

Skills training ~ the new trend

One of the major challenges, if India were to keep its economic promise and dream, would be to create a workforce geared to respond to the needs of a highly globalised economy, writes rahul dasgupta

THE Indian economy is going through a rough patch – a reflection of the turmoil in the global economy and the ongoing Euro crisis – but this does not in any way impact on the promise of the country's growth story in the long run. One of the major challenges, if India were to keep its economic promise and dream, would be to create, in very large numbers, a skills-enabled workforce geared to respond to the needs of a highly globalised economy. Numerous studies have shown that nation-states with higher levels of a skilled workforce are able to adjust more effectively to the challenges and opportunities.

According to a report by the Planning Commission, the National Sample Survey 61st Round results show that among those between the ages of 15 and 29 years, only about two per cent are said to have received formal vocational training and another eight per cent are said to have received non-formal vocational training. This indicates that very few young people actually get jobs with any kind of formal vocational training. This proportion of trained youth is one of the lowest in the world. The corresponding figures for industrialised countries are much higher, varying between 60-90 per cent of the youth in the 20-24 age group.



One reason for this poor performance is the near exclusive reliance upon a few training courses with long durations (two to three years) covering

around 100 skills. In China, for example, there are about 4,000 short duration modular courses that provide skills more closely tailored to employment requirement.

While the government of India has embarked on an aggressive plan to pursue the cause of Skill Development with a multi-pronged approach, under aegis of the Skill Development Mission, with an agglomeration of programmes and appropriate structures aimed at enhancing training opportunities of new entrants to the labour force from the existing 2.5 million in the non-agricultural sector to 10 million per year, the private sector is also gearing up to address this opportunity.

Eastern India is also waking up to the skill shortage being faced in the country and this region in particular. As a "not-only-for-profit" company, Globsyn Skills, one of the first equity-based joint venture organisations with the National Skill Development Corporation, a Union ministry of finance initiative, has taken a lead role in spreading the benefits of skills training in a number of areas identified. Till June this year, Globsyn trained around 10,000 youth.

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