

“Integrate Skill Labs in the various district level colleges to include the rural and semi-urban youth in the Skills Movement,”

Says, **BIKRAM DASGUPTA**, Founder & Executive Chairman, Globsyn Group

According to the India Labour Report 2009, 1.4 billion youth is expected to enter the country's labour force by 2026. Around three million students are added to Indian workforce every year. Despite deceleration in the broader economy, India is set to create more than a million jobs across various sectors. Though this sounds a promising figure, the industry perspective differs. Only 10-15 percent of them are considered employable by the industry.

With the growth rate expected to hit a record low figure in a decade, India is

in the middle of a crippling economic slowdown. But, it is unlikely to hit the hiring pattern. Companies are on the constant look out for skilled manpower so as to cut down their training costs. Multi-skilled people are given more preference in all fields.

It is a sorry fact that around 53 percent of the Indian youth faces a serious problem of skill deprivation, thus leading to the industry academic gap. With globalisation providing huge opportunities to the Indian youth, Indian youth need to up their employability quotient to meet the growing demands of the industry. With government allowing FDI in multi-brand retail, we expect that there will be huge demand for workforce for that particular sector. As reflected through the figures, availability of labour will not be a major problem. What is of concern is the absence of skills to meet the global standards. There is a need to groom the students with specific add on training so as to refine their existing skills.

To combat this issue, there is a major debate on how to bridge the industry — academic demand and supply gap. One of the approaches is the shift of the Indian education system from the current teacher-centric system, to the more holistic and robust

learner-centere instructional methodology. Further to this, emphasis should be given to vocational education in colleges.

Colleges today should pay equal importance to life and work skills along with regular academics.

One of the breakthrough ideas would be to integrate skill labs in the various district level colleges so as to include the rural and semi-urban youth in the skills movement. This will help the industry to address this skill gap by up-skilling and cross-skilling the students. The objective is to complement the existing curriculum followed by the colleges and groom the student to meet all the professional demand at the workplace right from day one of his office life.

The Indian government too, has gauged the potential of skilled manpower. Therefore, the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) was formed as a part of the coordinated approach to skill development to synergise and enhance industry and employer participation in skill development. As a part of this, NSDC has taken up the mandate of skilling 500 million people by 2022.

Considering the present scenario, collaboration of the skill training institutes with the industry is extremely essential. The corporates need to recognize the importance of certified skilled workers. The industry at this hour needs innovative solutions from the academia to meet their business needs of higher productivity and lower costs without compromising on efficiency. ■

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