

# Dr. R Chenraj Jain



## Dr. R Chenraj Jain

Chairman, The JGI Group

President, Jain University Trust

### 1. How do you see the Indian engineering education scenario? What do you think are its strengths?

"A scientist dreams to make this world better and an Engineer makes that dream true."

India has an extremely well developed education system and every year a considerable number of qualified professionals are produced by this system who hold many responsible positions not only inside the country but in many other countries in the world too. India has always been a favourite global destination for educational purpose and every year hundreds of international students come to India to pursue their higher studies. For countries like USA, UK, France, Germany, Canada and Australia - India is a great knowledge sharing platform and following the footsteps of the best educational institutes of the world most modern Indian universities and professional study institutes have developed an educational structure that not only provides the students with the best quality education but also help them to develop the necessary skills important for achieving success in almost every sphere of life. Engineering education in India has seen tremendous growth over the past decade, both in number of students and number of colleges. The recent growth in Indian engineering education has been overwhelmingly due to privately funded educational institutions rather than publicly funded ones.

Engineering education started in India during the British era. In India the first engineering college was established at Roorkee, known as Thomson Engineering College in 1847. In early times emphasis was laid on Civil Engineering. The Indian institutes of higher studies like the IIT and IIMs and a number of other advanced research and training institutes now hold prestigious positions among the global institutes for advanced studies and students graduating from these institutions are in demand in the most advanced countries in the world.

The admiration and brand equity that Indian knowledge and technology sector has earned overseas is enough testimony of Indian competence in global higher education sector and with proper planning and scholarly execution the country can still improve a lot to establish itself as the undisputed leader in the sector of higher and professional education.

Indian higher education has been at its best in the field of software development and IT communication and Indian software and IT professionals have an overwhelming presence all over the world. Only the city of Bangalore has more software engineers than the Silicon Valley and India has more software developers and IT professionals than any other country in the world.

As per the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), 401,791 engineers passed out from different engineering institutes or colleges in 2003. The number increased to 464,743 in 2004-05. Engineering colleges in India have been growing at 20 per cent per year. Five Indian states Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala account for 69 per cent of India's engineers.

### 2. What are the major challenges faced by the Indian education system in today's scenario?

When in 1991, we started to liberalise our economy deregulation, we didn't realise that the private entrepreneurs will come forward and build an economy which is going to be the key to global economy in the next 10-15 years. Today we are growing at 5.4 percent, we hope to grow at ranges 6.5 percent to 7 percent in next couple of years and lot of credit goes to deregulation, liberalisation, private entrepreneurs and innovations.

India's improved education system is often cited as one of the main contributors to the economic rise of India. Much of the progress, especially in higher education and scientific research, has been credited to various public institutions. The private education market in India is merely 5% although in terms of value is estimated to be worth \$40 billion in 2008 and will increase to \$68-70 billion by 2012.

Today the challenge is to deregulate education. Education is the only area where we haven't focused on economies of scale, it is all economies of scale we need to deregulate. We need Public Private Partnerships, we need seamless connectivity between vocational education and higher education if India has to fulfill its promise of sustaining its influence over the dynamic changing global economy.

India continues to face stern challenges. Despite growing investment in education, 25% of its population is still illiterate; only 15% of Indian students reach high school, and just 7%, of the 15% who make it to high school, graduate. The quality of education whether at primary or higher education is significantly poor as compared with major developing nations. As of 2008, India's post-secondary institutions offer only enough seats for 7% of India's college-age population, 25% of teaching positions nationwide are vacant, and 57% of college professors lack either a master's or PhD degree.

As of 2011, there are 1522 degree-granting engineering colleges in India with an annual student intake of 582,000,[8] plus 1,244 polytechnics with an annual intake of 265,000. However, these institutions face shortage of faculty and concerns have been raised over the quality of education.

Time is running out and we have to act.

### **3. What are the strategies involved in building entrepreneurs through education?**

Recognising the need to invest into creating and building Youth Entrepreneurship in the country, Governments and international agencies have embraced long term agendas to co-operate and collaborate in formulation of strategies and implementation plans for building training programs, building awareness amongst the youth and the families and empowering the youth with the required skills and knowledge to pursue entrepreneurship as an career option.

Though people say and believe that Leadership is born and cannot be learnt, the saying may not hold ground in all circumstances. When it comes to Youth and Entrepreneurship, a sustained effort to build leadership or entrepreneurial ship definitely helps and yields results. Youth Entrepreneurship is an amalgamation of attitude, character, behaviour, passion, natural orientation towards entrepreneurship and leadership sharpened by training and building awareness and skills necessary to become entrepreneurs.

Creating and building a Youth Entrepreneurial culture in the society calls for two pronged strategy. The first and foremost platform for building the awareness and initiating the Youth into the concept of Youth Entrepreneurship is by investing into Entrepreneurship Education. This involves creating and including Entrepreneurial and Management studies at all levels of education. Building the right content and syllabus and making it available to the teaching communities, training the teachers and counsellors to become Entrepreneurial educators and providing them with the infrastructure and facilities required would be some of the action points.

One of the most significant aspects of Enterprise education in which JGI has already set a precedent is to involve industry and business organisations into the Youth Entrepreneurship programs at College level as these provide an opportunity for the Youth to get hands on experience and increase their awareness of the business and economic environment.

Some of the initiatives that we have undertaken at JGI are

- Setting up idea pools
- Providing education and industry interface to students to help them gauge the magnitude of practical challenges
- Fostering free thinking environment
- Progressive syllabi to promote lateral thinking
- Equipping them with necessary resources through platforms to help them implement their ideas

Apart from introducing Enterprise education, the Youth Entrepreneurship strategy has got to address the issue of building Entrepreneurship awareness and culture amongst the youth. Creating an Entrepreneurial spirit amongst the youth can be done with the help of media and communication. At JGI, holding awareness programs, Orientation camps, group discussions, specific campaigns, promoting Youth Entrepreneurship events at all possible platforms as well as instituting young achievers awards and competitions are some of the effective ways already implemented. Youth meets, Seminars, Conferences, Festivals, fairs show a high participation of JGI students. We also periodically interview successful entrepreneurs (already incubated at JGI Ventures) and young starters in our media to build the awareness and enthusiasm amongst the youth as well as change the perception of Entrepreneurship in the family, society as well as at the individual level.

### **4. What, in your view, is required by the Indian education system to bridge the talent gap?**

To bridge the talent gap, Indian education system can adopt following strategies:

- Compulsory vocational courses
- Frequent revision of syllabi
- Intensive training of teaching faculty
- Compulsory industry training

#### **5. What are strategies used to inculcate the ESDM industry among students?**

We are in the process of setting up specialized lab and a finishing school pertaining to ESDM in addition to our existing world class research centers under Jain University pertaining to Emerging technologies, Disaster Mitigation, Advanced Studies in Biosciences, Pure and Applied Sciences, Social Sciences and Education and Aerospace Engineering and Management. This will help the students to acquire the right kind of skills which are needed by the Industry.

Apart from this, we also encourage the students to take up entrepreneurial activities related to ESDM under RCJCE (R Chenraj Jain Centre for Entrepreneurship).

#### **6. What is the objective of entrepreneurial wing of The JGI Group? What is your short term and long term goal?**

India is slowly depending on the foreign countries to meet the domestic need for the various products and technologies. At this pace, even the electronics import bill will surpass the oil import bill by 2020, which is alarming situation. In order to maintain a healthy and sustainable economy of our country it is the need of the hour to encourage and develop more and more entrepreneurs, keeping this in mind we are having a goal of developing 8800 entrepreneurs from our own institutes by 2015.

RCJ Centre for Entrepreneurship promotes entrepreneurial development, business incubation, empirical research & action research in the area of Entrepreneurship. Till date 48 companies have been incubated. The areas of business operations include hospitality, investment advisory, software services through telecommunication, interior design, hotel industry, niche marketing & educational services.

#### **7. What are the success stories incubated by The JGI Group in the past 3 years?**

There are many success stories, we have 48 companies under JGI Ventures and each one narrates a different success story by itself.

#### **About the author**

##### **Dr. R Chenraj Jain**

Chairman, The JGI Group  
President, Jain University Trust

Roychand Chenraj Jain better known as R Chenraj Jain is a visionary leader, educationist, entrepreneur, philanthropist and the founder chairman of The JGI Group, promoting excellence in education and in entrepreneurship. He believes that education is the cornerstone for the empowerment of people since it enables them to respond to opportunities, challenge their traditional roles and change their lives. His vision is to create human assets by providing education from elementary to tertiary levels, fuel economic growth by creating social entrepreneurs and build sustainable communities.

#### **Awards / Achievements / Recognition:**

- Rotary Award for Vocational Service
- Dr. B C Roy Award from Indian Medical Association Award for Leading Personalities
- SEVAK Award for Service to Humanity
- Rajasthan Youth Association Award for Service in Education Sector
- Jaycees Award – Outstanding Young Indian
- Seva Ratna Award awarded by Centurion Trust, Chennai
- Honorary Doctorate in Education Administration & Management from Golden State University, USA
- Honorary Doctorate in Social work, Education & Philanthropy from Mangalore University, Karnataka
- Kempegowda Award for remarkable contribution in the field of education

#### **Contribution**

Mr. Jain is a renowned social worker, philanthropist, and educationist. He has been associated with different acts of social upliftment. He has been instrumental in organizing blood donation camps and health check-up camps for eye screening and

cancer detection. He has also provided medical subsidies for cancer patients and free dialysis treatment.

He believes that education is a cornerstone for the empowerment of people since it enables them to respond to opportunities, challenge their traditional roles and change their lives. He floated the concept of creating Youth entrepreneurs and established **R Chenraj Jain Centre for Entrepreneurship (RCJCE)**. At present under RCJCE there are about **50 successful entrepreneurs** approximately at the net worth of **250 crores**. He has been actively involved in women empowerment and has organized many programmes and created avenues for their betterment.

#### **Other Social Work:**

##### **Jain Vidyaniketan – Kanakapura**

An opportunity School located in Kanakapura is another initiative undertaken by Dr. Chenraj Jain. Established in 2000, the school provides education from UKG to the 10th Standard and is affiliated to Karnataka state education board (KSEB). Each of the grades has English and Kannada as a medium of instruction. The classes have been kept at only 35 students to ensure a personalized attention. Regular medical checkups and treatment is provided to the students at the health centre of its sister institution, **Jain International Residential School**. In sports, the children are exposed to elitist sports disciplines that remain a dream for their city bred counterparts. **Jain Academy for sporting Excellence**, a JGI Institution has at these children's disposal an array of national and international class coaches and training facilities.

##### **Jain Vidyaniketan – Amethi**

Is another opportunity school started this year for children who wish to take advantage of the quality education and take charge of their lives as responsible citizens of India future. At present, 192 children from nearly 12 villages of **Amethi** have been admitted to the primary & middle section. Jain Vidyaniketan is a window of opportunity to all deserving children from the poorest sections, by providing a holistic, all round, high quality education free of cost

#### **Other Social Initiatives**

He has also organized a number of programmes for the rural populace of Kanakapura Taluk, Bangalore District (Rural), besides the cataract free Kanakapura Project – Eye camps held every week. Eye testing and cataract operations are performed free of cost.

Blood donation camps, health checkups, medical facilities and preventive care awareness in addition to the free distribution of cloths to large number of school children, every year, have been some of his attempts for a better world, the world of his visions and dreams.

Various animal health check-ups and rehabilitation, free vaccination campus in rural areas are conducted.

Dr. Jain has served as a member of the state level Apex body for quality Assurance & NAAC Accreditation, Collegiate Education, and Government of Karnataka and as Vice President, Federation of Jain Educational Institutes (FJEI).