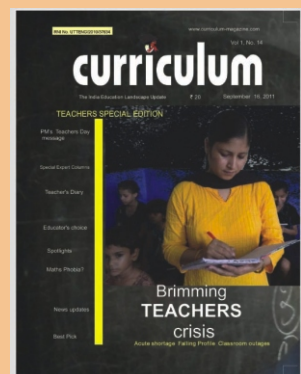
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