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GLOBAL EDUCATION LEADERS Special Edition



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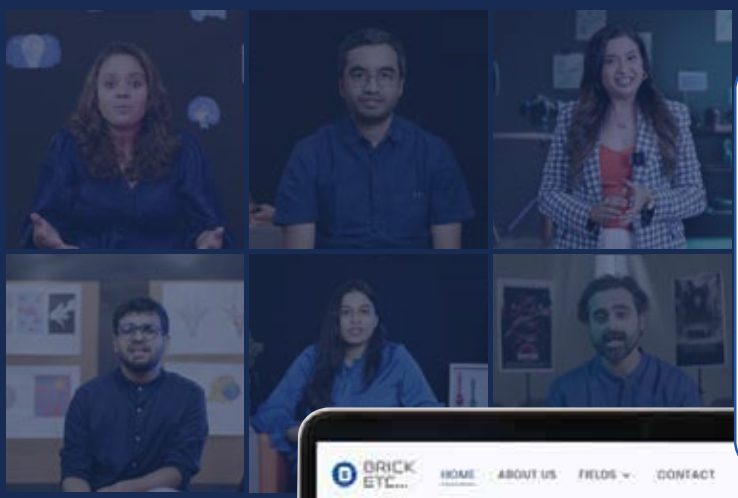
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Saluting India's World-Class Educational Pioneers

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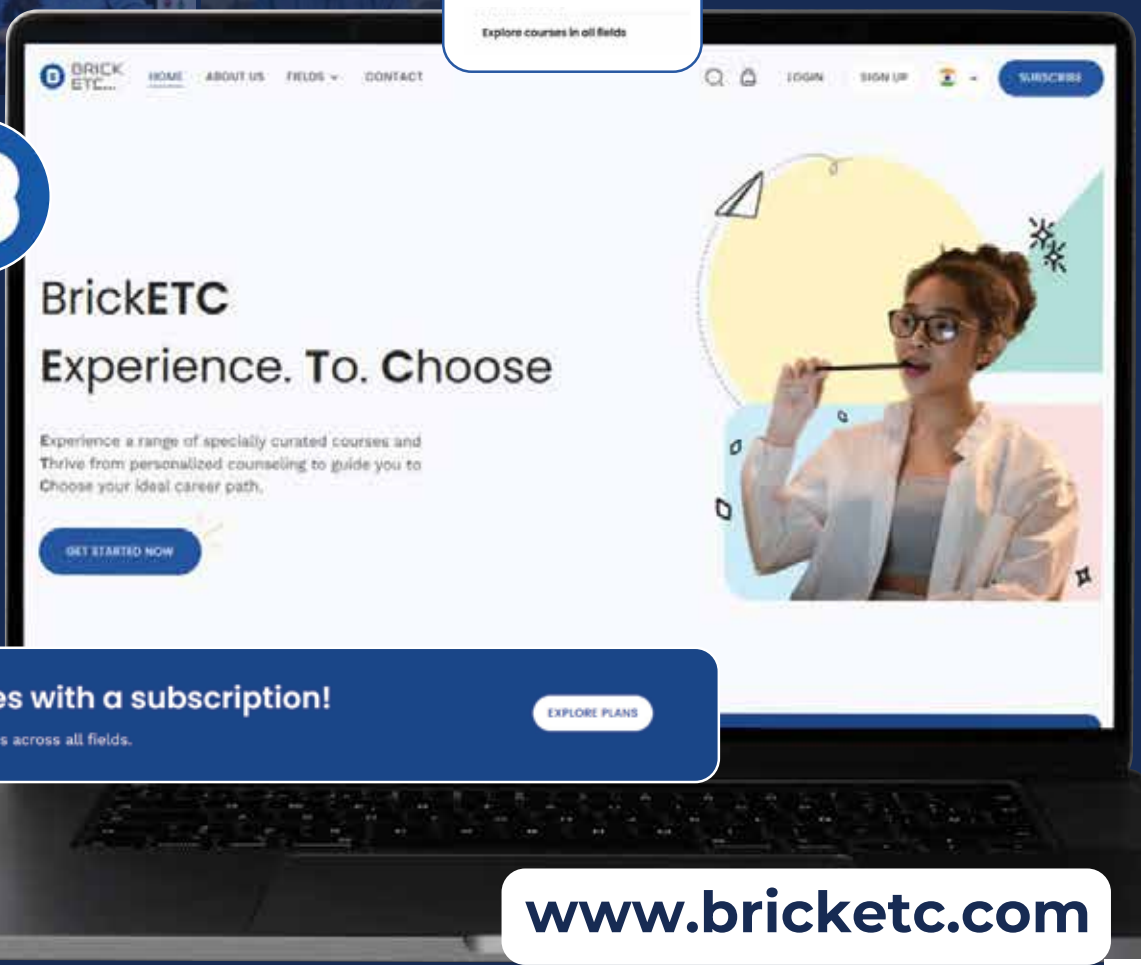
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Insight



Shaping The Future: India's Education Trailblazers

Building on the tremendous success of our previous Special Editions — the 'Society Achievers Realty Special' and the **'Society Achievers Women Leaders Special'** — we are proud to present the 'Society Achievers Global Education Leaders Special'. These Special Editions are dedicated to spotlighting the most influential figures across various industries, offering readers a closer look at the visionaries who are shaping the future.

The prestigious 'Society Achievers Global Education Leaders Special' pays tribute to those redefining education as a powerful driver of national transformation. This edition honours educators, edtech pioneers, philanthropic champions, and foundation heads who are revolutionising how young minds learn and thrive. From cutting-edge digital platforms to grassroots initiatives, their efforts are reimagining learning outcomes and expanding educational access across India's vast and diverse landscape.

Despite ongoing challenges around equity, scalability and access, these leaders are forging ahead with purpose and innovation. By personalising learning and harnessing the power of technology, many have succeeded in reaching the last mile — ensuring that no learner is left behind.

This edition is more than just a showcase. It is a celebration of bold ideas, inspiring journeys, and the shared belief that education is the bedrock of a developed nation. These stories aren't just about today — they are actively shaping the future of Indian education and, in turn, the future of India itself. Meet the visionaries transforming not just our classrooms, but the country at large.

With immense pride and joy, we present to you the **'Society Achievers Global Education Leaders Special'.** May it inspire, inform, and reaffirm your belief in education as one of the most powerful tools for lasting and meaningful change.

A heartfelt thank you to all the educationists featured, and to Team Magnate for their unwavering dedication in making this issue a grand success!

Warm regards,

Ashok Dhamankar

नहि ज्ञानेन सदृशं

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Chief Editor's Note



The future belongs to those who learn, adapt and lead. At the heart of this transformation are India's education trailblazers — visionary individuals who are shaping change.

The **'Society Achievers Global Education Leaders Special'** is an ode to some of the country's most inspiring minds — educators, edtech pioneers, philanthropists and foundation leaders. They bridge deep divides and build systems that prepare students for the challenges of a rapidly evolving world. They are reimagining how young Indians learn, grow, achieve and transform.

In this prestigious special edition, we go beyond applauding these changemakers. We explore what drives them, the obstacles they've overcome, and the groundbreaking initiatives they've led. With heart and innovation, they've turned challenges into opportunities — creating inclusive, scalable and lasting models of learning. Truly, their impact is extraordinary.

This magazine is a celebration of the way these visionaries are lighting up Indian education's journey ahead. And in doing so, they are shaping a future filled with thinkers, creators and leaders.

We are honoured to have these education powerhouses in our midst — may their tribe only grow... and their impact always endure!

- Andrea CostaBir

Photograph: Viraj Shirodkar

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Trends Shaping Tomorrow's Classrooms



Education is evolving faster than ever — from play-based preschools to future-focused universities. Today's learners seek more than degrees; they want skills, purpose, and adaptability. Here, we explore the trends, innovations, and institutions shaping learning at every stage — and how they're preparing a generation for life beyond the classroom.

Society Achievers is published once every month by Magnate Publishing Private Limited, 501, La-Creme CHS Ltd, Kondivita VLG, MIDC, Andheri(E), Near Akruti Trade Center, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India, 400059. Tel No: +91-993-0061-674. Editorial texts and illustrations are the copyright of the publishers of this magazine. No one may reproduce any material before permission is obtained in writing.

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Education Revolutionaries

Meet the trailblazers transforming the landscape of learning. They are educators and leaders reimagining how the world teaches, inspires, and empowers. From classrooms to communities, they're crafting a new blueprint for a smarter, more inclusive tomorrow.



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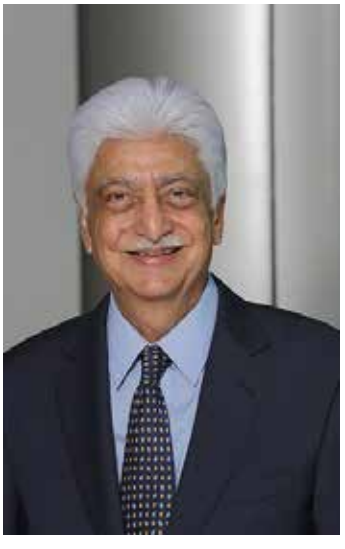
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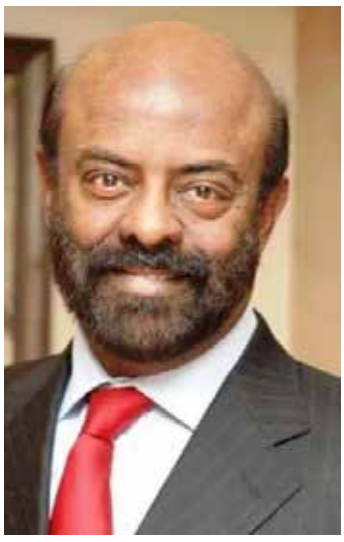
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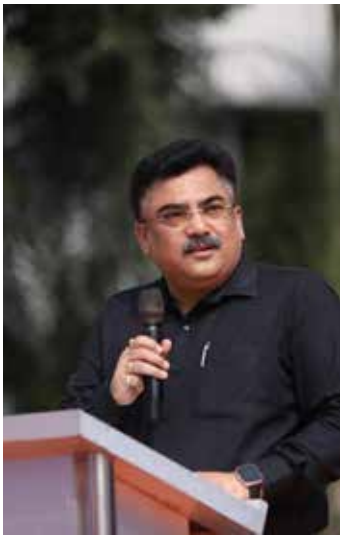
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Honouring Visionaries Who Shape The Future -
'Society Achievers' celebrates the launch of the 'Global Education Leaders Special'











Bridging Gaps, Building Futures

A story of contrasts - of rapid innovation and persistent inequities, bold reforms and enduring challenges. We take a closer look at the successes, struggles, and shifts shaping education in India today.

By Nichola Marie

India's education sector sits at a profound inflection point — caught between legacy systems and a digital, skills-led future. As the country seeks to balance inclusion, equity, quality, and innovation, the ambition is large: To bring 250 million young minds into a transformative learning ecosystem. Yet the challenges are equally formidable.





Big Picture & Key Shifts

India's demographics present an educational imperative: It has one of the youngest populations globally. On average, over 300 million students are enrolled across school and higher education levels. However, learning outcomes have lagged behind enrolment gains. International assessments like PISA reveal large gaps: Indian students often trail in reading, mathematics, and science compared to global peers.

In response, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 proposes a bold reimagining: Replacing the 10+2 structure with a 5+3+3+4 bracket (focusing on early childhood, foundational learning, preparatory, middle, and secondary phases) and placing foundational literacy & numeracy (FLN) at its core. The NEP also integrates vocational pathways early, promotes multilingualism, supports technology-enabled learning, and encourages holistic, multidisciplinary higher education.

One of the more visible outcomes has been the NIPUN Bharat mission, which aims to ensure that by Grade 3, every child attains basic reading and arithmetic. In focus states, foundational literacy has seen improvements, with some reporting an increase from ~58% to ~70% in recent years.

Yet systemic constraints remain. Public education spending in India hovers around 2.8–3% of GDP — far short of the 6% target many experts recommend. Implementation across states is uneven, with many unable to fully adopt reforms due to infrastructure gaps, teacher training deficits, and data limitations.

300+ million students are enrolled across India's school and higher education system — one of the largest in the world.



Successes & Bright Spots

Despite the hurdles, there are encouraging signs:

Growing private and hybrid models: Low-cost private schools, edtech platforms, and blended learning models have expanded reach and experimentation.

Digital infrastructure push: Platforms like DIKSHA, SWAYAM and integration of ICT in classrooms are accelerating.

Vocational integration: NEP 2020 has officially introduced vocational modules from Grade 6 onwards. Some schools and states are piloting collaborations with industry.

State-level leadership: States like Mizoram have claimed full literacy status (~98.2%) and are being studied as models.

Higher education reforms: The move towards multidisciplinary universities, liberalised curricula, and academic flexibility is underway. Several universities are restructuring to align with NEP's vision.

Persistent Challenges

Inequities and access: Rural vs urban, gender, and socio-economic disparities remain entrenched. Many children drop out before adolescence, especially in marginalized communities.

Teacher readiness: A large share of teachers lack training to adopt new pedagogies, assessment formats, or digital tools. Many states struggle with faculty shortages.



Infrastructure & connectivity: Many schools lack libraries, labs, reliable electricity, and internet connectivity — especially in remote areas.

Data and evaluation gaps: State-level monitoring is weak; fragmentation of educational data systems hampers evidence-based policymaking.

Resistance to change: Some traditional systems (e.g. rigid board exams, rote memorisation) and regional language policies meet pushback from stakeholders.

Funding constraints: Without a significant increase in public investment or novel financing models (PPP, CSR, philanthropic), many reforms may remain aspirational.

NEP 2020 – Where It Stands

It's been five years since NEP 2020 was launched, and the verdict is mixed. On one hand, structural reordering (5+3+3+4), digital initiatives, early literacy missions, and some curriculum redesign have begun. On the other, many states have delayed full adoption. A review notes that "mixed implementation, resource constraints, infrastructure deficits" are slowing progress. Critics caution that policy ambitions must be matched by political will, state-level ownership, and long-term resourcing.

2.9% of GDP is India's public expenditure on education, far short of the 6% recommended target.









Mizoram has achieved 98.2% literacy, making it India's first fully literate state.

What Must Be Done

Raise public education spending: Aim for 5–6% of GDP within the next decade.

Strengthen teacher capacity: Continuous professional development must become the norm — not the exception.

Bridge infrastructure gaps: Prioritise connectivity, labs, libraries, and learning spaces in underserved areas.

Leverage private & social sector partnerships: Edtech, NGOs, industry linkages can supplement public systems — especially in vocational training.

Localised flexibility: Encourage states and districts to adapt reforms to local languages, cultures, and needs while maintaining national standards.

Robust data ecosystems: Create interoperable, real-time educational data systems to monitor learning outcomes, teacher performance, and resource gaps.

Inclusive curriculum design: Emphasise multilingualism, life skills, critical thinking, and holistic education — not just exam scores.

Looking Ahead

The landscape of education in India is shifting. The seeds planted by NEP 2020, digital initiatives, and emergent models of schooling and skilling have potential to reshape. But success will depend less on policy documents and more on implementation fidelity, sustained investment, and local innovation.

If India can bridge access, quality, and equity in the coming decade, its young population could be its greatest educational dividend.

Pre-schools: Foundations of the Future

Nurturing curiosity, confidence, and creativity, India's pre-schools are redefining early education by combining play with purpose.

By Nichola Marie

The early years of a child's life are critical, shaping not just cognitive and physical growth but also social and emotional development. In India, this foundational stage is receiving unprecedented attention, driven by both policy reforms and changing parental expectations. Pre-school education, which caters to children typically between the ages of 3 and 6, is no longer seen merely as daycare but as the first formal step in a lifelong learning journey. As the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasises, "Learning in early childhood lays the groundwork for all future learning."



Policy Framework & NEP 2020

The NEP 2020 marks a transformative moment for early childhood education in India. It recommends a 5+3+3+4 curricular structure, with the foundational stage covering ages 3 to 8. This stage includes three years of pre-school education, followed by grades 1 and 2, creating a seamless transition into primary education. The policy underscores play-based, activity-based, and discovery-oriented learning, focusing on the holistic development of the child — cognitive, linguistic, physical, emotional, and social skills.

Significant changes include integrating early childhood care and education (ECCE) under a unified framework. The policy envisions bringing together anganwadis, pre-schools, and primary schools to ensure equitable access to quality education. NEP also emphasises a multilingual approach, promoting mother-tongue instruction to enhance comprehension and cognitive development during these formative years.

Enrollment Trends & Access

India has witnessed notable progress in early childhood education access, yet disparities remain. According to ASER 2023 data, nearly 80% of 3-year-olds and 85% of 4-year-olds are enrolled in early learning programmes. Urban areas generally see higher enrollment in private pre-schools, while rural regions rely heavily on government-run *anganwadis*. However, challenges persist, particularly in tribal and remote areas where infrastructure and trained educators are scarce (ASER 2023 Report).

Pre-school enrollment also reflects socio-economic divides. Affluent families often opt for internationally affiliated play schools or Montessori programmes, while middle- and lower-income families rely on state-run or low-cost private pre-schools. Bridging this gap is a central focus for policymakers and NGOs alike, aiming to make quality early education universally accessible.

According to ASER 2023 data, nearly 80% of 3-year-olds and 85% of 4-year-olds are enrolled in early learning programmes. Urban areas generally see higher enrollment in private pre-schools, while rural regions rely heavily on government-run *anganwadis*.

Curriculum & Pedagogy

Modern pre-schools in India are moving beyond rote learning to emphasise experiential, play-based pedagogy. Activities such as storytelling, role play, arts and crafts, music, and outdoor games are designed to foster creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023 lays down guidelines for early education, encouraging flexible curricula that respond to children's interests and local contexts.

International approaches like Montessori, Reggio Emilia, and Waldorf are gaining popularity in India, particularly in urban centres. These methods prioritise child-led learning, hands-on experiences, and a focus on socio-emotional development alongside cognitive skills. Increasingly, digital tools and educational apps are supplementing traditional teaching methods, helping children explore concepts through interactive games and multimedia content.

Teacher Training & Professional Development

Teachers are the backbone of quality early education. NEP 2020 stresses continuous professional development for pre-school educators, including certification programmes, workshops, and competency-based training. Organisations such as CBSE, NCERT, and private educational bodies have launched capacity-building programmes to enhance skills in child psychology, classroom management, and inclusive teaching practices.

The shortage of trained teachers remains a challenge, especially in rural and low-income areas. The government and NGOs are working to improve teacher education through blended training models, combining online modules with hands-on practice in classrooms.



Infrastructure & Safety

Quality pre-school education requires safe, child-friendly infrastructure. Classrooms are designed with age-appropriate furniture, learning corners, and open spaces for physical activity. Safety measures such as secure gates, non-toxic materials, hygiene facilities, and trained caregivers are now standard requirements under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) guidelines and various state regulations.

Parental Involvement

Research consistently shows that active parental involvement enhances early learning outcomes. Indian pre-schools are increasingly engaging parents through workshops, newsletters, and parent-teacher meetings. This collaboration ensures that learning extends beyond the classroom and reinforces socio-emotional and linguistic development at home.

Innovations & Technology Integration

Technology is reshaping pre-school education in India. Interactive whiteboards, tablet-based learning apps, and AI-driven assessment tools help personalise learning experiences. EdTech platforms offer curriculum-aligned content for children as well as training modules for teachers, making quality education more scalable and accessible, especially in semi-urban and rural regions.

Indian pre-schools are increasingly engaging parents through workshops, newsletters, and parent-teacher meetings.









“Every child should enjoy quality early childhood care and education as the foundation of lifelong learning.”

- NEP 2020

Challenges Ahead

Despite these strides, challenges persist. Regional disparities, lack of trained staff, high teacher-student ratios, and limited access in marginalised communities remain pressing issues. There is also a need to maintain cultural relevance while adopting modern pedagogical approaches. Ensuring affordability without compromising quality is another critical concern, particularly in private pre-school segments.

The Way Forward

The vision for pre-school education in India is ambitious: Universal access, high-quality pedagogy, and holistic child development. NEP 2020 has laid a roadmap, but its successful implementation requires coordinated efforts from the government, private sector, and civil society. Public-private partnerships, innovation in pedagogy, and scalable teacher training models will be key to achieving these goals.

Ultimately, the aim is to equip children with a strong foundation not just academically, but socially, emotionally, and ethically. Pre-schools are no longer ancillary; they are the first crucial building blocks of a lifelong learning journey. As India moves toward this vision, the next generation will be better prepared to thrive in an ever-changing world.

In the words of NEP 2020, “Every child should enjoy quality early childhood care and education as the foundation of lifelong learning.” With concerted effort, India’s pre-schools can truly become the cradle of the nation’s future.

K–12: Shaping Young India

Assessing the K–12 system, the very heart of India's education journey, where over 250 million students begin shaping both their own and the nation's future.

By Nichola Marie

Education in India today is a landscape of both opportunity and challenge. The K–12 segment — covering roughly ages 3 (pre-primary) through Grade 12 — plays a pivotal role in defining the trajectory of millions of children. With the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 providing a fresh roadmap, the country is rethinking what schooling should be: More inclusive, more flexible, more holistic.



Enrollment & Profile

According to data from the K-12 market overview for FY2020, nearly 254 million students were enrolled in about 1.5 million schools across India. Around 46% of these students attended private schools, while the rest were in government or government-aided schools.

Recent Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE+) stats show a slight dip: Enrollment dropped by 37 lakh students in 2023-24 compared to the prior year, with both male (21 lakh) and female (16 lakh) numbers affected.

On a more positive note, school teacher numbers have crossed 1 crore in 2024-25. This reflects efforts to scale up human resources, though other metrics underline there's more work ahead.



NEP 2020: Reform & Structure

NEP 2020 introduced a restructuring of school education: Replacing the old 10+2 model with a 5+3+3+4 design. Children begin schooling (including pre-school/ ECCE) at age 3, moving through foundational (ages 3-8), preparatory (8-11), middle (11-14), and secondary (14-18) stages.

Key reforms include:

> Emphasis on foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) under missions like NIPUN Bharat.

> Vocational education beginning from around Grade 6 to introduce skills early.

> Flexible curricula where academic streams (science, arts, languages) are less rigidly separated; more space for arts, sports, creative and critical thinking.

> Mental health, holistic development, and assessment reforms moving beyond rote exams towards formative, competency-based assessment.

The K–12 segment — covering roughly ages 3 (pre-primary) through Grade 12 — plays a pivotal role in defining the trajectory of millions of children.



Pedagogy, Technology & Curriculum

Pedagogical shifts are underway: Increased adoption of play-based learning, storytelling, project work, collaborative learning, and socio-emotional learning. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) and NEP both push these forward.

Technology is being leveraged — digital tools, learning management systems (LMS), online content, and virtual classrooms — but with big disparities. Urban schools often have reliable connectivity, smartboards, multimedia labs etc... while in many rural schools, infrastructure - including electricity, internet, and tech hardware - remains weak.

Innovations like the TARA reading fluency app, used in Kendriya Vidyalayas, and multilingual online assessment portals are positive examples.

Successes & Positive Trends

Dropout rates are coming down. The government reports that over the past two years, school dropout rates have been halved.

Access is improving. More schools are being made inclusive (ramps, and barrier-free infrastructure), though still not universal.

GER (Gross Enrollment Ratio) aims under NEP to reach nearly 100% for school education by 2030.

More teachers, better training — teacher numbers crossing 1 crore is significant, and capacity building programmes are being rolled out to upgrade pedagogical skills.



Persistent Challenges

Access & Equity: Rural-urban, gender, and socio-economic divides remain stubborn. Some regions still lack schools or transport; many government schools have infrastructure gaps — restrooms, electricity, and sanitation.

Drop In Enrollment: The recent fall of 37 lakh students in 2023-24 indicates retention remains a serious issue.

Quality Of Teaching: Teacher shortages, especially subject-specialised teachers, and lack of continuous training. Many educators struggle with large class sizes and administrative burdens.

Assessment & Curriculum: Overemphasis on rote learning persists in many schools; assessment reforms are unevenly adopted. Also, curriculum content sometimes lags behind real-world needs, especially in technology, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

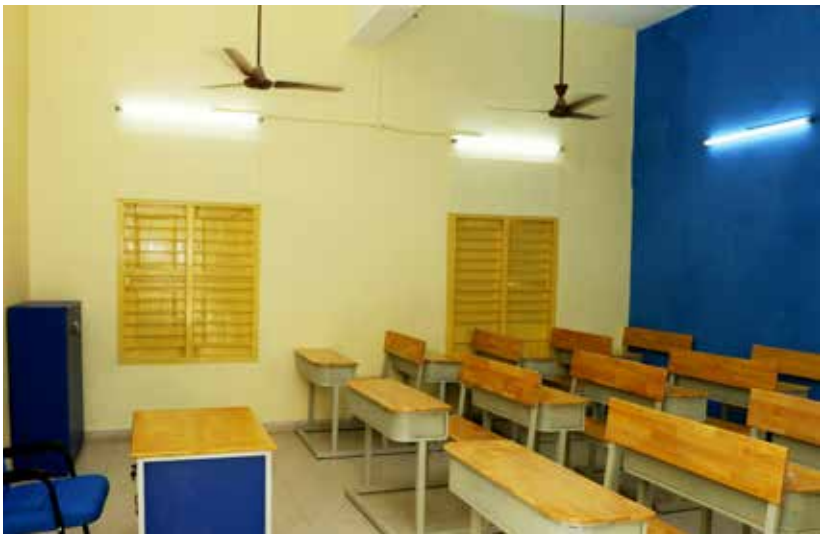
Infrastructure & Tech Divide: Significant gaps in digital infrastructure impede progress. Schools without reliable power, internet or devices can't leverage edtech fully.

Mental Health & Student Well-being: Pressure to perform, exam stress, and lack of counselling/ support structures are growing concerns.

Way Forward

Strengthen Teacher Capacity: Mass rollout of teacher training in pedagogical methods aligned with NEP; incentivise subject specialisation; and reduce non-teaching administrative load so teachers can focus on student learning.

Prioritise Infrastructure Investment: Basic facilities (sanitation, water, electricity), safe classrooms, and digital connectivity. States must ensure inclusive infrastructure (ramps, and accessible toilets) for differently-abled students.



The government reports that over the past two years, school dropout rates have been halved.







Technology is being leveraged — digital tools, learning management systems (LMS), online content, and virtual classrooms — but with big disparities.

Uniform & Holistic Curriculum Implementation: Encourage experiential learning, integrate vocational and life skills early, ensure mother-tongue instruction up to Grades 5-8.

Assessment Reform: Full adoption of PARAKH and other formative assessment systems; move away from high-stakes exams towards continuous evaluation; and ensure results translate into remedial support where needed.

Leverage EdTech Sensibly: Use tech to bridge gaps but ensure equal access; ensure teacher training for technology integration; and localised, multilingual content.

Focus On Retention & Inclusivity: Special schemes for marginalised communities; ensure girls' retention; and reduce dropouts through mid-day meals, scholarships, transport incentives.

Conclusion

India's K-12 system is evolving rapidly. NEP 2020 provides the scaffolding for a more inclusive, flexible, and holistic education architecture. Yet, reforms remain a work in progress — implementation across states is uneven, and many schools still lag in infrastructure, technology, and quality. If India manages to tackle these gaps — ensuring every child not only attends school but learns well — then the promise of young India can truly be realised.

Graduation & Beyond: The Career Launchpad

Exploring the role of graduation and post-graduation as stepping stones from learning to livelihood in India's evolving education landscape.

By Nichola Marie

For millions of young Indians, graduation is more than a milestone — it is the bridge between academic life and professional aspirations. Post-graduation, in turn, refines that bridge into a launchpad, equipping students with deeper expertise and sharper skills to navigate an increasingly competitive and globalised world. Together, these stages of higher education form the backbone of India's talent pipeline, shaping not only individual futures but also the nation's economic trajectory.



Scale Of Higher Education

India today boasts of one of the world's largest higher education systems, with over 1,100 universities, 43,000 colleges, and nearly 40 million students enrolled (AISHE 2021–22). Undergraduate programmes remain the most popular entry point, with Bachelor of Arts (BA) courses attracting around 40% of all enrollments, followed by science, commerce, and engineering streams. For many, graduation is the essential stepping stone to employability, a prerequisite for careers ranging from banking to government services.

However, as industries evolve, postgraduate qualifications are becoming increasingly valuable. Nearly 10% of students go on to pursue master's degrees or equivalent programmes, with engineering, management, law, and medicine being the most sought-after. Doctoral enrollments, though small in proportion, are also growing steadily as research gains policy attention.



Graduation: The First Gateway

At the undergraduate level, India's offerings are diverse, ranging from traditional arts, science, and commerce to professional degrees in engineering, law, business administration, and design. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has introduced greater flexibility in these programmes, encouraging multidisciplinary learning and multiple exit options. Students can now earn certificates, diplomas, or full degrees depending on the duration of study completed — a move designed to reduce dropouts and allow re-entry into higher education.

Graduation also continues to be the entry ticket to government jobs and competitive examinations, from the UPSC to state-level services, making it a non-negotiable milestone for many aspirants. At the same time, industries are increasingly seeking graduates with practical skills, pushing colleges to introduce internships, project-based learning, and tie-ups with corporates.

Students can now earn certificates, diplomas, or full degrees depending on the duration of study completed — a move designed to reduce dropouts and allow re-entry into higher education.

Post-Graduation: Sharpening The Edge

While graduation provides breadth, post-graduation is about depth. It allows students to specialise, conduct research, and gain a competitive edge in careers that demand advanced expertise. Master's in Business Administration (MBA) remains one of the most popular postgraduate degrees, producing tens of thousands of managers who power India's corporate sector. In parallel, master's programmes in science, technology, and medicine are critical for developing researchers, innovators, and healthcare professionals.

Law schools and public policy institutes are also attracting more postgraduates, reflecting the expanding scope of governance, regulation, and social impact careers. Additionally, with globalisation and technology driving change, new fields like data science, artificial intelligence, and sustainability studies are rapidly gaining traction.

Employability & Skills

A key question often raised is: Does higher education translate into employability? The answer is mixed. According to the India Skills Report 2024, only around 50% of graduates are considered employable by industry standards. This skills gap has led to growing emphasis on internships, industry-academia collaborations, and skill development alongside traditional academics. Post-graduation often helps bridge this gap by equipping students with specialised knowledge, research abilities, and professional networks.

However, there is also a need for stronger career counselling at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Many students pursue degrees without clarity on how these align with career goals. Initiatives like integrated career guidance in universities and partnerships with industry bodies can play a transformative role.



NEP 2020 & The Road Ahead

The NEP 2020 seeks to reshape higher education into a more holistic, multidisciplinary, and research-oriented ecosystem. For undergraduates, it introduces flexibility through the Academic Bank of Credits and encourages cross-disciplinary study. For postgraduates, the emphasis is on strengthening research, promoting international collaboration, and creating a National Research Foundation to boost innovation.

Importantly, the NEP envisions increasing the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in higher education to 50% by 2035 (from around 28% in 2021). Achieving this requires not only expanding access to graduation and post-graduation programmes, but also improving quality and affordability.

The Global Connect

Another trend reshaping the higher education landscape is the growing aspiration for international exposure. Every year, over 7,50,000 Indian students study abroad, pursuing both graduate and postgraduate courses. However, Indian universities are also seeing greater global collaborations, joint degrees, and exchange programmes, giving students world-class exposure without leaving home.

The NEP envisions increasing the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in higher education to 50% by 2035 (from around 28% in 2021).







Indian universities are seeing greater global collaborations, joint degrees, and exchange programmes, giving students world-class exposure without leaving home.

Challenges To Address

Despite its scale, India's higher education system faces pressing challenges. Uneven quality across institutions, outdated curricula, faculty shortages, and limited research output remain concerns. The employability gap highlights the urgency of aligning degrees with market realities. Financial accessibility is another barrier — while public universities offer affordable education, private institutions often remain out of reach for many.

Post-graduation, too, can be a double-edged sword — while it enhances knowledge, many graduates find themselves overqualified but underemployed, especially in saturated fields. Striking the balance between aspiration, employability, and affordability is the task ahead.

Shaping Lives

Despite the hurdles, graduation and post-graduation remain the most significant launchpads for Indian youth. They shape not only careers but also critical thinking, social awareness, and leadership. As NEP 2020 unfolds and industry-academia partnerships deepen, both stages of higher education will become even more pivotal in preparing India's demographic dividend for the opportunities of the future.

In essence, graduation lays the foundation; post-graduation builds the superstructure. Together, they form the launchpad from which millions of Indians take flight — towards careers, aspirations, and contributions that define the nation's growth story.

Expanding Horizons: The New Learning Landscape

Complementing traditional education, diverse learning avenues are transforming how students develop skills and global competence.

By Nichola Marie

Alternative learning avenues are reshaping the Indian education landscape, alongside formal learning, equipping students to be globally competent, career-ready, and holistically developed. From skill-based programmes to EdTech innovations, these pathways complement traditional curricula and expand opportunities for young learners.



Coaching Institutes: The Competitive Edge

For decades, coaching institutes have been a hallmark of India's education ecosystem. Catering to competitive exams, board enhancements, and standardised tests, these institutes provide structured guidance, mock assessments, and focused mentoring. While often associated with high-pressure preparation, many modern institutes emphasise conceptual clarity, personalised attention, and critical thinking. In a country where over 20 million students appear for entrance and competitive exams annually, coaching institutes offer both a competitive edge and confidence-building for aspirants.

Vocational & Skill Education: Bridging The Gap

Recognising that not all students follow conventional academic pathways, vocational and skill-based education has gained momentum. Programmes in trades, IT, healthcare, and hospitality aim to bridge the employability gap, providing hands-on experience alongside industry certifications. With initiatives under national skill development missions, nearly 40 million young Indians have been trained in various skills, helping them transition seamlessly into the workforce. Vocational training also nurtures entrepreneurship, enabling students to generate livelihood opportunities and contribute to local economies.

Overseas Education: Global Horizons

Studying abroad continues to be a sought-after avenue for Indian students seeking global exposure. With more than 8,00,000 Indians enrolled in universities worldwide, destinations like the US, UK, Canada, and Australia provide cross-cultural learning, international curricula, and access to research-intensive programmes. Beyond academics, students gain critical life skills, adaptability, and networks that span continents — qualities increasingly valued in today's global job market.

Programmes in trades, IT, healthcare, and hospitality aim to bridge the employability gap, providing hands-on experience alongside industry certifications.



EdTech: Reinventing The Classroom

The digital revolution has transformed how students learn. EdTech platforms offer interactive lessons, personalised feedback, gamified learning, and AI-driven analytics. From urban centres to remote villages, technology has made high-quality education accessible and scalable. The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated adoption, demonstrating that virtual classrooms, hybrid learning models, and online assessments can complement traditional pedagogy effectively.

Career Guidance & Mentorship: Shaping Futures

In an era of abundant choices, career counselling and mentorship play a vital role. Schools, institutes, and private organisations provide assessments, career fairs, and mentorship programmes to help students align their interests, strengths, and aspirations. Such guidance fosters informed decisions, reduces stress, and ensures students pursue paths that suit both personal growth and societal needs.

Soft Skills & Holistic Development: Preparing For Life

Beyond technical knowledge, employers increasingly value soft skills — communication, leadership, problem-solving, and emotional intelligence. Supplementary programmes in debate, drama, sports, and arts nurture these qualities, fostering well-rounded individuals. Mindfulness, ethical reasoning, and teamwork have become integral, preparing students not just for exams, but for life.



Experiential Learning: Learning By Doing

Experiential learning initiatives, including internships, field visits, community projects, and simulations, allow students to apply classroom knowledge in real-world contexts. This approach develops critical thinking, adaptability, and decision-making skills, bridging the gap between education and employability. Programmes like science fairs, entrepreneurship bootcamps, and industry collaborations further enhance practical exposure.

Global Collaborations & Exchange Programmes: Education Without Boundaries

As India's education ecosystem evolves, institutions are increasingly seeking global partnerships to broaden learning horizons. Collaboration with international schools, universities, and research centres allows students to participate in exchange programmes, joint projects, and cross-border workshops. These experiences expose learners to diverse pedagogical approaches, cutting-edge research, and multicultural environments, fostering adaptability and global competence.

Many K–12 schools now offer short-term overseas immersion programmes, virtual classrooms with international peers, and joint science, arts, and entrepreneurship projects. Such collaborations not only enhance academic knowledge but also instill cultural sensitivity, problem-solving skills, and innovative thinking. For instance, students engaged in global science fairs or virtual hackathons learn to tackle real-world challenges collaboratively, often presenting solutions with a global perspective.

Experiential learning initiatives develop critical thinking, adaptability, and decision-making skills, bridging the gap between education and employability.







The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 underscores holistic development, experiential learning, vocational training, and technology integration. It encourages multi-disciplinary studies, flexible curricula, and skill-oriented education from an early age.

Policy Backdrop: NEP 2020 & Beyond

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 underscores holistic development, experiential learning, vocational training, and technology integration. It encourages multi-disciplinary studies, flexible curricula, and skill-oriented education from an early age. By aligning supplementary initiatives with policy frameworks, India aims to create a dynamic ecosystem that caters to diverse student needs and global competitiveness.

Conclusion

The supplementary facets of Indian education — coaching, vocational training, overseas exposure, EdTech, mentorship, and experiential learning — serve as essential pillars supporting formal schooling. Together, they cultivate students who are knowledgeable, skilled, and adaptable. As the country navigates rapid technological, social, and economic changes, these alternative pathways ensure that learners are not only prepared to face challenges but are also empowered to seize opportunities and contribute meaningfully to society.

Education Special

Nita Ambani: Educating Hearts & Minds

When passion meets purpose, education becomes more than knowledge — it becomes a force for empowerment and change, a mission that Nita Ambani has passionately embraced.

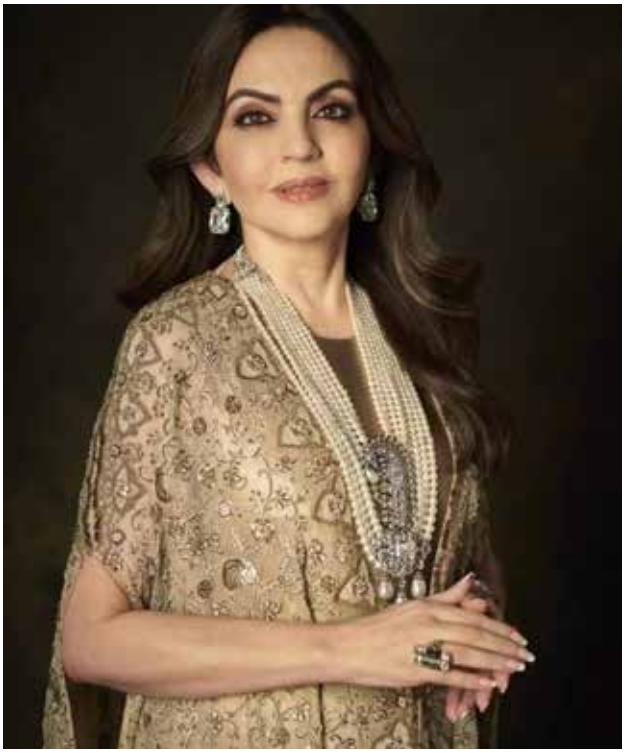
By Nichola Marie

Education, for Nita Ambani, is far more than academics — it is the foundation for equality, empowerment, and excellence. As Founder and Chairperson of the Reliance Foundation and the guiding spirit behind the Dhirubhai Ambani International School (DAIS), she has devoted herself to building institutions that nurture both intellect and character, blending ambition with compassion, vision with care.

DAIS, consistently ranked among India's finest schools, embodies her vision of integrating global best practices with Indian values. Classrooms are transformed into spaces of discovery and innovation, where children are encouraged to think beyond textbooks, embrace creativity, excel in sports, and engage in community service. Under her leadership, holistic learning is not just a philosophy but a daily practice, equipping students with the skills, resilience, and empathy to thrive in a rapidly changing world, while fostering curiosity and a love for lifelong learning.

Bridging The Educational Divide

Her commitment goes far beyond elite education. Through the Reliance Foundation, she has worked tirelessly to bridge the educational divide, focusing on rural and underserved communities. The Foundation's programmes range from scholarships for meritorious students to teacher training, digital classrooms, and learning hubs that bring quality education to those who might otherwise be left behind. She believes that talent should never be wasted for lack of opportunity, and her initiatives consistently reflect this conviction, ensuring that children in remote villages have access to the same quality of education as those in metropolitan classrooms.







Under her leadership, holistic learning is not just a philosophy but a daily practice, equipping students with the skills, resilience, and empathy to thrive in a rapidly changing world, while fostering curiosity and a love for lifelong learning.

A Vision For The Future Of Learning

Her vision also encompasses higher education, with efforts to develop world-class institutions that foster research, innovation, and entrepreneurship while remaining deeply rooted in Indian culture. By nurturing critical thinking, ethical leadership, and problem-solving skills, she aims to create pathways for young people to become changemakers on both national and global stages.

She often refers to education as a "great equaliser," capable of transforming lives and uplifting entire communities. Her focus on values such as empathy, integrity, and resilience underscores her belief that true education must cultivate both the heart and the mind. Through her work, she has created a model where excellence meets inclusivity — a child in a Mumbai classroom and another in a rural village can both access opportunities to learn, grow, and dream.

Empowering A Generation, Envisioning A Nation

Her journey stands as a testament to what visionary leadership can achieve in education. By investing in people, infrastructure, and innovation, she is shaping a future where every child can realise their potential — ensuring that learning is not merely a privilege but a right, and that the promise of tomorrow belongs to all.

Education Special

Shaping Minds, Building Futures: Dr Niranjan Hiranandani's Vision For Indian Education

From transforming skylines to reimagining classrooms, Dr Niranjan Hiranandani believes true nation-building begins with education. Through schools, universities, and pioneering MBA programmes, he's creating a future where learning is rooted in values, driven by innovation, and aligned with real-world needs.

By Andrea CostaBir

Dr Niranjan Hiranandani, Co-Founder and Managing Director of the Hiranandani Group, Provost of HSNC University, and a member of the NEP 2020 Task Force Committee, has long been celebrated as a visionary in both real estate and education. While he is credited with redefining India's urban landscape, his parallel commitment to shaping the country's academic future is equally profound. From establishing the Hiranandani Foundation Schools to leading Mumbai's first cluster university under the RUSA scheme, he continues to champion an education ecosystem that bridges industry and academia, tradition and innovation, and access with excellence.

Excerpts from the interview...

What initially inspired you to step into the education space, and how has your vision evolved with your growing involvement over the years?

Education has always been close to my heart – it's the most powerful tool for transformation. My entry into the education space was driven by a deep belief that real estate may build cities, but education builds societies. We began with the Hiranandani Foundation School to provide a well-rounded, value-based education for future generations. But as India's aspirations evolved, so did my vision.





“We are reimagining what Indian universities can be: Globally benchmarked, yet rooted in Indian values. Education is not just about degrees – it’s about shaping responsible, curious, and capable citizens. That is the legacy I hope to contribute to.”

Today, as the Provost of HSNC University – a cluster university formed under the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) – my commitment extends to higher education, research, and interdisciplinary learning. The aim is to bridge academia with industry, tradition with innovation, and access with excellence. We are reimagining what Indian universities can be: Globally benchmarked, yet rooted in Indian values. Education is not just about degrees – it’s about shaping responsible, curious, and capable citizens. That is the legacy I hope to contribute to.

Today, you are associated with a vast range of institutions – from the HSNC Board and HSNC University to Hiranandani Foundation Schools. Could you give us an overview of these prominent educational ventures and programmes?

Over the years, my involvement in education has spanned a wide spectrum – from foundational schooling to higher education and research.

At the school level, the Hiranandani Foundation Schools in Powai and Thane were established to provide holistic, value-based education that balances academic excellence with co-curricular and emotional development. These institutions have grown into sought-after centers of learning with a strong emphasis on discipline, ethics, and global outlook.

As a Trustee of the HSNC Board, one of the largest educational conglomerates in India, I am part of a legacy that oversees 14 institutions, including renowned names like KC College, HR College, and Bombay Teachers’ Training College.

Taking this vision forward, we established the HSNC University, Mumbai’s first cluster university under the RUSA scheme. As its Founding Provost, I’ve worked to shape it into an institution that fosters interdisciplinary learning, research, industry collaboration, and global partnerships – all while maintaining strong cultural roots.

Across all these ventures, the common thread is our commitment to nurturing intellectual curiosity, ethical leadership, and a mindset of lifelong learning.

You also oversee the Niranjan Hiranandani School of Management and Real Estate (NHSMRE). Could you tell us more about its specialised MBA offerings, especially the flagship MBA in Real Estate?

NHSMRE under HSNC University was born out of a growing need for domain-specific education in a rapidly evolving economic landscape. Our flagship MBA in Real Estate is one of the first of its kind in India. It is designed to provide a 360-degree understanding of the real estate sector – blending core business fundamentals with deep sectoral insights across finance, law, urban planning, construction technology, sustainability, and real estate marketing. The goal is to create future-ready professionals who understand not only the business of real estate, but also its socio-economic and environmental dimensions.

In addition, we also offer specialised MBA programmes in finance, marketing, and entrepreneurship. At NHSMRE, industry integration is key – students engage with live projects, expert faculty from across sectors, and a curriculum that evolves with market trends.

The vision is clear: To nurture leaders who are not only skilled managers, but also ethical changemakers in their respective industries.

Across your many educational initiatives, what kind of impact are you proud to see in terms of shaping future-ready students?

What gives me the greatest satisfaction is seeing our students evolve into confident, capable individuals – not just academically proficient, but socially conscious and globally aware. Whether it’s at the Hiranandani Foundation Schools, HSNC University, or NHSMRE, our focus has always been on holistic development.

We aim to nurture not only subject matter expertise but also skills like critical thinking, adaptability, digital fluency, and ethical leadership – which are essential in today's dynamic world. Through experiential learning, interdisciplinary exposure, and strong industry-academia linkages, our students are prepared to face real-world challenges.

Many of our alumni have gone on to become entrepreneurs, researchers, policy advisors, and leaders in their fields. That ripple effect – of contributing not just to individual growth but to nation-building – is what I'm truly proud of.

How important is industry integration in your institutions' curriculum – particularly at NHSMRE – to ensure students are prepared for real-world challenges?

At NHSMRE, industry integration is central to our approach. The real estate sector is rapidly evolving with technology, regulations, ESG, and new financial models, and our curriculum reflects this reality. Co-designed with industry experts, it blends theory with practice through case studies, site visits, masterclasses, internships, and live projects. Students gain hands-on exposure to legal frameworks, business planning, and market dynamics, ensuring they are both job-ready and innovation-ready. From land economics and sustainable development to smart cities and capital structuring, our graduates emerge with the skills and insights needed to thrive in a dynamic global environment.

Establishing educational institutions comes with its own set of challenges. What have been some of the key hurdles you've faced, and how did you overcome them?

One of the earliest challenges was regulatory compliance and acquiring the right affiliations, especially for a private university like HSNC. It required deep engagement with statutory bodies and relentless follow-through.

Another hurdle was attracting passionate educators who shared our vision of holistic, future-ready education. We overcame this by building institutional credibility and fostering an academic culture grounded in values and excellence.

Then came the challenge of designing curricula that weren't just academically sound but also industry-relevant – especially in emerging sectors like real estate, fintech, and entrepreneurship. We addressed this through active partnerships with industry leaders, introducing flexibility and innovation in pedagogy.

Lastly, in today's digital-first era, ensuring equitable access to tech-enabled learning tools was critical. From smart classrooms to digital libraries, we invested in infrastructure that could scale quality education.

Scalability and reach are important in education. How do you ensure that your institutions not only maintain quality but also expand their impact across regions?

Scalability without quality is counterproductive in education. We've ensured that every institution we've built – whether it's Hiranandani Foundation Schools, HSNC University, or NHSMRE – is rooted in academic integrity and governed by a consistent framework of excellence.

To maintain this balance, we rely on three levers: Strong governance, technology integration, and partnerships. A clear academic vision, capable leadership, and empowered faculty ensure quality at the core. We use digital platforms to enable blended learning, uniform assessments, and real-time feedback – making education both scalable and personalised.

"Our flagship MBA in Real Estate is one of the first of its kind in India. It is designed to provide a 360-degree understanding of the real estate sector – blending core business fundamentals with deep sectoral insights across finance, law, urban planning, construction technology, sustainability, and real estate marketing."





For regional outreach, we focus on collaborations with local stakeholders and community-led educational initiatives. Our goal is to adapt to regional aspirations without compromising on institutional standards. Expansion, for us, is not just physical – it's about creating a ripple effect of empowered students and educators who carry the ethos forward.

Technology is reshaping education globally. How are you integrating new-age tools like AI, digital platforms, and smart learning into your institutions?

At the Niranjan Hiranandani School of Management and Real Estate (NHSMRE), we integrate case-based learning, industry simulations, and exposure to tools like data analytics and emerging tech as part of the MBA experience. HSNC University has adopted hybrid learning, with digital libraries, online modules, and collaborative platforms that make education more flexible and accessible. Even at the Hiranandani Foundation Schools, technology is embedded through smart classrooms and interactive digital resources.

We aim not just to digitise but to personalise and democratise learning – equipping students with the tools and mindset for a fast-evolving, tech-driven world.

As a member of the NEP 2020 Task Force Committee, what is your perspective on the new education reforms, and how are your institutions aligning with this vision?

NEP 2020 is a watershed moment for Indian education – a progressive blueprint that emphasises flexibility, multidisciplinary learning, industry integration, and holistic development. As a member of the NEP 2020 Task Force, I see this not just as a policy shift but as a paradigm transformation that aligns with how the world is evolving.

At HSNC University, we've been at the forefront of implementing NEP-aligned practices – from offering multidisciplinary undergraduate courses to promoting research, skill-building, and entrepreneurship. Our curriculum redesign encourages students to take minors across disciplines, choose open electives, and pursue internships and community engagement projects.

NHSMRE's MBA programmes, too, reflect the NEP spirit – with an emphasis on real-world application, flexible learning pathways, and continuous industry collaboration. Even our foundation schools are aligning with the early childhood education and holistic pedagogy mandates of the NEP.





Beyond building institutions, how do you see your role evolving as an influencer and thought leader in India's education sector?

My role has grown from that of an institution-builder to that of a catalyst — someone who fosters collaboration between academia, industry, and policymakers. As Provost of HSNC University and a member of the NEP 2020 Task Force, I see it as my responsibility to advocate for reforms that make education more inclusive, experiential, and future-ready.

Through speaking forums, policy panels, and mentorship networks, I hope to continue contributing to national dialogue – whether it's about curriculum innovation, digital transformation, or employability. The aim is not just to build more institutions, but to help shape the ecosystem where knowledge, skills, and values converge to empower India's next generation.



Education Special

Gautam Hari Singhania & Nawaz Modi Singhania: Scaling Education For A Stronger, Smarter Nation

Building on a proud legacy, the Singhanias are redefining education to shape India's next generation of innovators and leaders.

By Andrea CostaBir

With a deep belief that education is the cornerstone of a resilient nation, Gautam Hari Singhania & Nawaz Modi Singhania are building on a proud legacy — and shaping the future through the Singhania Schools. With over 30,000 students already under their wing and an ambitious goal to reach 1,00,000, they are transforming how India learns, leads, and thrives. They share their thoughts on legacy, scale and the future of learning.

Excerpts from the interview...

You're aiming to scale from 30,000 to 1,00,000 students. What fuels this mission — and how do you see education driving national growth?

Education is a purpose. A resolve to educate. Every child we empower through education is a torchbearer of change. Education helps children build, innovate and transform. Investing in education is nation-building.

What inspired you to take charge of the Singhania Schools, and how have you evolved their vision for today's learners?

The inspiration was the family's legacy and the passion for educating children with quality education. Our schools provide opportunities to all to realise their fullest potential. We want to help our students look beyond immediate learning outcomes. We want our children to walk out of the portals of our schools as beautiful human beings.



“Education, for us, is not a certification exercise. It is a journey that transforms a child into a force for progress, innovation and humanity.”









Any standout initiatives or changes that you have introduced that are reshaping the learning experience?

Learning must inspire wonder and curiosity. We provide learning experiences that will ignite the spark of creativity in children. From flight simulators to AI and pottery labs, we have them all. Our schools are living laboratories of possibilities and opportunities to grow. There’s innovation in pedagogy and the flagship school has been a case study at IIM Ahmedabad. It is the culture of courage to innovate that we encourage at our schools.

While scaling the schools, what challenges have you faced? And how are you ensuring the topnotch quality that the Singhania Schools are famous for?

Growth can blur the DNA of an institution, so we have a strong team of renowned educationists who ensure the training of faculty and school leaders. Clear frameworks for the curriculum and students’ well-being help the building of a culture in schools. Scaling is not about just building more schools; it is about building more of what matters.

Do tell us how you are using technology and holistic education to prepare students for tomorrow’s world.

At our schools, we prepare our students to navigate a world that they will be shaping themselves in. We emphasise a perfect balance between tech and holistic education. Tech fuels curiosity – from AI and coding to flight simulators. On the other hand, holistic education nurtures character through fine arts and sports. Our schools are launchpads for innovators, thought leaders and change-makers. Education, for us, is not a certification exercise. It is a journey that transforms a child into a force for progress, innovation and humanity.

Education Special

Sujay Jairaj's Vision: Educational Institutions That Shape Life

With a focus on sports, sustainability, and value education, he explains how the Narsee Monjee institutions are setting benchmarks across India.

By Amber Dias

Sujay Jairaj, Trustee of the Narsee Monjee Educational Trust and Founder of Chatrabhuj Narsee School, is carrying forward a distinguished family legacy that has shaped India's education landscape for over six decades. From the establishment of Narsee Monjee College of Commerce and Economics in 1964 to the creation of world-class schools across Mumbai, Gandhinagar and Pune, the family has been at the forefront of expanding access to holistic, value-driven education that blends global standards with the Indian ethos.

Excerpts from the interview...

What prompted you to step into the education space? What is it that you believe you bring to the table to make an impact in this realm?

Although our family business has its roots in the chemical industry, education has always been at the heart of our family's philanthropic vision. Since the early 1960s, the Narsee Monjee family, through the Narsee Monjee Educational Trust, has been instrumental in establishing premier educational institutions in India. Narsee Monjee College of Commerce and Economics (1964) and NMIMS (1981) are just two shining examples, both founded under the visionary leadership of Shri Chatrabhuj Narsee during his 25-year tenure as President of Shri Vile Parle Kelavani Mandal.

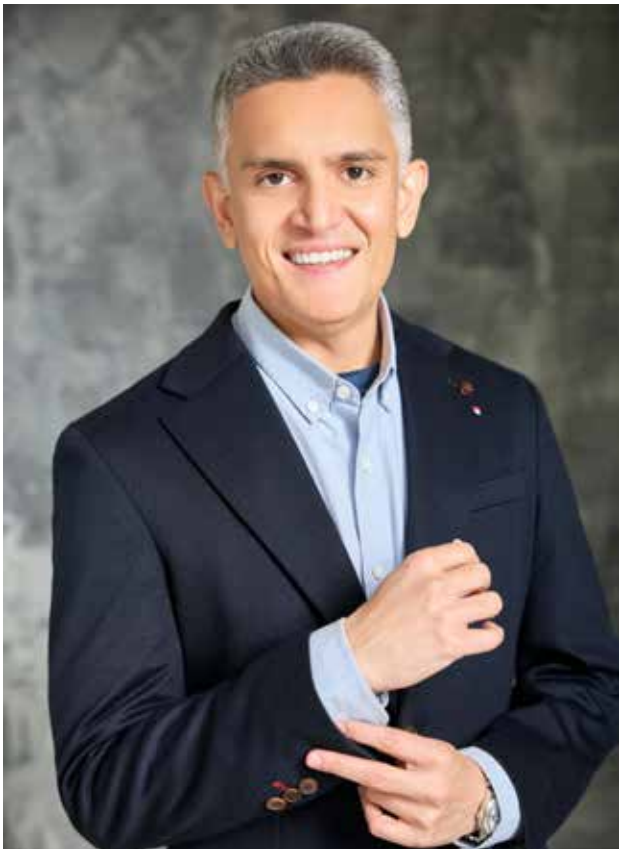
Our commitment extended beyond academics to inclusivity, with contributions to the Kamala Dharamshi Narsee Shruti School for the Hearing Impaired, and to community well-being through initiatives like the development of Pushpa Narsee Park — the green lung of JVPD Scheme in Mumbai.

After completing my Master's, I formally joined both the family business and our educational initiatives in 2004. Over the past two decades, I've witnessed the education sector transform with rapid innovation, technological upgrades, and evolving curricula. While our business is in chemicals, my passion lies deeply in education — and as a sportsman at heart, I bring discipline, perseverance, and a growth mindset to my role.

I've invested in learning from global experts, upskilling myself and my teams, and building networks with leading educationists. My goal has always been to ensure that every student in our institutions has access not just to education, but to an enriching, holistic experience that prepares them for life.

You've played a pivotal role in upgrading infrastructure and expanding the reach of the Narsee Monjee Educational Trust schools, and later founded Chatrabhuj Narsee School. What do you believe your institutions uniquely offer to India's education landscape?

What sets our institutions apart is the balance between world-class infrastructure, cutting-edge technology, and a highly passionate team that delivers a truly holistic curriculum.



“While our business is in chemicals, my passion lies deeply in education — and as a sportsman at heart, I bring discipline, perseverance, and a growth mindset to my role.”



We view education as a five-fold journey — academics, sports, extracurricular activities, life skills, and value education. While academics, sports, and activities are tangible, it is life skills and value-based education that we believe shape character and purpose. In a country like India, rich in history and heritage, these aspects hold immense significance.

Our schools offer global standards of learning, rooted in the Indian ethos. We prepare students to thrive in a global world, but with their feet firmly grounded in Indian wisdom, values and culture.

From introducing green-certified campuses like JNS GIFT City (2015) to launching large-scale international schools like CNS Pune, could you walk us through some of the most impactful or personally meaningful ventures you’ve spearheaded?

Each of our ventures has been special, but a few milestones stand out.

Jamnabai Narsee School, Mumbai (1971): A legacy institution that continues to set benchmarks in academics, sports, and extracurricular fields. Carrying this legacy forward to new geographies has been both a responsibility and a privilege.

Jamnabai Narsee School, GIFT City, Gandhinagar (2015): The first school in India’s first smart city, established under the vision of our Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. It was also the first school in Gujarat to receive a Green Building Gold Certification, reflecting our commitment to environmental consciousness and sustainability. Today, it is consistently ranked the No.1 school in the city.



Jamnabai Narsee International School (2015): A pioneering IB Continuum school offering PYP, MYP, and IBDP. With a unique "glocal" team — blending global expertise with local talent — JNIS quickly became Mumbai's No.1 international school.

Chatrabhuj Narsee School (Mumbai 2016, Pune 2022): Conceived as a "school within nature," CNS campuses combine spacious indoor and outdoor learning environments. Special attention was given to performing arts, creativity, extracurricular activities, and sports — areas I'm personally passionate about.

Across all our schools, we've gone beyond conventional facilities to create platforms where every student can discover and excel in their area of passion.

Your schools are known for their focus on both academic excellence and world-class sports infrastructure. How do you believe this dual focus prepares students for a more holistic future?

We believe in nurturing the five-fold growth of every child — physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual. This framework ensures that education is not confined to textbooks but extends to life itself.

Through a wide range of opportunities — international exposure, extracurricular platforms, performing arts, sustainability initiatives, and sports — students learn to push boundaries and discover themselves.

The results are evident in our alumni, who have gone on to shine globally in business, sports, art, culture and beyond. This, to me, is the true measure of impact: Students who carry forward the legacy of excellence while creating their own unique stories.





"We believe in nurturing the five-fold growth of every child — physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual. This framework ensures that education is not confined to textbooks but extends to life itself."







“Our focus is on delivering global standards, strong values, and high-quality facilities at a moderately affordable cost, ensuring every student has the opportunity to excel.”

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced when establishing and expanding these educational ventures across different cities and states?

I’ve always believed that every great institution begins with a dream. From there, it’s about assembling the right team, understanding the market, designing systems, and executing with discipline and ethics.

Rather than viewing them as challenges, I see them as learning curves shaped by local context. Each city and state brings its own aspirations, cultural nuances and expectations. Success lies in respecting and understanding these dynamics through detailed research before stepping in. Once that foundation is laid, expansion becomes a journey of collaboration rather than conflict.

Scalability is often a major hurdle in education. How do you ensure that your model of quality education with top-tier facilities is sustainable and adaptable across regions?

At the heart of K-12 education lies something no system can replicate — the human touch. That’s why we invest deeply in our teachers and leadership teams, making human resources the cornerstone of our scalability strategy.

For us, quality takes precedence over quantity. Each school is capital-intensive and requires patience, with a 7-10 year lifecycle before reaching sustainability. But education is not about short-term returns; it’s about creating lasting impact.

India’s aspirational families demand world-class education at accessible price points. Our focus, therefore, is on delivering global standards, strong values, and high-quality facilities at a moderately affordable cost, ensuring every student has the opportunity to excel.

Given your passion for sports and wellness, how do you envision the future of integrating athletics and education — and what message would you give to young changemakers aiming to redefine education for future generations?

Sports, creative arts, and extracurricular pursuits are not “extras” — they are essential life lessons. They teach discipline, teamwork, resilience, confidence, and self-expression — qualities no textbook can impart.

I believe every institution must consciously weave these into their framework. Not only does this benefit students, but it also creates healthier workplaces and happier communities in adulthood.

My message to future changemakers: Education must go beyond academics. Build systems that nurture curiosity, creativity, and well-being. If your students — or your teams — are happy, confident and motivated, you’ve already succeeded.

Education Special

Jayesh Choksi: Shaping Future-Ready Learners

Under the leadership of Jayesh Choksi, the President of Juhu Parle Education Society (JPES), Utpal Shanghvi Global School and PPSIJC have evolved from a humble institution into one of Mumbai's most forward-thinking global schools — redefining excellence through innovation, empathy, and purposeful education.

By Amber Dias



From its humble beginnings in 1982, Utpal Shanghvi Global School (USGS) and PPSIJC have evolved into benchmarks of international education. Under Jayesh Choksi's leadership, JPES fosters an ecosystem where innovation, values, and academic excellence converge — producing globally recognised achievers and future-ready leaders.

Excerpts from the interview...

What was your founding vision for education when you stepped into this field?

Founded in 1982, the Juhu Parle Education Society (JPES) set out to provide quality education that nurtures excellence, integrity, and growth. Guided by 55 dedicated members, JPES oversees two premier institutions — Utpal Shanghvi Global School (USGS) and Prabhavati Padamshi Soni International Junior College (PPSIJC). From a humble state board school, USGS evolved into one of Mumbai's first to adopt the full Cambridge Pathway, later launching PPSIJC for A Levels. With 43 World Toppers, 105 India Toppers, and alumni at leading global universities, USGS continues to shape confident, values-driven learners ready to thrive in a changing world.

In your view, what are the key attributes that distinguish Utpal Shanghvi Global School from other schools? What does USGS bring to the table that you believe is especially valuable?

At USGS, distinction lies in choice and perspective. As one of Mumbai's few schools offering both Cambridge and International Baccalaureate pathways, students can select what best suits their strengths. While Cambridge builds structure, rigour, and critical thinking, the IB PYP and forthcoming MYP nurture inquiry and purposeful action. Beyond academics, the philosophy of *Kintsugi* — finding strength in challenges — shapes resilient learners. Collaboration with parents ensures shared growth, while humility, respect, and empathy remain central, ensuring excellence is always balanced with integrity and values.

“As one of Mumbai’s few schools offering both Cambridge and International Baccalaureate pathways, students can select what best suits their strengths.”



Could you describe a few of the most significant programmes or pedagogical innovations you have introduced at USGS?

A part of our legacy, the in-house audio-visual studio launched in 2001, enables learners to broadcast daily news, produce radio shows, and build media fluency and leadership skills. In 2002, we were honoured with the Computer Literacy Excellence Award by the President of India, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam — an early recognition of our belief that technology and creativity go hand-in-hand.

That spirit continues through our STREAM Innovation Hub, where students explore Lego, circuits, and drones before progressing to coding, robotics, 3D printing, and prototyping with Arduino and Raspberry Pi. In 2025, our students achieved global recognition, winning at Codeavour 6 in Qatar and the World STEM & Robotics Olympiad Regionals.

Senior students are now developing a humanoid bot — a symbol of both precision and imagination. This ethos of student-led learning thrives through initiatives like TEDxYouth@PPSIJC, GCMUN, and Aikyam, and culminates in Blitzing — our signature event that redefines the annual day with immersive visuals, cultural depth, and performances entirely conceptualised in-house.

What are some of the unique challenges you’ve encountered while building and operating USGS? How have you addressed or overcome them?

Our journey began as a humble State Board school with a motivated community of students, staff, and parents. This strength anchored us when we transitioned to the Cambridge curriculum in 2006 — a shift that redefined teaching and learning. Teachers adopted inquiry-based pedagogy, students adjusted to international assessments, and parents understood the long-term value of global education. Through orientations, training, and continuous feedback, the process became one of constant improvement. ISO-certified since 2002, and now aligned with ISO 21001 standards, our systems ensure sustained quality. These foundations enabled the successful launch of the International Baccalaureate programme in 2022.

As you expand or consider growth, how do you ensure that USGS’s core values, quality of education, and culture can be scaled or adapted successfully in different regions or contexts?

For us, growth has always been strategy-driven, never accidental. The robust systems and processes established at our flagship Juhu campus created a model that replicates excellence without compromising ethos. This foundation enabled the launch of USGS Borivali, where we introduced both the Cambridge and CBSE curricula to meet community needs. The response has been remarkable — admissions have tripled in two years, reaffirming our reputation for innovation and values. For us, expansion is not about adding campuses, but sustaining a culture of rigour, humility, and foresight that prepares learners for life.

What role does technology play in teaching and learning processes?

At USGS, technology is both a tool and an enabler. Smart classrooms, the STREAM Innovation Hub, and the Skolaro ERP system enable seamless teaching, progress tracking, and communication. From AI and AR to coding, robotics, and 3D printing, technology drives immersive, hands-on learning. It personalises instruction, supports data-driven insights, and empowers students to innovate, collaborate, and think critically in a rapidly evolving world.

"Growth has always been strategy-driven, never accidental. The robust systems and processes established at our flagship Juhu campus created a model that replicates excellence without compromising ethos."

















“I see my role as both architect and visionary — shaping learners’ trajectories while contributing to broader educational conversations.”

As the leader of USGS, how do you see your role — not only in guiding your school’s trajectory, but also in shaping broader educational trends, policies, or conversations in India and beyond?

As the leader of Utpal Shanghvi Global School, I see my role as both architect and visionary — shaping learners’ trajectories while contributing to broader educational conversations. In an era where AI is set to transform 80% of jobs, education must go beyond knowledge transfer to nurture innately human skills.

At USGS and PPSIJC, we create real-world opportunities for students to collaborate, lead, and innovate. Our learners have published research papers, earned the ‘Times of India’s Unstoppable 21’ recognition, the Emily Dickinson Award, and a perfect score in the Fermat Mathematics Contest. USGS and PPSIJC also received the Legend Award at the School Enterprise Challenge, UK, for entrepreneurship and sustainable innovation.

Sports, too, are integral — with 10 in-house coaches training students across 10 disciplines.

Our expansion into the IB continuum, from PYP to MYP (2026) and DP, builds analytical thinking, creativity, resilience, and lifelong learning. At USGS, we don’t just teach — we cultivate thinkers who question, interpret, and lead with purpose.

Education Special

Dr Grace Pinto: Pioneering Holistic & Global Education Across India

Guided by faith, vision, and decades of experience, Dr Grace Pinto has grown Ryan Group of Institutions into one of India's largest school networks, blending academic excellence with leadership, innovation, and social responsibility.

By Andrea CostaBir

Taking inspiration from the boundless curiosity and energy of children, Dr Grace Pinto has dedicated her life to education, transforming Ryan Group of Institutions into a powerhouse of holistic learning. From its founding in 1976 by Dr AF Pinto to its present reach across 18 states, Ryan In al Group combines rigorous academics with co-curricular excellence, global exposure, and technology-driven innovation. Today, under the leadership of Dr Grace Pinto, the Group nurtures not only knowledge but character, empathy and leadership, preparing students to thrive as responsible global citizens.

Excerpts from the interview...

What inspired you to enter the education sector and commit yourself to building one of India's largest private school networks?

The vibrant presence of children — their smiles, energy, and eagerness to learn — has always inspired my journey from teacher to educationist. I felt a calling to help students unlock their full potential through supportive learning environments. Their enthusiasm fuels my passion for delivering high-quality, meaningful education. At Ryan Group, we champion inclusive education, embrace diversity, and value each child's strengths. Guided by the vision of our Lord Jesus Christ and supported by our stakeholders, we strive to broaden access, positively impact students' lives, and transform India's educational landscape.

Please give us a brief overview of the Ryan Group of Institutions. Also, what do you believe sets it apart in terms of contributing meaningfully to India's educational landscape?

Founded in 1976 by visionary Dr AF Pinto, Ryan Group of Institutions was created to provide quality education across India. Today, it is one of the country's largest privately owned K–12 networks, offering diverse curricula including CBSE, ICSE/ISC, State Boards, IB, and IGCSE. Guided by the motto "Excellence in Education and All-Round Development," the Group delivers holistic learning that combines rigorous academics with co-curricular programmes, experiential learning, and exposure to arts, culture, and global perspectives. By empowering educators, embracing technology, and fostering dynamic learning ecosystems, Ryan Group prepares students to become compassionate, confident, and globally-minded future leaders.

Could you highlight some of the most impactful



Dr Grace Pinto, Managing Director, Ryan Group of Institutions



educational programmes or initiatives introduced under the Ryan umbrella?

At Ryan, education is viewed as a holistic experience, blending academics with arts, culture, and global perspectives. The institution nurtures lifelong learners who thrive in an ever-changing world through landmark programmes designed to shape character and broaden outlook.

The Theatre Festival (ITF), India's largest school theatre event, hosts over 12,000 participants from 30+ countries, fostering cross-cultural learning and collaboration. Similarly, the Indian Model United Nations (INMUN) develops diplomacy, public speaking, and leadership skills, while the Cultural Exchange (ICE) offers workshops at institutions like NASA alongside global peers.

Ryan also pioneers media education. In 2008, it launched Education through Lens, introducing media studies and filmmaking, establishing India's first in-house school media studios. Initiatives like Young Jourknows, Beyond Breaking News, and Young Directors cultivate media literacy, storytelling, and responsible journalism.

Sports form a core part of holistic development. The Ryan Sports Club trains athletes to excel at district, state, national, and levels, producing champions like Chirag Shetty and Karman Thandi. The Ryan Minithon, India's largest student road race series, motivates over 9,00,000 students across 13 cities to prioritise fitness, teamwork, and outdoor engagement.

Global collaborations with organisations such as the College Board, Navitas, Access USA, and ABE provide scholarships and opportunities. Ryan Global School, Mumbai, became the first school globally to offer ABE (UK) qualifications as part of the IB Career-related Programme (CP), while the KidsMBA programme nurtures entrepreneurial thinking in Grades 6–9.

Leadership and civic engagement are fostered through the Ryan School Parliament, giving students hands-on experience in governance, teamwork, and public speaking. Social responsibility initiatives include supporting orphanages, homes for the disabled and elderly, village adoption programmes, health camps, environmental campaigns, and disaster relief, cultivating empathy, resilience, and community awareness among students.

"We champion inclusive education, embrace diversity, and value each child's strengths."





In what ways do you think your schools have helped prepare students to thrive in a rapidly changing global environment?

Education can no longer remain static; it must grow, innovate, and adapt to society's evolving needs. Ryan Group of Institutions pioneers technology in education while staying rooted in holistic development, shaping the future of learning in India.

Education is not just about acquiring knowledge — it's about building character, fostering leadership, and nurturing a global mindset. Guided by this principle and aligned with NEP 2020, Ryan embraces AI-driven learning, immersive EdTech tools, and research-oriented approaches that equip students with academic knowledge, critical thinking, and reasoning skills needed to thrive in a global, tech-driven economy. By integrating technology thoughtfully, Ryan ensures students are academically competent, globally aware, and digitally fluent, while maintaining the human connection central to education.

From the start, Ryan has emphasised holistic and socio-emotional development. Beyond academics, the school nurtures children's ability to manage emotions, build positive relationships, show empathy, and make responsible decisions. While the home provides the foundation, schools identify areas to strengthen each child's value system. Where challenges arise, specialists work with students to ensure they are not defined by their environment, enabling them to create their own ethical framework and grow into balanced, confident, and socially responsible individuals.

"From the start, Ryan has emphasised holistic and socio-emotional development. Beyond academics, the school nurtures children's ability to manage emotions, build positive relationships, show empathy, and make responsible decisions."



What major challenges have you faced while expanding your educational ventures, and how did you address them?

My journey in education has been both challenging and deeply enriching — a continuous path of growth, reflection, and learning. Building one of India's leading educational brands has required innovation, adaptability, and forward-thinking at every step. At Ryan Group, we are guided by inclusive education, celebrating each child's unique potential. From the start, we have expanded access to quality education across Tier I and II cities as well as remote regions. We are deeply grateful for the blessings of our Lord Jesus Christ and the unwavering support of parents, educators, and communities, whose trust has been instrumental in making our mission a reality.

"Face-to-face classroom engagement remains a priority, with technology strategically supporting research and self-learning."





How do you ensure that the educational model used in your schools is scalable and adaptable to diverse regions and communities?

At Ryan Group, we believe an effective educational model must be scalable and adaptable to meet diverse learner needs across regions. To achieve this, we have refined curricula, strengthened teacher training, integrated technology strategically, and ensured regular parent-teacher engagement, allowing consistent quality with local customisation. Spanning 18 states and 40 cities, Ryan Group offers a wide range of academic boards, catering to varied aspirations and preferences. By combining progressive pedagogy with cutting-edge technology, we have created a robust, responsive educational ecosystem that empowers students from all backgrounds to thrive in a dynamic, globalised world.



What role does technology play in your schools, and how are you leveraging it to enhance both teaching and learning outcomes?

Technology plays a central role at Ryan Group, enhancing learning while preserving the human touch. Face-to-face classroom engagement remains a priority, with technology strategically supporting research and self-learning. Initiatives like the Ryan OS platform streamline curriculum management, assessments, and interactive sessions, keeping students, educators, and parents connected. Social-emotional learning, collaboration, and interpersonal skills are emphasised alongside academics. Hands-on experiences in Robotics, Coding, Drones, and AI foster a STEM-oriented mindset, encouraging students to actively innovate. Project-based learning enables them to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world scenarios, strengthening problem-solving, critical thinking, and practical skills essential for today's fast-paced world.

Nahar Group Redefines Education



With Innovation, Values And Global Awareness

Nahar Group Redefining Education with Innovation, Values and Global Awareness

Manju Yagnik, Vice Chairperson of Nahar Group and Senior VP of NAREDCO, Maharashtra, has made an outstanding impact in education field by building renowned academic institutions Nahar International School and Bees & Cubs Preschool and Day Care. Through her visionary leadership, she has created institutions that stand for academic excellence, innovation, and holistic development. In this exclusive insight, she opens up about her vision of nurturing young minds with global perspectives while grounding them in strong values, setting a high benchmark in the education space.



What inspired you to venture into education and establish Nahar International School? What was the original vision?

The inspiration behind Nahar International School stemmed from a deep recognition that education must evolve to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world. As community builders, we viewed education as the cornerstone of meaningful and sustainable development — not just the creation of infrastructure, but the nurturing of minds and values.

We envisioned a school that moves beyond rote learning to embrace a future-focused, experiential model, grounded in the belief that "Every Child is a Star." This philosophy became our driving force: to unlock each child's unique potential through personalized attention, life skills, and real-world learning.

Our aim was to create a learning environment that blends global standards through the Cambridge and IB curricula with a strong foundation in ethics, creativity, and emotional intelligence. The goal has always been clear — to develop not only academic achievers but thoughtful, empowered global citizens who can adapt, lead, and contribute meaningfully to society.



Nahar International School

Nahar International School has been awarded the "Best School in Innovative Teaching Excellence" at the prestigious Cambridge School Recognition Awards. What are your thoughts on this?

We are truly honoured to receive the "Best School in Innovative Teaching Excellence" award from the Cambridge School Recognition Awards. This recognition reflects our unwavering commitment to nurturing young minds through progressive, student-centred learning.

At Nahar International School, innovation is not just a method — it's a mindset. We are deeply grateful to our educators, students, and parents whose collective passion, trust, and belief make this journey meaningful. This accolade strengthens our resolve to continue inspiring curiosity, creativity, and character in every learner.

What core philosophy and values define Nahar International School's approach to academic and holistic development?

At Nahar International School, our core philosophy centers on nurturing the child holistically — academically, socially, and emotionally. We believe education goes beyond textbooks; it's about fostering curiosity, critical thinking, and compassion.

Our values of integrity, respect, and inclusivity guide everything we do. We strive to create a supportive environment where every student feels valued and empowered to reach their full potential — not just as learners, but as responsible and caring individuals ready to contribute positively to society.

Ultimately, our goal is to equip students with the skills and mindset to thrive in a rapidly changing world while staying grounded in strong ethical principles.

How do you ensure that students are equipped with future-ready skills such as critical thinking, creativity and global awareness?

At Nahar International School, we understand that preparing students for the future means equipping them with the mindset and skills to adapt, innovate, and lead. Future readiness is cultivated through a curriculum that challenges students to think independently, act creatively, and engage meaningfully with the world around them.

Critical thinking is nurtured through inquiry-based learning, research projects, and real-world challenges that promote reflection, reasoning, and problem-solving. Our students are encouraged to question deeply, explore multiple perspectives, and take ownership of their learning.

To foster global awareness, we offer Global Perspectives as a dedicated subject. Students explore international themes, engage with global issues, and develop an appreciation for cultural diversity and interconnectedness — laying the foundation for thoughtful global citizenship.

In what ways is Nahar International School integrating technology and digital innovation to enhance learning outcomes?

At Nahar International School, technology is seen as a tool to enhance — not replace — the human connection in learning. We thoughtfully integrate digital tools to make lessons more engaging and interactive, helping students grasp concepts in ways that resonate with them.

From smart classrooms to collaborative online platforms, we aim to create an environment where technology supports creativity, critical thinking, and personalized learning. More importantly, we focus on teaching students to use technology responsibly and thoughtfully — preparing them not just to consume information, but to become creators and innovators.

It's about blending tradition with innovation to enrich the learning experience and better prepare our students for the world ahead.



Turf Ground



High-Tech Classroom

What have been some of the significant challenges in building and growing the school, and how have you overcome them?

Building and growing Nahar International School has been an inspiring journey filled with challenges that have only strengthened our resolve. One of the significant hurdles was establishing a culture of innovation and excellence from the ground up — ensuring every student and teacher embraced our vision wholeheartedly.

We overcame this by fostering a collaborative community, investing in continuous professional development, and staying committed to our core values. Another challenge was adapting to the rapid changes in education technology and pedagogy, which we met head-on by being proactive, agile, and open to learning.

These experiences have made us more resilient and focused, and today, we proudly stand as a school that not only meets but exceeds the expectations of our students, parents, and educators.

How is Nahar International School evolving to meet the changing educational landscape while maintaining its core values?

We are constantly exploring opportunities to enhance and expand our educational offerings in ways that align with our mission and values. While we remain deeply committed to maintaining the quality and personalized experience that define Nahar International School, we continuously evaluate new initiatives and innovations that can further enrich our students' learning journey.

Any future expansion or new programs will be thoughtfully planned to ensure they uphold our standards of excellence and meet the evolving needs of our community. Our focus is, and always will be, on delivering the best possible education and holistic development for our students.

Are there any plans to expand the school's footprint or introduce new initiatives in the near future?

Bees & Cubs was envisioned as a thoughtfully designed backward integration to Nahar International School — ensuring that the foundation for a child's educational journey is strong, holistic, and aligned with the values we carry forward into formal schooling.

As part of our long-term vision, we are actively exploring opportunities to expand our footprint, both in terms of infrastructure and reach. Every step we take is strategic and purpose-driven.

In addition, we are introducing future-focused initiatives that align with global best practices in early childhood education — ranging from deeper integration of experiential learning to sustainability-driven programs and enhanced emotional intelligence development.



Forest Theme Area

Our goal is to create a seamless continuum from early years to formal schooling, nurturing not just learners but mindful, capable individuals who are future-ready.



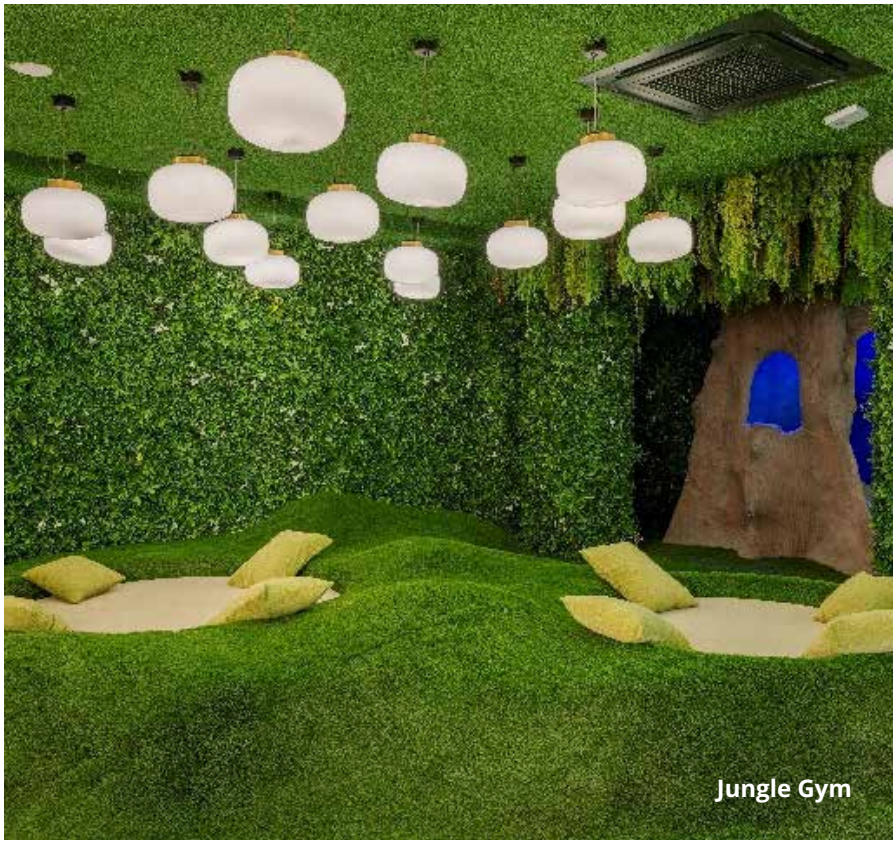


Gallery & Activity Zone

Bees & Cubs has a unique philosophy when it comes to early childhood education. Can you elaborate on how you approach the development of young learners beyond academics?

At Bees & Cubs, we see every child as full of potential — naturally curious, imaginative, and eager to explore. While academic development is important, our focus goes far beyond it. We are proud to offer the Cambridge Early Years Programme a globally respected curriculum that nurtures each child's holistic growth.

What truly sets us apart is our intentional focus on shaping attitudes, values, and life skills from the earliest years. We create a culture where responsibility, mindfulness, and collaboration are not just encouraged — they are lived every day. Children learn to take ownership of their actions, complete tasks with care, and contribute meaningfully to what we call "the hive" — our learning community.



Jungle Gym

Tree House Café

How does the 'Best Campus Design Excellence' award reflect your vision for early childhood learning?

We are truly honoured and humbled to receive the "Best Campus Design Excellence" award for Bees & Cubs Preschool and Day Care. This recognition is not just about architecture or aesthetics — it's a celebration of our commitment to creating a nurturing, safe, and imaginative environment where every child can thrive.

Our vision has always been to design a space that reflects the joy, curiosity, and boundless potential of early childhood. This award is a testament to the collective efforts of our dedicated team, our supportive parent community, and the little hearts who bring our campus to life every day.

We see this not as a destination, but as an encouragement to keep growing, learning, and reimagining what's possible in early education.



Astronauts Space

Education Special

Legacy Of Holistic Learning: RBK Educational Institutions

Rupal Kanakia, Chairperson; Niyati Kanakia, Director; and the principals of various institutions open up about how RBKEI has championed holistic growth.

By Amber Dias

Excerpts from our interview with Rupal Kanakia, Chairperson; Niyati Kanakia, Director, Rambai Babubhai Kanakia Educational Institutions...

RBK Educational Institutions have been shaping young minds for over 25 years. What inspired you to enter this field, and what drives the mission today?

Established in 1999 by Rambai Babubhai Kanakia, RBKEI has nurtured generations of confident, creative learners across Mumbai and Mahuva. Beyond academics, we provide an environment where students discover passions, develop talents, and grow into responsible global citizens. With state-of-the-art campuses and a strong focus on academics, co-curriculars, and extracurriculars, we aim to prepare young minds for a changing world, fostering curiosity, compassion, and holistic development over rote learning.

What challenges did RBKEI face while expanding across regions, and how did you adapt to local needs?

Expansion has been rewarding yet challenging, with each region bringing unique cultural and educational expectations. We follow a community-first approach, engaging parents to tailor curriculum, infrastructure, and activities while maintaining a consistent international programme enriched with Indian traditions and values. Building quality teaching talent was another challenge, addressed through continuous training, mentorship, and collaborative practices, ensuring excellence and consistency across all campuses while keeping students rooted and globally prepared.

As an educational leader, how do you see your role in shaping India's education landscape?

At Kanakia International School, education centres on nurturing responsible global citizens through curiosity, critical thinking, and empathy. We balance tradition with modernity, academics with life skills, and knowledge with values. With progressive practices, interdisciplinary teaching, and a focus on mental wellness, we empower teachers and inspire learners to achieve success while contributing meaningfully to society.



Rupal Kanakia, Chairperson, RBKEI



Rupal Kanakia, Chairperson, RBKEI

"With state-of-the-art campuses and a strong focus on academics, co-curriculars, and extracurriculars, we aim to prepare young minds for a changing world, fostering curiosity, compassion, and holistic development over rote learning."

Excerpts from our interview with Nalini Shetty, Principal, Kanakia International School (ICSE), Mira Road, Mumbai...

RBKEI has launched several forward-thinking initiatives. Could you highlight a few impactful programmes?

2013-14: Kanakia International School introduced CORE (Cognitive and Rational Emotive Education), rooted in Cognitive Behavioural and Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy, to build resilience, self-discipline, and adaptability. This includes activities such as brain gym, mind mapping, and bullying awareness.

2014: Sports were integrated into the curriculum, offering disciplines from football and cricket to yoga and martial arts, alongside mandatory meditation for mindfulness.

2017-18: STREAM/STEM was introduced, later expanded to AI, robotics, and coding for Grades 6+, combining theory with hands-on projects.

The UNICEF SDG Programme followed in **2018-19**, linking global goals to classroom learning. Post-pandemic, yoga and meditation became compulsory. More recently, horticulture **(2022)** and the Master Talk Series - with speakers like Kapil Dev - have enriched learning beyond academics.

With an emphasis on holistic development, what long-term impact have you seen in students?

Our students consistently achieve 100% results in ICSE and ISC, while excelling globally in fields from music to football. Many alumni return as parents, entrusting us with the next generation.

How do you preserve values while scaling?

Through strong parent partnerships, scholarships, and community engagement, we ensure every decision remains learner-centric, focused on well-being, empathy, and holistic growth.

How is RBKEI integrating technology into classrooms?

From smart boards and AI labs to coding, drones, and robotics competitions, technology is seamlessly embedded, driving innovation and student engagement.

Excerpts from our interview with Dr Shitala Prabhu, Principal, Kanakia International School (CBSE), Bhayandar...

RBKEI has launched several forward-thinking initiatives. Could you highlight a few impactful programmes?

At Kanakia International School, we blend academics with life skills through design thinking, AI, IT, and handicraft programmes, alongside eco, heritage, and literacy clubs. Role-playing, storytelling, and gamification make learning engaging, while art, ICT, and sports build creativity and resilience. Learners also participate in UN SDG projects, auditing resource use to foster global responsibility.

With emphasis on holistic development, what long-term impact have you seen in students?

Our learners grow into future leaders, academically strong, empathetic, adaptable, and culturally rooted, while being prepared for global citizenship.

How is RBKEI integrating technology into classrooms?

With smart boards, AI and STREAM labs, coding, app development, and robotics, students innovate, compete, and excel with confidence.



Niyati Kanakia, Director, RBKEI

Excerpts from our interview with Vani Reddy, Principal, Kanakia International School (IGCSE), Bhayandar...

RBKEI has launched several forward-thinking initiatives. Could you highlight a few impactful programmes?

We host guest lectures by alumni to inspire students and boost confidence. In 2022, we introduced the IAYP Programme in partnership with the Rotaract Club, encouraging community service, life skills, and adventure-based learning, endorsed globally by Cambridge.

With a focus on holistic development, what long-term impact have you seen?

Our students are confident, independent thinkers - bold, curious, and expressive. We nurture individuality with empathy, avoiding punishment and valuing every question.

How does RBKEI preserve values while expanding?

Through skilled educators, dedicated curricula, and rigorous quality assurance, we maintain consistent standards across all schools.

Excerpts from our interview with Shuchi Shukla, Principal, Kanakia International School, Chembur (IB) & Sunayana Awasthi, Kanakia International School, Chembur (CBSE)...

RBKEI has launched several forward-thinking initiatives. Could you highlight a few impactful programmes?

At RBKEI, learning extends beyond academics to nurture curiosity, creativity, and well-being. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is part of the timetable, helping students build resilience and empathy. Our Immersions for Grades 1-5 explore topics like filmmaking, hydroponics, and space, while the Fountas & Pinnell Framework personalises literacy. In the Early Years, play-based ateliers and a Culinary Corner spark creativity and life skills.

"We follow a community-first approach, engaging parents to tailor curriculum, infrastructure, and activities while maintaining a consistent international programme enriched with Indian traditions and values."



Niyati Kanakia, Director, RBKEI

“We aim to prepare young minds for a changing world, fostering curiosity, compassion, and holistic development over rote learning.”

“With progressive practices, interdisciplinary teaching, and a focus on mental wellness, we empower teachers and inspire learners to achieve success while contributing meaningfully to society.”

With emphasis on holistic development, what long-term impact have you seen?

We nurture mind, heart, and spirit, blending mindfulness with global pedagogy. Students lead impactful projects - from vertical gardens to fundraising for cancer patients - learning recognition such as ranking in the top 2% of schools in the Global Climate Action Project.

What challenges have you faced while expanding?

Introducing IB education required educating parents. Through orientations, showcases, and open dialogues, we built trust and strong partnerships.

How do you preserve values while scaling?

Guided by Diversity, Integrity, Leadership, and Excellence, we ensure personalisation through differentiated teaching, counselling, and inclusive support systems.

How is technology integrated into learning?

Technology is embedded across grades through coding, robotics, 3D printing, and design thinking, leading to achievements at NASA, WRO, and Formula One competitions.

What is your role as a changemaker?

By modelling value-based, student-centric schooling, we aim to inspire Indian education to balance rigour with empathy, shaping confident, compassionate leaders.

Education Special

Bindu Oberoi On Building A School That Balances Emotional Well-being, Rigour & Resilience

Bindu Oberoi, the Board Chair of Oberoi International School, emphasises that they see education as more than lessons or grades. It's a shared journey rooted in curiosity, empathy and resilience.

By Amber Dias

For over 17 years, Bindu Oberoi, Board Chair of Oberoi International School (OIS), has championed a vision of education that goes far beyond academics. Guided by the belief that learning should nurture curiosity, empathy and resilience, she built OIS into one of India's leading IB schools — a space where students are free to think, explore, and grow into globally minded, compassionate citizens. Through participatory leadership, holistic learning, and a deeply engaged community, Bindu Oberoi continues to redefine what it means to educate for a changing world.

Excerpts from the interview...

What inspired you to step into the education space?

My journey into education stems from a simple conviction — that schools should nurture not only knowledge, but also curiosity, empathy, and resilience. 17 years ago, when few schools in India offered a truly inquiry-based, international curriculum, I saw the need for one that prepared children for a changing world. Oberoi International School was born from this vision: A place where learning challenges the mind, nurtures the heart, and empowers every child with the freedom to think, explore their passions, and grow into their most authentic selves.

In your view, what sets Oberoi International School apart in shaping the future of education in India? What do you believe OIS uniquely brings to the table?

One of OIS's greatest strengths is that it is truly community-driven. We view education as more than lessons or grades — a shared journey between families, educators, and learners. When we recently revisited our mission, vision, and core values, the entire community — parents, teachers, students, staff, and alumni — came together to co-create them through open dialogue. This process itself became a powerful learning experience, resulting in a renewed statement of purpose that reflects who we are and who we strive to become.Our participatory ethos extends to hiring as well, where key leadership interviews often include parents and students, fostering genuine accountability and connection. This deep sense of belonging and collaboration — from classroom interactions to strategic visioning — defines OIS. We are not merely preparing students for the world, but preparing a world that is inclusive, collaborative, and humane. Our guiding ethos captures it best: Freedom to Think, Empower to Be.









Could you highlight some of the most impactful programmes or initiatives introduced at OIS that reflect its commitment to holistic, inquiry-based learning?

What excites me most about OIS is how our programmes empower students to evolve from learners into leaders. Initiatives such as Hackathons and Innovation Days unite students across grades to address real-world challenges — from sustainability to mental health — inspiring creativity, courage, and problem-solving. Through Service as Action and CAS, service becomes a way of seeing the world, where inquiry extends into empathy and responsibility. Independent projects like the Personal Project and Extended Essay encourage depth, rigour, and resilience.Student voice extends beyond the classroom, with learners actively shaping school life through leadership councils and decision-making panels. This is supported by a strong wellbeing framework — including social-emotional learning, counselling, and academic support — ensuring every child feels safe, valued, and able to thrive.Together, these initiatives reflect OIS's belief in holistic education — one that challenges the mind, nurtures the heart, and prepares students to engage meaningfully with the world.

"With 19 cohorts and over 3,100 students, OIS's vibrant community comes together through student-led initiatives, collaborative projects, and cross-grade programmes that turn ideas into action in the real world."

How do you believe OIS has influenced students' development — both academically and in terms of preparing them to be compassionate, globally-minded citizens?

The influence of OIS is evident in the confidence, empathy, and adaptability our students bring to the world. Beyond strong IB results and global university placements, what truly matters is the kind of individuals they become — thoughtful, compassionate, and proactive leaders who create real change. A shining example is Aanya Baxi, India's sole representative on the IB Youth Advisory Board, whose voice shapes IB practices globally — a testament to how OIS nurtures academic excellence and empathetic, globally-minded citizens.

What have been some of the unique challenges in building and sustaining a school of this scale and vision in India, and how did you navigate them?

Building OIS meant venturing into uncharted territory. When we began, IB schools were rare in India, and many parents were hesitant to move away from traditional models. Earning trust required transparency and consistently proving the value of inquiry-based learning. Recruiting passionate educators aligned with our ethos of curiosity and care was another challenge, addressed through strong professional development. As we expanded, maintaining intimacy within scale remained vital, achieved through small class sizes and robust student support. Sustaining innovation has meant staying rooted in our values while embracing continuous renewal and change.

"Classrooms are designed for collaboration — digital and physical — where students use technology seamlessly while staying rooted in human connection."











“I view the school as part of India’s wider educational ecosystem, with the responsibility to inspire progress. At OIS, participatory leadership reflects our belief in collective growth.”

Technology is deeply integrated into the IB framework. How has OIS leveraged technology to enhance teaching, learning, and student engagement?

At OIS, technology enhances real-world learning by making it more thoughtful, personalised, and impactful. Classrooms are designed for collaboration — digital and physical — where students use technology seamlessly while staying rooted in human connection. For teachers, digital tools provide insights to tailor learning; for students, they enable innovation through initiatives like the student-led Hackathon addressing real-world challenges. Whether creating films, apps, or global collaborations, technology at OIS is never an add-on but a purposeful tool that empowers students to think critically, create meaningfully, and extend learning beyond the classroom.

As the guiding force behind OIS, how do you see your role in shaping not just the school’s trajectory, but also influencing the broader discourse on education in India?

My role is to ensure OIS remains true to its founding values of excellence, integrity, care, and curiosity, while evolving with the world’s changing needs. I view the school as part of India’s wider educational ecosystem, with the responsibility to inspire progress. At OIS, participatory leadership — through co-created values and shared decision-making — reflects our belief in collective growth. By fostering teacher leadership, wellbeing, and student agency, we aim to model holistic, future-focused education rooted in empathy, courage, and purpose.

Education Special

Ashok Saraf's Mission: Transforming Mumbai's Education Landscape

Guided by a family legacy and inspired by visionary mentors, he has grown RSET into a hub of schools, colleges, and innovation that empowers students at every stage.

By Amber Dias

Ashok Saraf, President of the Rajasthani Sammelan Education Trust (RSET), has been at the helm of one of Mumbai's most respected educational conglomerates, overseeing 14 diverse institutions that serve over 16,000 learners every day. Rooted in a family legacy of philanthropy and inspired by visionary mentors, he has spent more than three decades expanding RSET's footprint — from pre-schools and international schools to management, commerce, media, and online learning — while championing education as a transformative force for social progress.

Excerpts from the interview...

From a modest beginning to managing 14 diverse institutions under RSET, what initially inspired you to step into the world of education? Was there a defining moment that shaped this journey?

I come from a family that has always believed in the transformative power of education. My father, Shri Mahavirprasadji Saraf, directed much of his philanthropy towards education, women's empowerment, and social upliftment. In 1983, he readily donated to establish a girls' degree college, followed by contributions to several other initiatives under the Rajasthani Sammelan Education Trust (RSET).

Inspired by this legacy, and by my visionary uncle Shri Ramnarayanji Saraf — who spearheaded the expansion and redevelopment of RSET — I was drawn to the field of education. The defining moment came when he encouraged me to actively participate in the Trust's endeavours, carrying forward the family's mission of advancing learning and social progress.

In 2007, I was elected President of RSET and, together with a dedicated team of office bearers, set about transforming the Trust into a new avatar, realising the vision first articulated by my uncle. Since then, there has been no looking back, and I have continued to steer RSET's growth with the steadfast support of my colleagues.



Ashok M Saraf, President, RSET

“In 2007, I was elected President of RSET and, together with a dedicated team of office bearers, set about transforming the Trust into a new avatar, realising the vision first articulated by my uncle.”

Pre-school and post-graduate education to online learning — all under one roof. What was the thought behind this, and how do you view this journey of growth?

We believe that every student who enrolls in our schools should be able to complete their entire educational journey within our campus. With this vision, we introduced a wide spectrum of courses ranging from commerce and management to media studies. We also recognised the need for schools offering curricula from different boards. While we already had a Hindi medium school catering largely to students from marginalised sections of society, there was a growing demand for an English medium school. In response, we established one affiliated with the SSC Board, followed by two more schools attached to the CISCE and IGCSE Boards.

Today, all four schools run by RSET are mentored by my daughter, Ms Archita Rajpuria, who serves as their Chief Mentor. Beyond offering strategic guidance, she actively fosters a positive school culture by working closely with heads, faculty, and students.



Archita Rajpuria, Trustee & Jt Secretary, MBIS

Today, RSET’s constantly growing network of educational institutions includes:

- Mainadevi Bajaj International Playschool, which is accredited to the International Playschool Curriculum of USA.
- Kudilal Govindram Seksaria Sarvodaya School, which is a Hindi medium school (affiliated to Maharashtra State Board).
- Kudilal Govindram Seksaria English School (affiliated to Maharashtra State Board).
- Ramniwas Bajaj English High School, which follows the ICSE Curriculum.
- Mainadevi Bajaj International School, one of the top International schools with the Cambridge Curriculum.
- Durgadevi Saraf Junior College (affiliated to Maharashtra State Board).
- Ghanshyamdas Saraf College of Commerce, which offers Mumbai University-affiliated undergraduate and post graduate courses in Commerce. The college is also a PhD centre.
- Ladhidevi Ramdhar Maheshwari College of Commerce, which offers Mumbai University-affiliated undergraduate and post graduate courses in Commerce.
- Deviprasad Goenka Management College of Media Studies, which offers Mumbai University-affiliated undergraduate and post graduate courses in Media.
- Durgadevi Saraf Institute of Management Studies, affiliated to Mumbai University and AICTE, which offers post graduate courses in Management Studies.
- Durgadevi Saraf Global Business School, affiliated to AICTE, which offers Post Graduate Diploma in Management Studies.
- Kirandevi Saraf Institute of Complete Learning, which offers vocational courses.
- Nalini Shah Music Academy, which offers courses in music education.
- Kunjbihari S Goyal Online Academy for online Learning.

RSET has also provided the following facilities to students:

- Ramdhar Maheshwari Career Counseling Centre - Career counseling services.
- Draupadidevi Sanwarmal Women’s Hostel - Hostel accommodation for girls.
- Jankidevi Bilasrai Bubna Boys’ Hostel - Hostel accommodation for boys.
- Pravinchandra D Shah Sports Academy - To nurture the talents in sports.
- Vishwanath Podar Study Centre - A study centre for CA students

It has been an exciting and challenging journey so far. It gives me immense satisfaction to cater to the educational needs of over 16,000 learners coming to the campus every day. However, the best is yet to come. We are planning the second phase of our growth with the launch of a private Skills University under the banner of RSET, which will be coming up close to the iconic RSET campus, very soon.

As President of RSET, what do you believe your institutions offer that truly sets them apart in Mumbai's educational landscape?

I believe that educational leaders have a crucial role to play in shaping an institution by setting a clear vision, creating a positive learning environment, and fostering a culture of growth and collaboration. As President of RSET, we focused on defining the vision and mission while establishing clear and achievable goals for each of our institutions. We invested in high-quality infrastructure and recruited the finest talent across our educational establishments. As in any successful organisation, I strongly believe in setting measurable objectives, implementing robust reporting systems, and conducting regular review meetings. We place great emphasis on student well-being, providing a supportive learning environment, a deep commitment to academic excellence, and strong leadership capable of inspiring and guiding both students and faculty. Furthermore, beyond academics, our institutions prioritise the holistic development of students – qualities that distinguish us and have helped position our institutions among the leading schools and colleges in Mumbai.

With over three decades of dedication to education, what do you believe has been the most tangible impact of your work on students' futures?

At RSET today, we provide education to over 16,000 learners across a wide spectrum of courses, ranging from pre-school to post-graduate programmes in management, media, and commerce. We believe that the values, knowledge, and skills our students acquire during their time at RSET not only shape their careers but also empower them to be a positive force in society. Many of our alumni are now well established in their professions and hold senior leadership positions.

Having built such a robust ecosystem in Mumbai, what are some of the unique challenges you faced while expanding RSET's footprint, and how did your leadership style help overcome them?

RSET's educational journey began in 1959 with the establishment of a school for girls – a pioneering step towards women's empowerment. As time went by, we felt the need to broaden our reach, leading to the launch of a Junior College in 1975, a Degree College in 1983, and an English medium school in 1985.

"I believe that educational leaders have a crucial role to play in shaping an institution by setting a clear vision, creating a positive learning environment, and fostering a culture of growth and collaboration."



Dr Subhash Chandra, Shri Sajjan Goenka, Shri Kalyan Banerjee and Shri Ashok M Saraf Inaugurating the Deviprasad Goenka Management College of Media Studies



Inauguration of Ramdhar Maheshweri Career Counciling Centre by Shri KG Maheshwari, in the presence of Shri Ashok M Saraf, Shri Madhusudan Maheshwari, Shri Balkrishna Lakhotia and donor family members



Shri Ravi Goyal (Center) With Shri Vinod Shelar and Shri Vinod Tawde at the Inauguration Ceremony Of Kunjbihari S Goyal Online Academy

"It has been an exciting and challenging journey so far. It gives me immense satisfaction to cater to the educational needs of over 16,000 learners coming to the campus every day."



Smt Vidya Thakur, Shri Vinod Podaar, Shri Rahul Podaar, Shri Ashok M Saraf and Shri M P Taparia inaugurating Vishwanath Podar Study Centre



Shri Kapil Dev inaugurating Jankidevi Bilasrai Bubna Boys Hostel in the presence of Shri Ramprakash Bubna and Smt. Sharda Bubna and other dignitaries



Music Composer Shri Chirantan Bhatt inaugurating Nalini Shah Music Academy



His Excellency Shri R Sankarnarayan, Shri Pavankumar Sanwarmal and his family at the Inauguration Of Draupadidevi Sanwarmal Women's hostel



Aamir Khan releasing the Golden Jubilee Souvenir of Kudilal Govindram Seksaria Sarvodaya School

"Beyond academics, our institutions prioritise the holistic development of students – qualities that distinguish us and have helped position our institutions among the leading schools and colleges in Mumbai."



Shri Ashok Chavan inaugurating Durgadevi Saraf Institute of Management Studies in the presence of (L to R) Shri Ashok M Saraf, Shri Mahavirprasad G Saraf, Shri Prakash M Saraf, Shri Naresh M Saraf, Shri Rajesh Tope & Shri Rajan Welukar



Dr Naresh M Saraf, Shri Sujay Jairaj, Shri Ashok M Saraf, Shri Pravinchandra Shah, Shri Harish Shah and Smt Bina Shah and other dignitaries at the inauguration ceremony of Pravinchandra D Shah Sports Academy

The real turning point came in 2007, when we undertook a major expansion and modernisation of the campus while introducing new institutions. The challenges were clear: Deciding which courses and institutions to prioritise, and raising the funds for world-class infrastructure.

A workshop on University Leadership Development at Harvard proved invaluable, particularly in understanding fundraising through alumni networks. Combined with my business experience and the strong support of RSET's office bearers, we overcame these hurdles. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we have since transformed these plans into reality.

Leadership in education today also means being an influencer and advocate for positive change. How do you view your role in shaping discourse and policies within India's education sector?

I would be happy to see like-minded leaders emulate the growth story of RSET and be inspired to extend quality education to students across all strata of society, thereby fostering positive change. To me, that would be the greatest satisfaction.

Personally, I hope to see young entrepreneurs and educational leaders step forward with fresh energy, expertise, and a genuine passion for education. By widening access to quality learning, they can create meaningful social impact. While a few are already doing commendable work, I am confident that the coming decade will witness many more entering the field.

Education Special

Aarav Muchhala: Transforming Thane Into A Hub Of Holistic Learning

Blending a proud family legacy with a progressive outlook, Aarav Muchhala of the Arun Muchhala Group, is building an ecosystem of institutions that empower students with choice, confidence, and cutting-edge skills.

By Amber Dias

Aarav Arun Muchhala, Managing Director of the Arun Muchhala Group, is charting a bold path in India's education landscape through a network of schools and colleges spanning Maharashtra and Gujarat. At the heart of this expansion is the Sai Shiva Educational Trust's Aarav Muchhala College of Arts, Commerce & Science in Thane, a dynamic institution offering eleven distinct undergraduate programmes alongside junior college streams. By combining world-class infrastructure, progressive teaching methods, and a culture that nurtures confidence both on and off the stage, Muchhala is ensuring that students in Thane and beyond are prepared not just for degrees, but for life.

Excerpts from the interview...

What motivated the Sai Shiva Educational Trust to establish Aarav Muchhala College? What unique value do you believe the college brings to students in Thane and beyond?

For too long, Thane students had limited undergraduate choices. We changed that. Under one roof, we now offer 11 UG programmes — ranging from B.A., B.Com. and B.Sc. in Microbiology or IT to specialised courses like B.A. Psychology, B.B.I. and B.A.F. — alongside FYJC and SYJC in Arts, Commerce and Science. Choice is backed by world-class infrastructure, modern labs and globally trained faculty. Our support extends beyond graduation, mentoring students for life. Every student also participates in our annual personality contest, building stage confidence that lasts forever. This, to me, is complete education — empowering students to step onto the world stage.

Could you describe some of the signature academic or co-curricular programmes at Aarav Muchhala College that you feel have made the biggest difference for your students?

When asked about signature programmes at Aarav Muchhala College of Arts, Commerce & Science, my answer may seem unusual. We are still young — five years including junior college and only in our third year of senior college. At this stage, I would not single out one course as a flagship. Every programme, whether B.A., B.Com. or B.Sc. in Psychology, contributes meaningfully to shaping young lives. In time, some may emerge as defining pillars, but today I see all of them making a difference.

In my other institutions, however, the picture is clearer. At Muchhala Polytechnic, Computer Engineering has long been the favourite, with over 500 graduates since inception, making it the institution's heart in Thane. Similarly, at Arun Muchhala International College of Hotel Management, our B.Sc. in Hospitality Studies has built the college's reputation, producing professionals who thrive in the global hospitality industry. Across all our colleges, progressive teaching methods ensure students experience education of the highest quality.



Arunkumar Muchhala - Chairman



Aarav Arun Muchhala - Managing Director





“Choice is backed by world-class infrastructure, modern labs and globally trained faculty. Our support extends beyond graduation, mentoring students for life.”



Personality Contest with Mr Aarav Muchhala

In what ways have these programmes helped prepare students for the future — not just academically, but in terms of employability, critical thinking, adaptability, or social/ emotional skills?

Our B.Sc. in Hospitality Studies has delivered the highest employability, preparing students to enter the industry directly, often with international exposure through overseas internships. By contrast, Computer Engineering at Muchhala Polytechnic, as a diploma, often leads students to pursue further studies before work. Both offer strong but distinct outcomes. Across all institutions, we add trending elements beyond the syllabus, keeping students adaptive, while projects and the final-year Blackbook foster critical thinking. Alumni like Chef Prashant Chipkar, now Executive Chef in Dubai, embody this success. With Aarav Muchhala Senior College, we are building similar platforms through industry tie-ups and mentorship.

What are some of the specific challenges you’ve faced while building out undergraduate and higher secondary education offerings and how has the college navigated them?

Every new beginning comes with its own pit-stops — moments of failure, rethinking, and rapid planning. We are no exception. Looking back, what once seemed like major challenges now feel like milestones we simply had to cross. Securing affiliations and approvals, designing a campus that balances academics with extra-curricular spaces, and above all, building the right faculty team — these were intense processes. Indeed, finding the right educators was the toughest; it took us over six months of interviews to form the teaching pool that anchors us today.

One distinctive step we took was listening directly to students. We conducted surveys before launching programmes to understand their expectations of course line-ups and exposure. This gave us clarity in finalising subjects and selecting the right courses to offer. Once the right team was in place, the remaining challenges — whether academic design or institutional processes — were navigated with confidence. I regard that entire inception phase as proof that perseverance and collaboration always pay off.

How do you ensure that your models of education (infrastructure, faculty, curriculum, co-curricular activities) are scalable and can be adapted to different regions or similar demographic settings?

Scalability in education is not a fixed formula — it varies across faculty, curriculum, infrastructure and co-curriculars. Faculty and curriculum are inseparable, with outcomes the true measure of success. Infrastructure must reflect demand; for example, we created a table tennis facility after spotting student talent. To us, scalability means responsiveness, not replication. Curriculum must adapt to local contexts — such as regional languages — while faculty quality also varies by region, but can reach excellence with commitment. Having built institutions across Gujarat and Maharashtra, I believe scalability aligns global standards with local realities.

"Finding the right educators was the toughest; it took us over six months of interviews before we could form the teaching pool that anchors us today."


Physics Lab


Biology Lab


Chemistry Lab


Computer Lab


FnB Training


House-Keeping Training


Kitchen Training - Flambe


Kitchen Training Lab


Library



Team Aarav Muchhala College of Arts, Commerce and Science



Team Arun Muchhala International College of Hotel Management



Team of Muchhala Polytechnic

“My passion for technology — from drones to smartboards — shaped our rapid shift to online teaching during the pandemic, creating a collaborative model that has strengthened us.”

What role do modern technologies and teaching innovations play in your pedagogical approach — and how do you balance them with offline/ interactive/ hands-on learning?

I have always believed education must move with the times, blending quality learning with adaptive teaching and modern technologies. Faculty and management test new software for coding, graphics or design before introducing it, ensuring technical readiness and classroom relevance. Our teams attend conferences and, when needed, we bring in industry experts for practical insights. My passion for technology — from drones to smartboards — has shaped this approach. COVID-19 further strengthened us, as digital classrooms became collaborative models. Today, with tools like 3D printing, students are active participants, even creating small codes for administration — proof that true pedagogy empowers learners to lead.

Beyond immediate student outcomes, how do you see Aarav Muchhala College influencing educational practices or policy in India? What aspirations do you have for its role in education reform and leadership?

The NEP 2020 is not just another policy but a catalyst to redefine education for the next generation. At Aarav Muchhala College of Arts, Commerce & Science, we are actively aligning with its vision. I remain closely engaged with faculty attending NEP training, as I want us shaping — not merely following — these reforms. I strongly recommend systematic curriculum renewal every 5–10 years, given rapid advances in AI, Data Science and IoT. Equally vital is fostering awareness of risks such as data breaches and hacking. As we evolve into a university, our goal is to balance innovation with security, creativity with responsibility.

Education Special

Gur K Serai & Dr Krit Serai: Building A Future-Ready Generation

Carrying forward the legacy of their founders, the Co-Chairs of the Satluj Group are expanding Satluj's impact across Northern India by combining world-class academics, life skills, and innovation to shape students for the 21st century.

By Andrea CostaBir

Guided by the pioneering ideals of S Pritam Singh Serai and Jagdish Kaur Serai, Satluj Public School has grown from a modest house in Chandigarh in 1976 into one of Northern India's largest school networks. Today, under the leadership of Gur K Serai and Dr Krit Serai, the Satluj Group continues to uphold its founding promise — making world-class education accessible while nurturing character, curiosity, and compassion. Following the British and Indian curricula in the Early Years, Satluj schools also impart optional special English courses in association with **Cambridge, Burlington**, and Trinity College London. With a focus on holistic growth, technological innovation, and global exposure, the Group is preparing students not only for academic success but for meaningful lives as responsible global citizens.

Excerpts from the interview...

What inspired the founding of the Satluj Group of Schools in Haryana, and what key educational values or goals have guided its journey over the years?

Satluj Public School was founded by S Pritam Singh Serai and Jagdish Kaur Serai*ji* in a small house in Chandigarh on January 12, 1976, driven by a simple dream: To provide world-class education to children in Northern India while keeping them connected to their roots. From the start, the focus has been on shaping character, curiosity and confidence, not just marks. With respect for every child's individuality and a balance of academics and life skills, Satluj now spans Jammu & Kashmir, Haryana, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh, nurturing holistic, 21st-century-ready students.

Can you share some of the most impactful educational programmes or initiatives introduced by Satluj Public School that have made a difference in students' academic or personal development?

Some of our most impactful initiatives extend beyond textbooks. Leadership and debate clubs have helped students develop confidence and critical thinking, while our mentorship programme, where teachers guide small groups, fosters both academic and emotional growth. Community service projects — including collaborations with local NGOs, clean-up drives, and literacy programmes — instill compassion and responsibility. Our AI initiatives further expand learning, using tools to personalise education and introduce ethical applications. By engaging with AI meaningfully, students learn to innovate, collaborate, and devise solutions that address community challenges and shape a better future.



Dr Krit Serai, DLitt (Hon), MA Education (University of London, UK), with advanced studies at Cambridge, the London School of Economics, and CMSU USA, is an eminent educationist with over 25 years of teaching experience across the UK, USA, and India. A national award-winning education leader, he received the prestigious CBSE National Award (2011) and multiple honours.



Gur K Serai, MA in Educational Leadership from the University of Lancaster, UK, with additional leadership courses from University College London (UCL), brings over 22 years of experience in educational leadership in the UK. Honoured with several accolades, including the Chandigarh Eminence Award 2025, Serai is widely recognised as an innovator shaping the future of education.

"By engaging with AI meaningfully, students learn to innovate, collaborate, and devise solutions that address community challenges and shape a better future."

How does Satluj Public School prepare its students for the challenges of the modern world, including higher education, careers, and social responsibility?

We prepare our students to be global citizens who remain connected to their local identity. Academically, we ensure strong foundations in STEM and languages, while also emphasising communication, problem-solving, and adaptability. Our career counselling workshops, partnerships with leading universities in India and abroad, and industry interactions help bridge the gap between school and the real world. At the same time, our focus on ethics, empathy, and social responsibility ensures that our graduates not only excel in their careers, but also make meaningful contributions to society.



“Our career counselling workshops, partnerships with leading universities in India and abroad, and industry interactions help bridge the gap between school and the real world.”

What specific challenges has the school faced in delivering quality education in Haryana, and how have you addressed them to maintain high standards of learning?

One challenge we have faced is bridging the gap between traditional expectations and modern educational practices, not just in Haryana but across Northern India. Parents often equate learning with examinations, while we focus on holistic growth. We have addressed this by promoting transparency — inviting parents to observe our teaching methods, showcasing student projects, and demonstrating how life skills translate into success. Another challenge is access to resources in semi-urban areas. To address this, we have invested significantly in teacher training and digital classrooms, ensuring no child is disadvantaged by their location.





How does Satluj Public School ensure its teaching methodologies and programs can be adapted or scaled to benefit students in other regions or under different educational settings?

Our philosophy has always been "simple, scalable, and student-first." Most of our teaching methodologies are designed to be flexible. For instance, our activity-based learning modules can be implemented in a rural classroom with basic resources just as effectively as in a fully digitised urban setting. We also actively collaborate with other schools in the region — sharing lesson plans, teacher training frameworks, and digital content — because we believe quality education grows stronger when it is shared, not guarded. Students follow a robust British-India curriculum from the foundation stage, which supports them throughout their schooling and beyond.

In what ways has technology been integrated into the classroom and school culture at Satluj, and how has it enhanced learning outcomes and engagement?

Technology at Satluj isn't a buzzword — it's an enabler. From smart boards and AI-powered learning apps to virtual exchanges with schools in India and abroad, we've embedded technology into daily learning. For students, it means interactive lessons, access to global knowledge, and personalised feedback. For teachers, it means smarter assessments and better tracking of progress. Most importantly, technology has made learning exciting and relevant, so students see education not as a chore, but as a discovery.

"We see ourselves not just as an institution, but as a catalyst. Education in Haryana — and India at large — is evolving, and we want to be at the forefront of that change."

As a respected institution in the region, how does Satluj Public School see its role in shaping educational discourse and inspiring other schools or educators in Haryana and beyond?

We see ourselves not just as an institution, but as a catalyst. Education in Haryana — and India at large — is evolving, and we want to be at the forefront of that change. Through teacher workshops, inter-school collaborations, and open forums, we share what works for us and learn from others. Our role is to raise the bar, inspire confidence in innovation, and remind every educator that we are shaping not just students, but the future of our communities and our country. Our partnerships with universities in India and abroad support career growth.

Education Special

Dr Ajeenkya DY Patil: Building Futures, Not Just Campuses

Hon'ble Dr Ajeenkya DY Patil, Chairman, Ajeenkya DY Patil Group & President, Ajeenkya DY Patil University (ADYPU), shares his vision of transforming education into an ecosystem of innovation, inclusivity, and purpose — where learning goes beyond classrooms to create future-ready leaders.

By Amber Dias

For Dr Ajeenkya DY Patil, education is more than an institution — it is a movement that empowers individuals and transforms societies. As President and Chancellor of Ajeenkya DY Patil University, Pune, he has spent years redefining what quality education means in a rapidly evolving world. His mission has been clear: To blend Indian values with global standards, nurture creativity alongside academic rigour, and prepare students not just for careers, but for life.

Excerpts from the interview...

What motivated you to step into the education sector, and how has your vision shaped the growth of Ajeenkya DY Patil University in Pune?

For me, education has always been more than just imparting knowledge — it is about shaping lives, building opportunities, and creating an ecosystem where young people can thrive. I stepped into this sector with the belief that quality education should not be a privilege for a few, but a right for all. Over the years, my vision has been to combine academic excellence with global exposure and industry relevance. This vision has guided the growth of Ajeenkya DY Patil University in Pune, where we are committed to not just producing graduates, but nurturing leaders who can make a difference in society.

Ajeenkya DY Patil University, Pune, is recognised as one of the leading education groups in India. In your view, what sets it apart, and what unique value does it bring to students and the wider education ecosystem?

What sets Ajeenkya DY Patil University, Pune, apart is our philosophy of holistic education. We have built a model that balances rigorous academics with innovation, research, sports, arts, and entrepreneurship. Our campuses are not just classrooms — they are ecosystems where students are encouraged to think differently, explore their passions, and build global competencies. The unique value we bring lies in blending traditional Indian values with modern, future-focused education that equips students to excel anywhere in the world.





Could you share some of the most impactful programmes, academic innovations, or global collaborations that you have introduced in recent years?

Some of the most impactful initiatives we've introduced include collaborations with leading global universities to bring world-class curricula and research opportunities to our students. We have invested in cutting-edge programmes in areas such as healthcare innovation, AI and data science, design, and sustainability. Our emphasis on experiential learning — through incubators, start-up labs, and industry immersion programmes — has given students a platform to innovate and translate ideas into impact. These initiatives reflect our belief that education must always be relevant to the world of tomorrow.

"The unique value we bring lies in blending traditional Indian values with modern, future-focused education that equips students to excel anywhere in the world."



How do you believe Ajeenkya DY Patil University, Pune, has influenced students — not only in terms of academic excellence, but also in preparing them as future-ready leaders and professionals?

Academic excellence is our foundation, but our true measure of success is the kind of individuals our students become. We have focused on developing critical thinking, adaptability, leadership, and ethical responsibility. Whether through community engagement, global internships, or interdisciplinary projects, our students graduate not just with degrees, but with a sense of purpose and the confidence to lead in complex, fast-changing environments.

Establishing and sustaining higher education ventures comes with unique challenges. What have been some of the key challenges for you, and how did you navigate them?

Like any major institution, we have faced challenges ranging from regulatory frameworks to adapting to the rapid changes in technology and industry demand. Another significant challenge has been maintaining consistent quality while scaling across different disciplines. The way we have navigated these challenges is by remaining agile, building strong governance systems, and never compromising on our core values. Collaboration with industry, international institutions, and our own alumni network has been key in helping us overcome hurdles and move forward.

"Our online learning platforms ensure that education is accessible and flexible, enabling students to learn anytime, anywhere."





“My role is both a custodian of tradition and a driver of transformation. Education in India is at an inflexion point, with the potential to not only empower millions within the country, but also to contribute to solving global challenges.”

How does Ajeenkya DY Patil University, Pune, leverage digital tools, online learning platforms, and AI-driven solutions to enhance teaching, research, and student experiences?

Digital transformation is at the heart of our strategy. We have integrated AI-driven tools to personalise learning, improve assessment, and provide data-driven insights into student performance. Our online learning platforms ensure that education is accessible and flexible, enabling students to learn anytime, anywhere. For research, we use advanced digital labs and simulation platforms that allow our students and faculty to work on projects at the cutting edge of science and technology. The goal is to ensure that our students are not just consumers of technology, but innovators who shape their future.

As a leader of one of India’s most prominent educational institutions, how do you see your role in shaping the future of education, both in India and on a global stage?

My role is both a custodian of tradition and a driver of transformation. Education in India is at an inflexion point, with the potential to not only empower millions within the country, but also to contribute to solving global challenges. My responsibility is to ensure that Ajeenkya DY Patil University, Pune, continues to be a torchbearer of innovation, inclusivity, and excellence. Globally, I believe India has a unique opportunity to lead in areas like affordable healthcare, technology-driven learning, and sustainable development — and through our institutions, we aim to be active contributors to this global dialogue.

Education Special

Bharati Vidyapeeth's Cambridge School: A Shining Legacy, In Sync With The Times

From Legacy to Leadership: Bharati Vidyapeeth's Cambridge School redefines excellence.

Education in India has long been defined by visionaries who believed that learning must not only inform the mind but also transform society. Among these pioneers stands Dr Patangrao Kadam, the Founder of Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University). Established in 1964, his dream of "social transformation through dynamic education" has grown into one of the nation's most respected educational movements with a network of over 170 institutions spanning schools, colleges, research centers, and professional academies. With its NAAC A++ grade with a CGPA of 3.60, Bharati Vidyapeeth continues to symbolise academic rigour, inclusivity, and progress. Dr Kadam's conviction that education is the most powerful instrument of change remains the institution's guiding light even today.

Leadership That Honors Legacy

Carrying this legacy forward is Dr Vishwajeet Patangrao Kadam, Secretary of Bharati Vidyapeeth and Pro Vice Chancellor of its Deemed University. An engineer with executive education from Harvard University, Dr Kadam represents a new generation of leadership that blends tradition with progress. Under his guidance, Bharati Vidyapeeth continues to expand its educational and healthcare initiatives while remaining true to its founding principles.

BVRTSE - Where Legacy Meets Tomorrow

Introducing Bharati Vidyapeeth Rabindranath Tagore School of Excellence (BVRTSE) in Pune, the Cambridge curriculum offering from the Bharati Vidyapeeth group, a school that mirrors the group's commitment to holistic, future-ready learning.

At the helm is Swapnali Vishwajeet Kadam, Chairperson of BVRTSE, an educationist leader who embodies the convergence of intellect and empathy. With a background in finance from Cardiff Business School and executive education from Harvard University, she brings both Indian values and a global outlook to her work. With academic roots at Cardiff Business School and global exposure at Harvard University, she brings a rare blend of insight, empathy, and a global outlook to her work in education.



“Education frameworks need to move from static structures to living systems, ones that evolve and adapt continuously, where schools, teachers, and systems learn as much as the students do.”



Inheriting A Vision, Inspiring A Generation

Mandated with the legacy of the group, Swapnali Kadam operates from the premise of transforming young minds marked by one principle: Education must evolve with time, but its heart must stay rooted in values.

She says, “We have to continuously build education frameworks that nurture the inherent qualities of every child. Education frameworks need to move from static structures to living systems, ones that evolve and adapt continuously, where schools, teachers, and systems learn as much as the students do.” She continues, “I emphasise the word nurture, because that’s the true power of an educational space, to shape not just intellect, but inner strength.”

She believes that AI will never replace a good teacher, but it can empower great teachers to reach more minds, which reflects the school’s ethos of technology with a heart. From coding in early grades to digital-ethics programmes, BVRTSE teaches students to balance analytics with empathy, innovation with intention.

Under her leadership, BVRTSE has become a space where learning is both joyful and meaningful. The school integrates the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its curriculum, offering students hands-on experiences, from expert sessions and field visits to sustainability projects that connect knowledge to life. The infrastructure at the school is designed to make physical education and sports integral to the curriculum, promoting fitness, teamwork, and discipline.





Rooted In Culture, Global In Outlook

BVRTSE celebrates India's cultural richness while fostering a global perspective. Through its performing arts, international exchange programs, and global collaborations, the school encourages students to embrace their roots while engaging with the world.

Its students have represented India at international arts festivals, including the Folk Arts Festival in Russia, a reflection of Swapnali's belief that true confidence comes from blending global perspective with a rooted identity.

BVRTSE stands today as a school where excellence is nurtured, empathy is taught, and leadership is lived every day.





Swapnali believes that AI will never replace a good teacher, but it can empower great teachers to reach more minds, which reflects the school's ethos of technology with a heart.

Carrying The Legacy Forward

Together, Dr Vishwajeet Kadam and Swapnali Vishwajeet Kadam embody the evolution of Bharati Vidyapeeth's founding philosophy, blending the founder's enduring values with a modern, forward-looking vision.

BVRTSE stands today as a school where excellence is nurtured, empathy is taught, and leadership is lived every day. The school is expected to launch another campus at Kothrud, Pune, in the coming months. The value-based, holistic education is expected to expand to an additional three-five schools across locations over the next five years.

For over six decades, Bharati Vidyapeeth has empowered generations to learn, lead, and serve with pride. With BVRTSE carrying its torch into the future, that legacy continues to shine; brighter, broader, and ever in sync with the times.

Education Special

Dilip Vengsarkar: Building Foundations That Make Champions

Dilip Vengsarkar, former India cricket captain and selector, on three decades of nurturing cricketing talent at his Vengsarkar Cricket Academy, creating equal opportunities for young players, and why mental strength matters as much as skill.

By Amber Dias

For over 30 years, former India cricket captain Dilip Vengsarkar has shaped the next generation of cricketers through his academies in Mumbai, Panvel and Pune. Since 1995, these academies have produced players who've gone on to represent India, Mumbai, and the IPL. Focused on discipline, education, and strong fundamentals, Vengsarkar's mission is to build not just skilled players, but resilient, grounded sportsmen.

Excerpts from the interview...

What do you believe you and the Vengsarkar Cricket Academy uniquely bring to Indian cricket?

I have been running my cricket academies for the past 30 years — four in total, with two in Mumbai, one in Panvel, and one in Chinchwad, Pune. Over the years, thousands of aspiring cricketers have trained under our guidance. Many have gone on to represent India at the Under-19 and India A levels, as well as play for Mumbai, Maharashtra, in the IPL, and even in Test matches.

After retiring from professional cricket in 1992, I wanted to give back to the game that shaped my life — and so, in 1995, I founded my first academy. Many of the players we nurture come from humble backgrounds, including the slums of Mumbai and Maharashtra. What I bring to Indian cricket is not just experience, but generations of talented, hard-working cricketers who have gone on to make their mark at the highest levels of the sport.

Can you tell us about some of the important training programmes or activities the Vengsarkar Cricket Academy has started to help young cricketers?

We conduct training sessions for players between the ages of nine and eighteen, supported by a comprehensive tournament structure. Our players participate in inter-academy competitions across age groups — Under 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 19 — held in Pune, Panvel, and Mumbai. These tournaments give hundreds of young cricketers valuable match experience and exposure to competitive play.

In addition, I take my academy teams to Manchester every year — a tradition that has continued for the past 15 years. Many of our players who have gone on to represent India have been part of these tours. For several youngsters from humble backgrounds, it's often their first time travelling abroad. Their trips are generously sponsored by friends, corporates, and well-wishers, allowing them to experience English playing conditions and gain invaluable international exposure.





How has the academy helped young players get ready, not only for matches but also for the tough demands of being a professional cricketer?

We believe that while regular practice is essential, the most important learning happens through match play. It's during real games that players understand the nuances of cricket, gain practical experience, and develop confidence under pressure. Our academy organises numerous tournaments to provide this exposure, helping young cricketers progress swiftly and prepare for competitive levels such as the Under 14, Under 16, and Under 19 interstate tournaments conducted by the BCCI.

What difficulties did you face when starting and running the academy in India, and how did you deal with them?

I am deeply grateful to the Government of Maharashtra and the BMC for granting me open spaces on a long lease, and to all the sponsors who support our academies. Their contribution is invaluable, as coaching is provided entirely free of charge. We cover all academy expenses — including coaches' and groundsmen's salaries, kits, ground maintenance, and equipment — as well as tournament costs such as umpiring and scorer fees, match balls, food, and other essentials.

"After retiring from professional cricket in 1992, I wanted to give back to the game that shaped my life — and so, in 1995, I founded my first academy."





How do you make sure the academy's way of training can grow and reach more young players?

Players in Mumbai and Maharashtra are fortunate to have these academies. The children are guided very well by the trained coaches, which is crucial. Most importantly, they get to play matches and participate in tournaments. This is how they truly grow as cricketers — not just by developing their skills, but by building mental strength and maturity. Mental resilience comes from playing consistently, performing under pressure, and learning from each match.

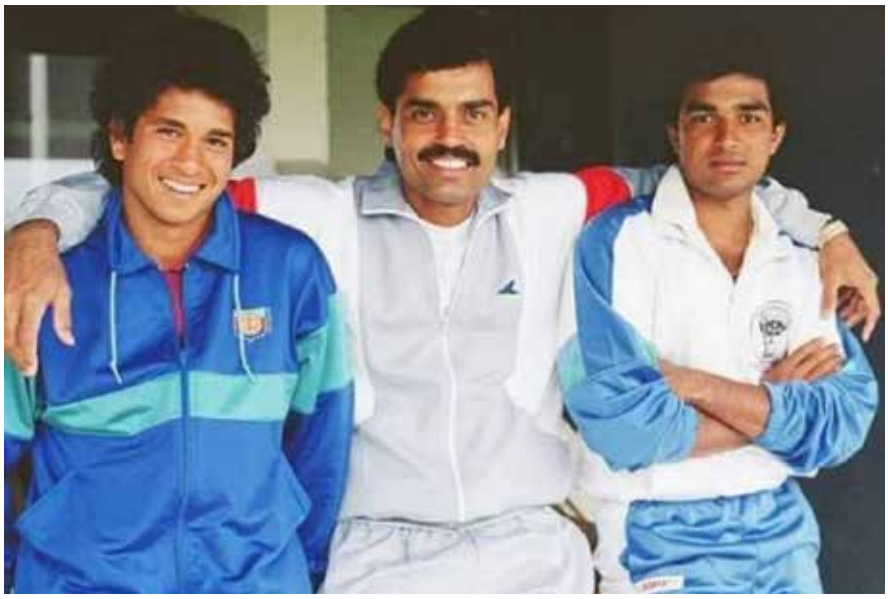


Apart from coaching, how do you see your role as a guide and inspiration for the future of Indian cricket?

I have had the privilege of serving on the BCCI Apex Council, working as a selector for the Indian team, and supporting talent identification at the national level. Through these roles — and in all my academy matches and tournaments — I make it a point to guide young cricketers on how they can continually improve and move forward in their careers.

"Our academy organises numerous tournaments to provide this exposure, helping young cricketers progress swiftly and prepare for competitive levels such as the Under 14, Under 16, and Under 19 interstate tournaments."





“I personally visit all four academies to oversee training, fitness, and overall progress. Physical conditioning is as essential as skill development, and I constantly monitor how players are evolving.”











I emphasise the importance of focus, passion, dedication, determination, devotion, and discipline — qualities that are crucial for success. In today’s world, social media can be a major distraction, so I always remind players to keep their phones aside and prioritise their training and education. Academics are equally important: We review every player’s report card, and only those performing well in their studies are inducted. Others are encouraged to first focus on improving their grades before rejoining the academy. We stress that education provides security beyond cricket, given the sport’s limited career span and intense competition. Those who remain disciplined, dedicated, and focused are the ones who make it to Mumbai, India, or even the IPL.

I personally visit all four academies to oversee training, fitness, and overall progress. Physical conditioning is as essential as skill development, and I constantly monitor how players are evolving.

We also teach all three formats — Test, One-Day, and T20 — but we don’t allow players under 15 to specialise in any single format. A strong foundation and solid defensive technique are critical at a young age, as they help players adapt to spinning and seaming conditions with ease. Once they are 16 or 17, they are ready to play across all formats.

Education Special

Dr Pooja Misal On Innovation, Design & Education

Dr Pooja Misal, Founder & Director of SMEF's Brick Group of Institutes, opens up about building a future where creativity meets confidence, culture, and real-world impact.

By Amber Dias





Dr Pooja Misal, Founder and Director of SMEF's Brick Group of Institutes, envisions an education ecosystem that goes beyond textbooks. Focusing on design, architecture, and creative disciplines, Brick empowers students to think critically, experiment boldly, and translate ideas into meaningful solutions. From hands-on learning to global exposure, her approach nurtures confident, responsible, and future-ready innovators who are shaping India's creative landscape.

Excerpts from the interview...

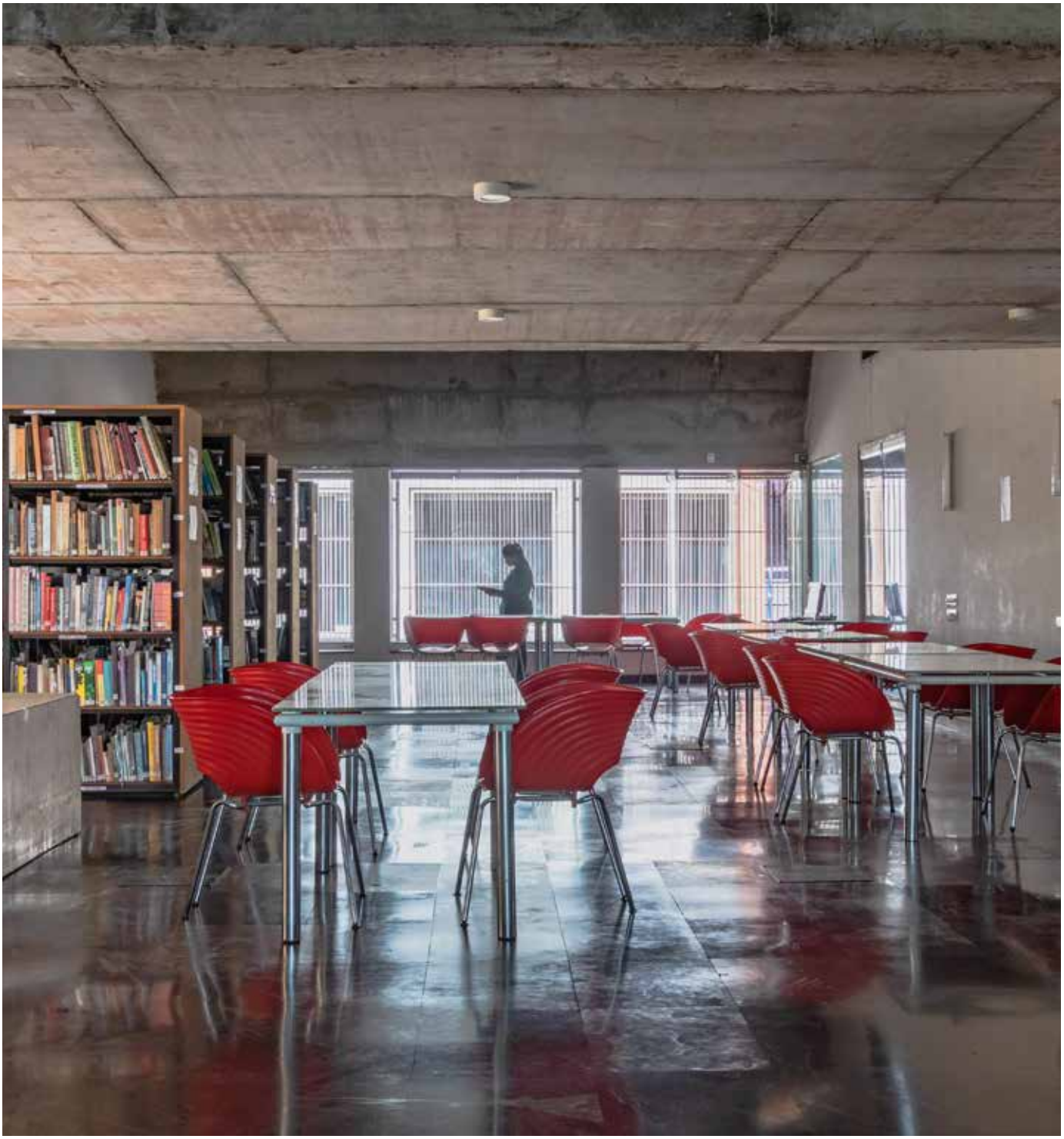
What led you to found SMEF's Brick Group of Institutes and enter the education sector?

I founded SMEF's Brick Group of Institutes with the vision of creating an education ecosystem that goes beyond conventional learning and textbooks. My aim was to nurture creativity, innovation, and global perspectives while staying rooted in cultural values. Through Brick, I wanted to provide world-class education in architecture and design and empower students to grow as confident, responsible individuals who can make a real difference in society.

What is the guiding philosophy that you believe Brick brings to the design/ creative education space — something different from traditional institutions?

At Brick, our philosophy is to go beyond rote learning and focus on experiential, hands-on, and interdisciplinary education. We encourage students to think critically, question creatively, and learn through real-world projects rather than just theory. Unlike traditional institutions, Brick blends design thinking with innovation, cultural awareness, and sustainability, so that students not only master their craft but also develop the mindset to solve future challenges with creativity and responsibility.

"My aim was to nurture creativity, innovation, and global perspectives while staying rooted in cultural values."



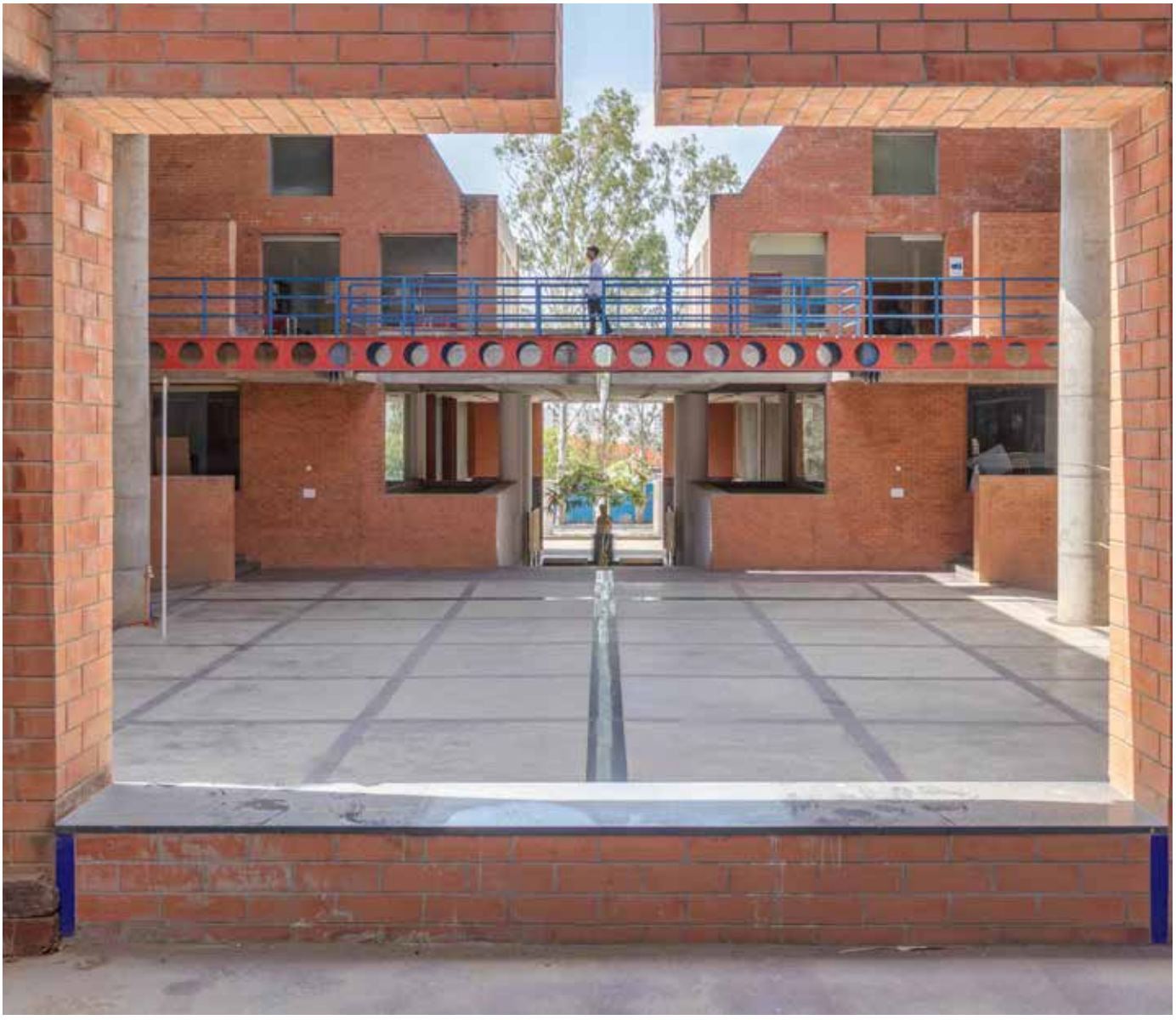
How have you observed Brick's programmes influencing students — in their design thinking, creative confidence, professional readiness or worldview?

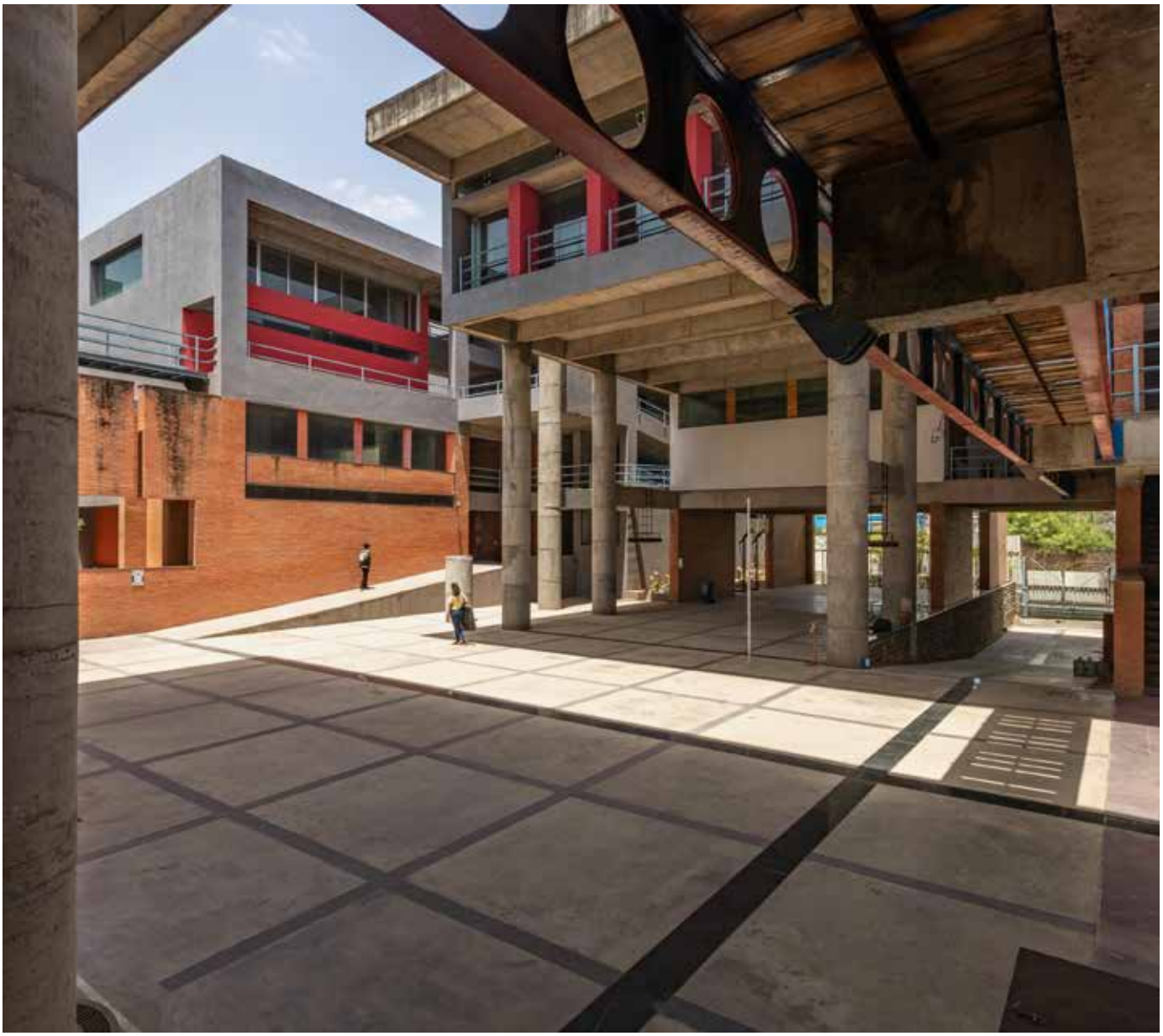
Students at BRIC share one key trait: The freedom to explore their creativity and develop confidence in themselves. This confidence is evident in their designs and projects. Many alumni have gone on to achieve remarkable success worldwide, while some have launched startups, even securing initial funding. The ethos of the campus — encouraging experimentation, embracing mistakes, and fostering exploration — combined with supportive teachers, cultivates an environment where students can realise their fullest potential.

What were some of the toughest challenges you faced while establishing a design institute — e.g. regulatory, faculty, market perception, infrastructure etc?

Establishing a design institute came with many challenges. Getting the right approvals and navigating regulatory processes was a long journey. Finding passionate faculty who shared the same vision was also not easy. In the beginning, building awareness and changing the perception of design education in Pune was another hurdle. Infrastructure too required a lot of effort, but overcoming these challenges has made Brick stronger and more committed to its purpose.

"Through Brick and other platforms, I hope to influence practices that make creative education in India more future-oriented, inclusive, and impactful."





“We are excited about setting up a university, which will be a significant step in bridging the gap between education and employable skills.”

As someone recognised in the education and design space, how do you see your role in shaping discourse, policy or practice in creative education?

I see my role as not just leading an institute, but also contributing to the larger conversation around creative education. By sharing insights, collaborating with peers, and engaging in policy discussions, I aim to highlight the importance of innovation, sustainability, and global exposure in design education. Through Brick and other platforms, I hope to influence practices that make creative education in India more future-oriented, inclusive, and impactful.

Looking ahead, what new frontiers or educational experiments are you excited about — new disciplines, formats, partnerships, or models?

Looking ahead, we are excited about setting up a university, which will be a significant step in bridging the gap between education and employable skills. This university will focus on practical, industry-relevant training across design, technology, entrepreneurship, and creative fields, enabling students to gain hands-on experience alongside theoretical knowledge. Through this initiative, our goal is to create a model where students are not only academically qualified but also professionally ready to take on real-world challenges with confidence.

Education Special

Sanjay Vaidh: Building India's Future Through AI & Drone Innovation

Sanjay Vaidh, Founder, Aerobott, on merging technology, education and entrepreneurship to empower students, farmers and soldiers with hands-on skills for a smarter, self-reliant India.

By Amber Dias

Aerobott, India's leading AI and drone technology company, is revolutionising education and skill development through its AI & Drone Excellence Centres across top universities and training institutes. With a manufacturing facility in Bhiwandi, Maharashtra, Aerobott produces high-quality drones for industrial, agricultural, and defence use. Its RPTO and skill development centres nationwide equip students, farmers and soldiers with practical expertise in drone operations and AI applications. Through these initiatives, Aerobott is empowering India's youth, enhancing agricultural efficiency, and strengthening national capabilities in emerging technologies.

Excerpts from the interview...

What led you to step into the drone and AI education space alongside your entrepreneurial journey?

I wanted to create a platform where learners could not only understand drone technology but also apply it in manufacturing, services, and entrepreneurial ventures. It's a natural extension of our mission – merging innovation, education, and industry relevance.

What guiding philosophy shapes the way you design training courses, workshops and collaborations?

Our philosophy is simple – learn by doing, innovate by applying. Every course or workshop is designed to provide practical, hands-on experience, not just theory. Collaborations with universities and schools ensure that learning is contextual, industry-aligned and scalable.

Could you highlight some of the most impactful workshops, bootcamps or partnerships you've introduced to promote drone and AI education?

Some of our most impactful initiatives include:

- AI & Drone Excellence Centers at LPU, Chandigarh University, Atharva University, LR Tiwari College, Rahul Education Trust, and KVK Baramati – giving every student hands-on exposure.
- RPTO Training Centers for small and medium drones in Chandigarh, Mumbai, Baramati, and upcoming centers in Ulhasnagar, Jaipur, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar, Nagpur, Kolkata.
- Drone Bootcamps and Skill Workshops targeting schools and universities, teaching both industrial and entrepreneurial applications.
- Collaborative projects where students design drones for agriculture, defense and industrial purposes, bridging theory and real-world problem-solving.



“Our philosophy is simple – learn by doing, innovate by applying. Every course or workshop is designed to provide practical, hands-on experience, not just theory.”



What have been the biggest challenges in bringing drone and AI education to a wider audience in India — whether it’s access, perception, or regulatory frameworks?

The main challenges are:

Access: Many students and schools do not have infrastructure for drones or AI labs.

Perception: Parents and educators often perceive drones as toys rather than serious educational tools.

Regulatory frameworks: Ensuring compliance with DGCA rules for drone operations and safety standards is critical and sometimes slows implementation.



We address these by setting up scalable RPTO centers, providing turnkey lab setups, and awareness campaigns to highlight the educational and career value of these skills.





How do you see your role in bridging the gap between industry and education in emerging fields like drones and AI?

Aerobott bridges the gap between education and industry by offering hands-on labs, industrial projects, and RPTO-certified drone training, ensuring students gain practical, job-ready, and innovation-focused skills.

Looking ahead, what kind of collaborations, formats, or experiments are you excited about?

We are excited about:

- AI-powered Sports Academies in schools and colleges, integrating drones and AI into athletic training – a first-of-its-kind initiative.
- International collaborations for exchange programs and innovation labs.
- Industry-linked hackathons and challenges give students opportunities to solve real-world problems.
- Expansion of franchise-based AI & Drone Excellence Centers across India and globally.



Education Special

Azim Premji: Empowering Through Education

Beyond building Wipro, Azim Premji has reshaped India's education landscape through philanthropy and purpose.

By Nichola Marie

Few business leaders in India have redefined the meaning of success as profoundly as Azim Premji. Best known for transforming Wipro into a global IT powerhouse, Premji has spent the past two decades devoting his time, wealth, and vision to a cause close to his heart — education. For him, nation-building begins not with profit margins but with classrooms that nurture young minds and teachers who inspire them.

Transforming Public Education

Premji's interest in education stems from his belief that quality learning is the most powerful tool for reducing inequity in society. In 2001, he established the Azim Premji Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving the public school system in India. Beginning with small initiatives in select districts, the foundation has grown into one of the largest philanthropic efforts in the country, working across 25 states and engaging with over 3.5 lakh schools.

At the core of his approach lies teacher development. Premji recognised early on that education reform cannot be achieved without empowering teachers, who are the real agents of change in classrooms. Through resource centres, training programmes, and continuous support, the foundation helps teachers build confidence, sharpen their skills, and foster critical thinking among students.









Through resource centres, training programmes, and continuous support, the Azim Premji Foundation helps teachers build confidence, sharpen their skills, and foster critical thinking among students.





In 2010, Premji took his commitment a step further by establishing the Azim Premji University in Bengaluru. The university focuses on education, development, and related fields, preparing graduates who are not only academically strong but also deeply committed to social change. It has quickly become a hub for aspiring educators and researchers dedicated to improving India's learning landscape.

A Legacy Of Impact & Nation-Building

Premji's philanthropy is unprecedented in scale. By pledging the majority of his wealth to social causes — with education at the forefront — he has set an example for corporate India and the world. His donations, amounting to billions of dollars, have enabled sustained, long-term interventions rather than one-time projects. The results are evident in stronger teaching practices, improved learning outcomes for children in rural areas, and a growing culture of social responsibility within the private sector.

Through quiet determination and visionary leadership, Premji has shown that true legacy lies not in the size of a company but in the empowerment of future generations. In the story of Indian education, his name stands as a beacon of hope, demonstrating that when one person invests in teachers and children, they invest in the nation itself.

Education Special

Ronnie Screwvala: Educating For Tomorrow

Media entrepreneur turned philanthropist, Ronnie Screwvala has redefined how education and skilling can change lives in India through upGrad.

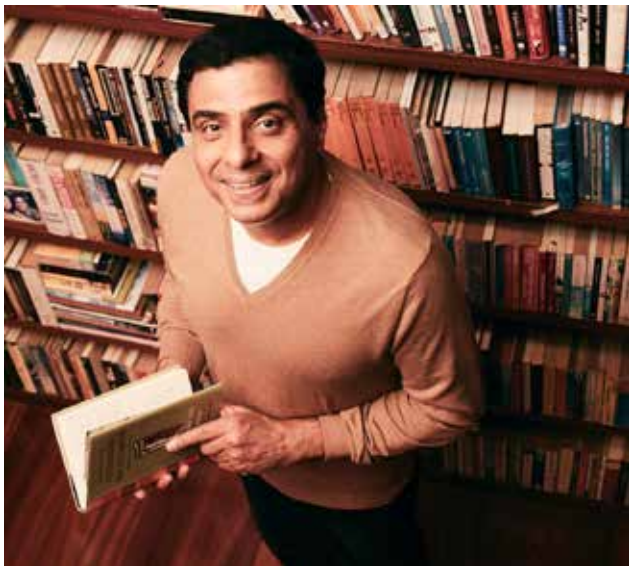
By Nichola Marie

Ronnie Screwvala is best known as a pioneer in India's entertainment industry, but his most enduring impact may well come from the field of education. Through his philanthropic initiatives, he has shifted the focus from traditional charity to sustainable change, placing learning, skilling, and empowerment at the heart of his vision for India's future.

Holistic Rural Education & Empowerment

In 2012, Screwvala and his wife, Zarina Mehta, co-founded the Swades Foundation, a rural empowerment initiative that works to lift families out of poverty through a holistic model. Education forms one of its four pillars, alongside health, water and sanitation, and livelihood. By investing in rural schools, teacher training, digital access, and remedial learning, the foundation ensures that children in underserved communities not only attend school but also stay engaged and thrive.







Skilling, Entrepreneurship & Lifelong Learning

Beyond school education, Screwvala has been an outspoken advocate for skilling and employability. Recognising India's "demographic dividend," he has argued that the country's youth need more than degrees — they need practical, industry-relevant skills to compete in a rapidly changing job market. His organisation has supported vocational training programmes and initiatives that directly link young people to employment opportunities, narrowing the gap between education and livelihood.

Screwvala's focus on entrepreneurship education also stands out. Through his ventures in EdTech, he has sought to democratise access to quality learning. He co-founded upGrad, now one of India's largest online higher education platforms, which partners with global universities to deliver accessible, career-oriented programmes. By empowering professionals to upskill and reskill, upGrad has reshaped the idea of lifelong learning in India, making higher education both aspirational and practical.

Education As A Tool For Self-Reliance & Social Change

The impact of these initiatives is visible in numbers, but more importantly, in narratives of transformation. From rural children in Raigad district who become first-generation learners, to working professionals advancing careers through digital courses, Screwvala's efforts underscore education as the most powerful tool for change.

For Screwvala, education is not just about imparting knowledge but about enabling self-reliance and dignity. His journey from media mogul to education-focused philanthropist illustrates how vision, strategy, and persistence can move beyond business success to create lasting social impact. In a country where millions still grapple with barriers to learning, his work offers both inspiration and a roadmap for progress.

By empowering professionals to upskill and reskill, Ronnie Screwvala's upGrad has reshaped the idea of lifelong learning in India, making higher education both aspirational and practical.





Education Special

Shiv Nadar: Building Legacies Through Education

From tech titan to education crusader, Shiv Nadar has redefined philanthropy by making learning the cornerstone of nation-building.

By Nichola Marie

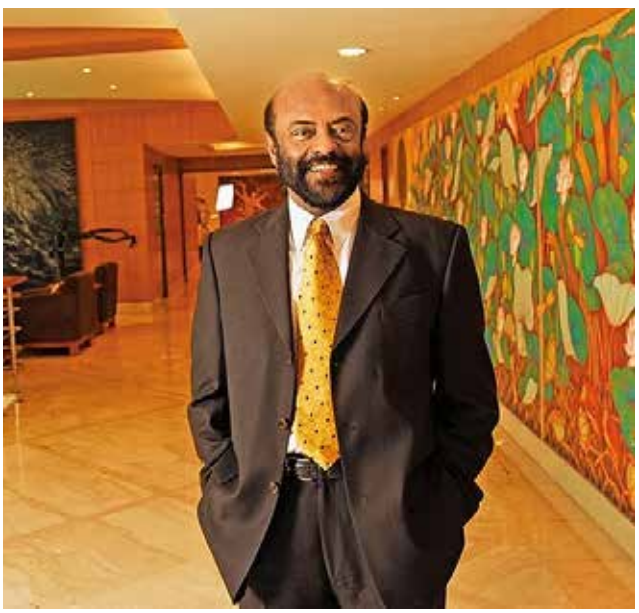
Shiv Nadar, Founder of HCL and one of India's most visionary philanthropists, has long believed that true nation-building begins in the classroom. While he first made his mark as a pioneer in the IT industry, it is in education that his legacy continues to expand, touching countless lives and reshaping futures.

In 1994, Nadar established the Shiv Nadar Foundation with a simple yet ambitious goal: To transform India by empowering its youth through quality education. What began as a philanthropic initiative has since grown into a network of world-class institutions that nurture talent, creativity, and leadership. Today, the foundation supports a range of schools and universities, including Shiv Nadar School, VidyaGyan leadership academies, SSN Institutions in Chennai, and Shiv Nadar University, each designed to deliver holistic learning opportunities to students from diverse backgrounds.

Transforming Lives Through Access & Opportunity

Among his most remarkable contributions is VidyaGyan, a residential school programme for underprivileged rural children. Handpicked for their academic potential, students here are given access to world-class education, mentorship, and opportunities that would otherwise have been out of reach. Many VidyaGyan alumni are now pursuing higher education at prestigious global universities, a testament to the transformative power of Nadar's vision.

The Shiv Nadar University near Delhi is another jewel in this crown. With its focus on multidisciplinary learning, cutting-edge research, and global collaboration, the university reflects Nadar's belief that education must equip students not just with knowledge but with curiosity and problem-solving skills for the 21st century.









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Education, An Investment In Human Potential

For Nadar, education is not just charity — it is an investment in human potential. He often emphasises that giving students access to knowledge, creativity, and critical thinking empowers them to become change agents in their own communities. His philanthropic commitment is reflected in the fact that he has pledged most of his wealth to education and related initiatives, making him one of the largest individual donors in India.

The results speak for themselves: Thousands of students from rural and urban India have benefitted from the Shiv Nadar Foundation's institutions, going on to excel in fields ranging from engineering and medicine to the arts and social sciences.

A Lasting Legacy

Nadar's journey from technocrat to educationist is an inspiring story of vision, generosity, and impact. By placing education at the heart of his philanthropy, he has not only built institutions but also opened doors of opportunity for generations of young Indians — laying the foundation for a more equitable and empowered society.

Education Special

Educating For Tomorrow: Seva Sadan's Vision For The 21st Century Learner

Blending technology, sports, and science to build a nation of innovators.

By Amber Dias

Founded by Late Parsram Parumal Dabrai, Seva Sadan Sindhi Educational Trust has been shaping education for over 74 years. Today, under the leadership of Sanjay Dabrai, with the fourth generation represented by Karan Dabrai, the Trust continues its mission of empowering students with skills, character, and future-ready learning.

Excerpts from the interview...

What do you believe you bring to the table to make a meaningful impact?

Seva Sadan Sindhi Educational Trust was born from the resilience of the Sindhi community displaced during Partition. In 1950, Shri Parsram Parumal Dabrai founded the Trust to rebuild lives through education, giving refugee children hope, stability, and opportunity. From the first school in Ulhasnagar, we have grown into 17 institutions serving over 12,500 students annually, guided by the principle that no child should be denied learning due to circumstance. What I bring to the table is a commitment to this legacy: bridging potential and opportunity. By aligning family, school, mentors, and peers, we nurture curiosity, resilience, and ambition. We empower students not just to succeed academically, but to discover purpose, grow confidence, and become agents of change in their communities.

Could you highlight some of the most significant educational and vocational programmes that have been introduced over the years?

At Seva Sadan, education goes far beyond textbooks and exams. From our roots serving displaced Sindhi families, we have grown into 17 institutions offering kindergarten through graduation, vocational training, professional courses, and skill-based programmes. Our approach nurtures curiosity, resilience, and purpose, combining academic rigour with mentorship, early exposure, and life skills. We offer programmes in finance, accounting, management, IT, AI, robotics, and drone technology, alongside preparatory courses for competitive exams and career counselling, child psychology, and brain mapping. Our in-house Learning Management System enhances teaching and student growth. By aligning self-development, formal education, family, and social influences, we empower students not only to excel academically but to discover their potential, embrace leadership, and make meaningful contributions to society.

What are some of the distinctive challenges Seva Sadan has faced while building and sustaining initiatives for underprivileged communities, and how have you worked to overcome them?

At Seva Sadan, we see education as much more than exams or grades; it's about helping children discover their potential. Many of our students come from families where even a small fee is a stretch, so we focus on smart systems, teacher mentorship, and working closely with parents. Together, we nurture curiosity, resilience, and purpose, helping students dream bigger and achieve more.



Karan Dabrai



Founder Late Parsram Paromal Dabrai

“Our BrainMapping and counselling programmes further build emotional resilience, self-awareness, and the confidence to dream big and contribute to a Viksit Bharat.”









Beyond direct impact, how do you see Seva Sadan Trust shaping the larger conversation around education in India?

Learning happens at home, with peers, and through exposure to opportunities. We are preparing students for the Industry 4.0 era by combining skills, mindset, values, and mentorship. We help children — and their families — see what’s possible. Through innovation, holistic programs, and real-world learning, we aim to spark a larger conversation in India about purpose-driven, empowering education that prepares every child to thrive. Our BrainMapping and counselling programmes further build emotional resilience, self-awareness, and the confidence to dream big and contribute to a Viksit Bharat.

Education Special

Joydeep Sah: Reimagining Education - A Vision Rooted In Practice & Purpose

Joydeep Sah opens up about Morning Bells Academy's vision, its pioneering initiatives, and its aspirations to influence the future of education.

By Amber Dias

Morning Bells Academy, Kolkata, stands as a beacon of balance, where academic excellence meets empathy, innovation intertwines with tradition, and every child's individuality is honoured. Under the stewardship of Joydeep Sah, Chairman, Morning Bells Academy, carrying forward the legacy of Lt. Shri BN Sah, the institution continues to reimagine education as a transformative journey.

Excerpts from the interview...

What defines Morning Bells Academy's identity and sets it apart from other institutions?

Founded on the visionary ideals of Lt. Shri BN Sah, a pioneering educationist who believed in nurturing character alongside intellect, Morning Bells Academy distinguishes itself through its unwavering commitment to holistic education. The institution's ethos is defined by personalised mentorship, experiential learning, and a seamless blend of academic excellence with value-based instruction. Signature initiatives like the Adolescence Wellbeing Summit and inclusive cultural celebrations foster leadership and resilience.

Could you share some of the most impactful programmes or initiatives that have shaped your students' holistic growth?

Morning Bells Academy shapes well-rounded individuals through a symphony of pursuits — literature, debates, dramatics, design thinking, storytelling, and performing arts spark creativity and confidence; SEWA and outreach nurture empathy; while sports from football and cricket to archery and pickleball build teamwork and grit. Together, these experiences cultivate intellect, integrity, and emotional depth.



How do you use technology and innovative teaching methods to enhance learning while ensuring balance with offline engagement?

Morning Bells Academy blends technology with traditional learning. Smart boards, simulations, VR labs, STEM projects, and IIT Madras online modules sharpen curiosity, clarity, and innovation, while storytelling apps spark imagination. Equally, offline experiences — field trips, reading circles, dramatisations, and peer discussions — foster empathy, creativity, and social acumen, ensuring balanced, holistic growth.

How do you hope to influence or contribute to broader education policy?

We envision shaping education policy through learner-centric frameworks that unite innovation, inclusivity, and timeless values. Advocating competency-based education, we emphasise real-world skills, creativity, and emotional intelligence alongside academics. Our vision integrates well-being, financial literacy, digital citizenship, and experiential learning from early years, championing inclusive pedagogies and empathetic teacher training to nurture resilient, compassionate citizens ready to lead with wisdom.



Education Special

Yogesh Agrawal: Cultivating Leaders, Driving Change

From pioneering food curricula to robotics labs, he shares how Progressive Heights blends innovation, values and well-being to shape future-ready, compassionate leaders.

By Amber Dias

At the helm of Progressive Heights, Biaora, Madhya Pradesh, Yogesh Agrawal champions an education model that goes beyond academics to instill values, creativity, and resilience. His vision blends innovation with holistic growth, shaping students into confident learners, compassionate citizens, and future-ready leaders.

Excerpts from the interview...

What defines Progressive Heights' identity and sets it apart from other institutions in the region?

Its very name echoes its identity — a legacy that began with just eight students and has now blossomed into thousands of bright minds. More than an institution, it is a guiding light that nurtures not only education but also cultural, ethical and moral values. With creativity and innovation at its core, it empowers students to grow beyond textbooks, shaping character as well as knowledge.

Could you share some of the most impactful programmes or initiatives that have shaped your students' holistic growth?

Pro Council: Fostering leadership and responsibility.

Pro Robotics & Space Lab: Igniting innovation and problem-solving.

Pro Darshan (in-house news channel) & Pro World (student magazine): Nurturing creativity and expression.

Pro Life Skills & Pro Meditation: Ensuring emotional well-being.

ProActive (Sports & Wellness Programme): Promoting active living and fitness.

Pro Nutrition (Food Curriculum): Building healthy eating habits and awareness.

Pro Leaders (Learning by Leaders): Connecting students with achievers for real-life learning.

Together, these initiatives shape students into successful learners, responsible citizens, and compassionate human beings.

How are you using technology and innovative teaching methods to enhance learning while ensuring balance with offline engagement?

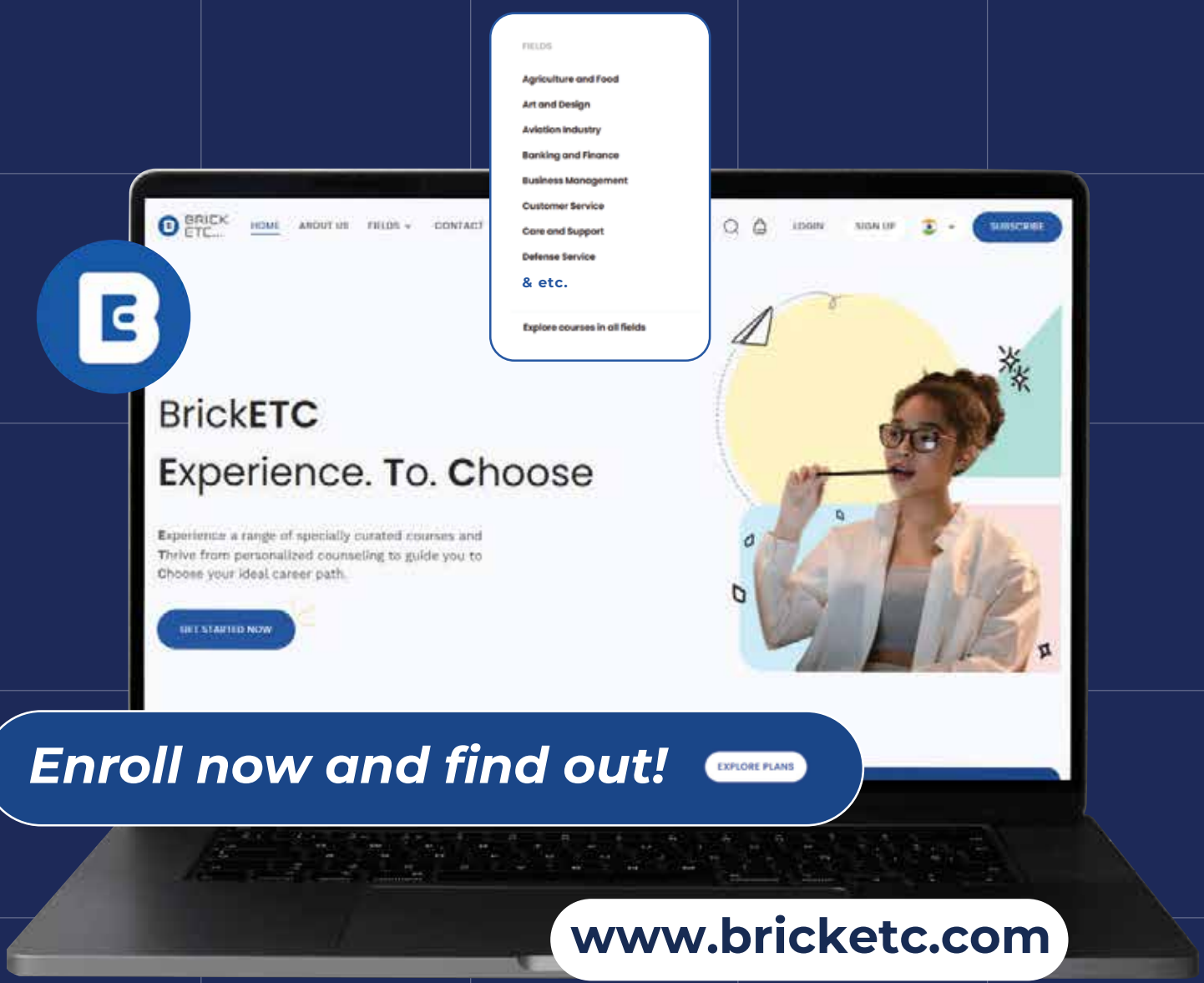
At Progressive Heights, we blend innovation with human connection. Smart boards, digital apps and AI tools make learning engaging and future-ready, while offline discussions, projects and experiential activities nurture creativity, collaboration and values. By exposing students to global trends and practical skills, we foster innovation, adaptability and leadership — preparing them to think globally, act locally, and excel in life.

How do you see Progressive Heights as a regional model for education reform? In what ways do you hope to influence or contribute to broader education policy?

Progressive Heights is a regional model of education reform, blending global vision with local roots. Moving beyond rote learning, it emphasises life skills, practical experiences and well-being. With initiatives like the Food Curriculum and a focus on values, gratitude and happiness, it nurtures holistic growth while inspiring policy change to shape responsible, compassionate citizens for India's future.



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Education Special

Venkat Muriki: Pioneering A New Era In Education

Through Venkat Muriki's leadership, the Excellencia Group of Institutions (CBSE/ Cambridge/ IB), under the Vedaantha Foundation, is redefining education in Hyderabad by blending world-class learning with community empowerment and inclusive opportunities.

Commitment to Transformation

Through its CBSE, Cambridge, and IB programmes, Excellencia fosters hands-on learning, collaboration, and confidence. This vision sets a benchmark for holistic education.

A World-Class School in Hyderabad

Central to this mission is a multidisciplinary world-class school, aligned with NEP 2020, serving over 2,000 students with cutting-edge research facilities. It aims to become a hub for future leaders.

Expansion Of Existing Programmes

The Excellencia CBSE, Cambridge, and IB programmes will make initiatives such as the outreach programme for underprivileged children more rigorous by connecting with more schools in Hyderabad.





Integrated Curriculum

Excellencia integrates CBSE, Cambridge, and IB curricula with specialised coaching for IIT-JEE, NEET, CA, SAT, and IPMAT. Faculty use methods such as Error Analysis, Homework Analytics, and Concept Gap Bridging to personalise learning and enhance conceptual clarity.

Sports Achievements

Excellencia nurtures both mind and body through structured sports and physical fitness programmes. Students have excelled in athletics, volleyball, skating, and football at national and international levels.

Expanding Outreach

The Foundation extends its outreach via community service programmes - mentoring underprivileged children, plantation drives, street plays, etc.

Strategic Partnerships

Excellencia collaborates with schools in the Maldives, Uzbekistan, and Sri Lanka, promoting global awareness and cultural exchange. RIDS initiatives nurture creativity, leadership, and innovation through scholarships, ideation challenges, and student exchange programmes.

Education Special

Jyoti Gupta: Pioneering A Neuro-Education Revolution In India

Founder & CEO Jyoti Gupta's BrainHap is shaping a future where mental wellness and skill readiness advance together — empowering students to thrive both emotionally and intellectually.

Revolutionising Learning & Mental Wellness

In an age where mental health and career clarity are equally vital, BrainHap, in association with IIT Bombay, is redefining education through science and technology. Founded by Jyoti Gupta, BrainHap has created the world's first Neuroscience-based BrainMapping Technology designed for education and mental wellness. Over five years of research with IIT Bombay's team of neuroscientists, psychologists, and AI experts, BrainHap has studied more than 1.5 lakh students, analysing 30 parameters to decode aptitude, emotion, and learning styles.

Scientific Breakthrough: BrainMapping Technology

At the heart of BrainHap's innovation is its EEG-based brainmapping system, which measures 30 scientific parameters to assess brain activity in students aged ten and above. This technology provides educators and parents with precise, data-driven insights into a child's cognitive strengths, learning styles, and emotional balance.

"BrainHap uses one of the best approaches to reform learning patterns in young students," says Prof Dr Azizuddin Khan of IIT Bombay, a neuroscience and psychology expert with over 26 years of experience. Using an EEG headset, BrainHap maps brain activity across six key parameters and visualises them as brain maps, helping guide students with scientific accuracy.

The technology allows for pre- and post-assessments, enabling measurable improvement in focus, attention, and emotional regulation. BrainHap's research has also been recognised internationally, marking a milestone in neuroscience-led education and mental health innovation.

AI Meets Neuroscience: The Future Of Education

BrainHap's AI-powered platform integrates neuroscience, artificial intelligence, and education to deliver personalised counselling, testing, and career guidance. In alignment with NEP 2020, it helps schools and colleges identify a student's aptitudes early, align skill-building programs, and promote emotional well-being.

Through its AI–Drone–Robotics–BrainMapping Labs, BrainHap provides:

- Hands-on learning in advanced technologies.
- Customised curricula and physical kits.
- National competitions and certifications.
- Continuous upskilling for teachers.









BrainHap is setting up labs across India to give students hands-on exposure to AI tools, drone operations, robotics systems, and neuroscience applications.

Transforming Classrooms Into Innovation Hubs

BrainHap is setting up labs across India to give students hands-on exposure to AI tools, drone operations, robotics systems, and neuroscience applications. These labs integrate curriculum-based learning with experimentation, ensuring every child experiences practical, skill-based education alongside academic growth.

AI Companion: Support For Every Mind

The BrainHap AI Companion is an intelligent platform offering personalised guidance for academics, career choices, and emotional health. With 88% accuracy, it helps users overcome challenges like anxiety, overthinking, loneliness, and digital burnout, providing actionable coping techniques and insights.

A Vision Beyond Technology

Founder & CEO Jyoti Gupta envisions a world where every child has access to evidence-based career and mental wellness support. “Our mission is to bring AI-BrainMapping Labs to every school and college — combining science and empathy to nurture India’s future minds,” she says.

Towards India’s Neuro-Education Revolution

As India steps into the Industry 4.0 era, BrainHap stands at the forefront of the Neuro-Education Revolution — preparing a generation equipped with emotional intelligence, innovative thinking, and resilience. More than a company, BrainHap is a movement empowering Gen Z to learn smarter, think deeper, and live stronger.

Education Special

Pankaj Sharma: Reimagining Education Through Innovation & Collaboration

The Founder & CEO of the Global School Leaders' Consortium, he opens up about wisdom, changemakers and why education must evolve beyond textbooks.

By Amber Dias

For Pankaj Sharma, education is about shaping creators, not just learners. As Founder & CEO of the Global School Leaders' Consortium (GSLC), he drives design thinking, innovation, and global collaboration. From his "Wisdom Lab" to a network of changemakers, Sharma's goal is clear: Build learning ecosystems where curiosity, creativity, and impact go hand-in-hand.

Excerpts from the interview...

You have been a pioneer in design thinking, innovation, and global collaboration in education. What inspired you to embark on this journey, and what drives your work today?

My journey began with a deep conviction that education must go beyond textbooks and examinations to truly prepare students for life. Design thinking and innovation offered me the tools to reimagine learning, while global collaboration showed me the power of shared ideas and collective growth. What drives me today is the vision of creating ecosystems where educators and students are not just consumers of knowledge, but creators and changemakers in society.

Your "Wisdom Lab" initiative emphasises developing common sense in education. Could you share the key principles behind it and why you believe this approach is crucial for students and educators alike?

Wisdom Lab is built on the belief that while knowledge is abundant, wisdom is rare. Its principles are simple: Cultivate curiosity, encourage questioning, apply learning to real-world problems, and build emotional intelligence. Common sense bridges the gap between what we know and how we live. By fostering it, we prepare students and educators to make better decisions, adapt quickly, and contribute meaningfully in an unpredictable world.











"We identify changemakers by looking at their commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and impact beyond their own institutions."

Leading global collaborations and initiatives often come with unique challenges. What have been some of the most significant lessons you've learned from working with diverse educational leaders worldwide?

The biggest lesson has been the value of listening. Every leader brings a unique cultural perspective, and embracing these differences leads to richer outcomes. I've also learnt that trust and transparency are non-negotiable in collaborations. Challenges around priorities, resources, or pace of change exist everywhere, but when the focus remains on students and societal impact, collective progress always follows.

The GSLC celebrates changemakers in education and fosters collaboration. How do you identify and support these leaders, and what impact do you hope this recognition and network have on the broader education ecosystem?

We identify changemakers by looking at their commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and impact beyond their own institutions. Once they become part of the GSLC network, we provide platforms for them to share their journeys, collaborate with peers, and amplify their initiatives globally. The recognition not only validates their efforts but also inspires others. The long-term impact we envision is a stronger, interconnected education ecosystem that thrives on shared knowledge and collective action.

What prompted you to collaborate with 'Society Achievers' for the 'Global Education Leaders Special'?

'Society Achievers' has a legacy of celebrating excellence and leadership across fields. Collaborating with them allowed us to highlight the stories of education leaders on a mainstream platform, ensuring their work gets the visibility it deserves. This partnership bridges the world of education with broader society, reinforcing the idea that transformative education leadership is essential for building the future we all aspire to.

Education Special

Honouring Visionaries Who Shape The Future

‘Society Achievers’ celebrates the launch of the ‘Global Education Leaders Special’.

It was an evening defined by inspiration, intellect, and immense pride as ‘Society Achievers’ hosted the launch of its ‘Global Education Leaders Special’, a commemorative edition celebrating the exceptional minds and institutions shaping the future of learning in India and beyond. Held at Taj Santacruz, Mumbai, the evening brought together distinguished dignitaries, pioneering educators, policymakers, entrepreneurs, and philanthropists, all united by a shared mission to redefine education for a changing world.

The event began with a heartfelt tribute to Nari Hira, the visionary media pioneer who shaped India’s magazine culture and whose legacy continues to guide the Magnate family. The ceremonial lamp lighting followed, led by Founder Ashok Dhamankar, Chief Editor Andrea CostaBir, and Director Jayshree Dhamankar, alongside esteemed dignitaries including Hon. Minister Madhuri Misal, Member of the Maharashtra State Assembly; Dr Bhushan Gagrani, Commissioner of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), and Dr Sheetal Gagrani; Dr Niranjan Hiranandani; Sujay Jairaj Thacker; Jayesh Choksi; Sonal Pinto; and Bechar Patel.

Team Magnate, comprising Directors Sunil Khanvnekar and Preeta Nair, Marketing Director Shivendra Parihar, Assistant Editor Amber Dias, Administration Head Mario Ferreira, Swati Balgi, Consulting Editor, ‘Society Interiors & Design’, and team members Riya Sachdeva and Pragya Ganani — were present in full strength, joined by collaborators Pankaj Sharma, Founder & Director, Global School Leaders’ Consortium; Sanjay Vaidh, Founder, Aerobott; and Jyoti Gupta, Founder, BrainHap. The evening was gracefully compered by the dynamic Simran Ahuja.



Andrea CostaBir, Hon. Minister Shri. Ashish Shelar and Ashok Dhamankar



Ashok Dhamankar, Sujay Jairaj Thacker, Andrea CostaBir, Jayshree Dhamankar, Hon. Minister Smt. Madhuri Misal, BMC Commissioner Dr Bhushan Gagrani, Dr Sheetal Gagrani, Dr Niranjan Hiranandani and Jayesh Choksi

A soulful performance by the students of Navras Art Academy added a graceful artistic touch to the evening.

The evening's speeches set an inspiring tone, beginning with Ashok Dhamankar, whose address encapsulated 'Society Achievers's' mission of spotlighting India's finest achievers and bridging industries through purposeful storytelling. Guests of Honour, Hon. Minister Madhuri Misal and Dr Bhushan Gagrani, then took the stage, sharing their insights on education as the cornerstone of inclusive growth and civic transformation. Their words underscored the evening's overarching theme — that education, at its core, is an act of nation-building.

This was followed by the felicitation of and address from the Chief Guest of the evening, Hon. Minister Ashish Shelar, Cabinet Minister of Information Technology & Cultural Affairs, Government of Maharashtra, who said, "Education today must go beyond the classroom, it must build character, curiosity, and compassion. I congratulate 'Society Achievers' for spotlighting leaders who are transforming education into a force for global good."

An Evening Of Recognition

The highlight of the evening was the Felicitation Ceremony, where 'Society Achievers' honoured visionary leaders whose innovation and dedication continue to transform education at every level.

Among those celebrated were Dr Niranjan Hiranandani, Nawaz Modi Singhania, Sujay Jairaj Thacker, Jayesh Choksi, Dr Grace Pinto, Manju Yagnik, Rupal Kanakia, Bindu Oberoi, Archita Rajpuria, Aarav Muchhala, Dr Krit Serai, Dr Ajeenkya DY Patil, Swapnali Vishwajeet Kadam, Dilip Vengsarkar, Dr Pooja Misal, Sanjay Vaidh, Venkat Muriki, Yogesh Agrawal, Joydeep Sah, Karan Dabrai, Gopinath Chandra Das, Asif Bhamla, Pranali Dhamankar, Jyoti Gupta and Vinit Ahuja.

Dignitaries who joined us for the evening included politician-designer Shaina NC, actor Mukesh Rishi, entertainment honcho Bunty Walia, music composer Anu Malik, Suchi Shukla representing RBKEI, power couple Kailash and Aarti Surendranath, interior designer Ketan Seth of Goldmine Project Consultants, restaurateur Neeti Goel, jeweller Kamlesh Hemdev and Dhanesh Chheda of Just Men.

Also felicitated at the event were Krishna Tiwari, Raghav Rishi, Chanda Patil, Ekta Dang, Anusha Srinivasan Iyer and her son Vedant Gill from Naraad PR and Image Strategists, and Vasant Bhandari for their contributions to their respective fields. Dr Yogesh Lakhani was also in attendance.

As the night drew to a close, the atmosphere was one of celebration, inspiration, and collective pride — a reminder that India's greatest strength lies in its thinkers, dreamers, and doers. Through the 'Global Education Leaders Special', 'Society Achievers' once again reaffirmed its commitment to chronicling stories of passion, progress, and the people who make India shine on the world stage.

The magazine would like to thank Taj Santacruz for being our hospitality partner, and Bright Outdoor Media and 'The Free Press Journal' for being our media partners.



Andrea CostaBir, Hon. Minister Shri. Ashish Shelar and Ashok Dhamankar



Andrea CostaBir, Hon. Minister Smt. Madhuri Misal and Ashok Dhamankar


Andrea CostaBir, BMC Commissioner Dr Bhushan Gagrani and Dr Sheetal Gagrani and Ashok Dhamankar

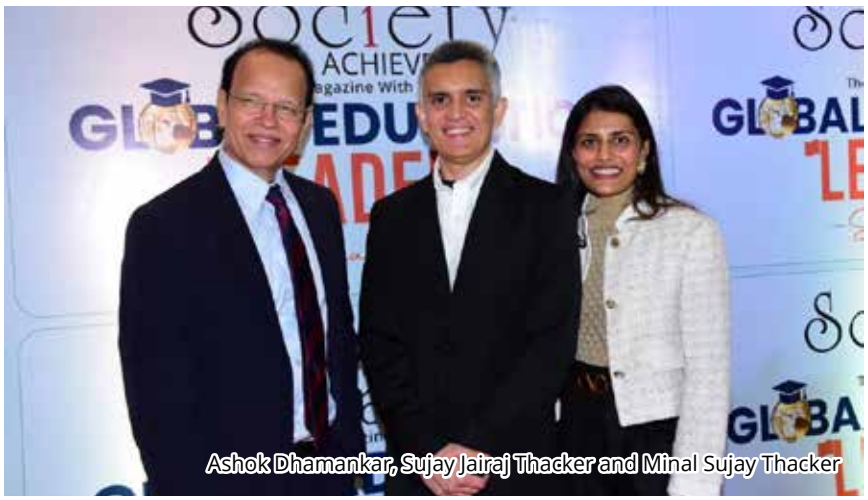

Mukesh Rishi, Hon. Minister Smt. Madhuri Misal, Anu Malik, Ashok Dhamankar,
BMC Commissioner Dr Bhushan Gagrani, Dr Niranjan Hiranandani, Kailash and Aarti Surendranath



Arpana Mishra, Sanjay Vaidh, Krishna Tiwari and Ashok Dhamankar


Nawaz Modi Singhania and Neeti Goel


Shaina NC


Ashok Dhamankar, Sujay Jairaj Thacker and Minal Sujay Thacker


Jayesh Choksi, Ashok Dhamankar and Harish Choksi



Amber Dias, Sunil Khanvnekar, Andrea CostaBir, Ashok Dhamankar, Jayshree Dhamankar, Mario Ferreira, Preeta Nair, Riya Sachdeva, Pragya Ganani, Ekta Dang, Chanda Patil, Jyoti Gupta and Pankaj Sharma



Ashok Dhamankar, Hon. Minister Smt. Madhuri Misal, Shaina NC, Sujay Jairaj Thacker and Andrea CostaBir



Ashok Dhamankar, Nawaz Modi Singhania, Hon. Minister Smt. Madhuri Misal, Shaina NC and Andrea CostaBir



Andrea CostaBir, Ashok Dhamankar, Jayesh Choksi, Hon. Minister Smt. Madhuri Misal and Shaina NC



Ashok Dhamankar, Mukesh Rishi, Archita Rajpuria, Kamlesh Hemdev and Dhanesh Chheda



Nishita Muchhala and Aarav Muchhala


Swapnali Vishwajeet Kadam and Ashok Dhamankar



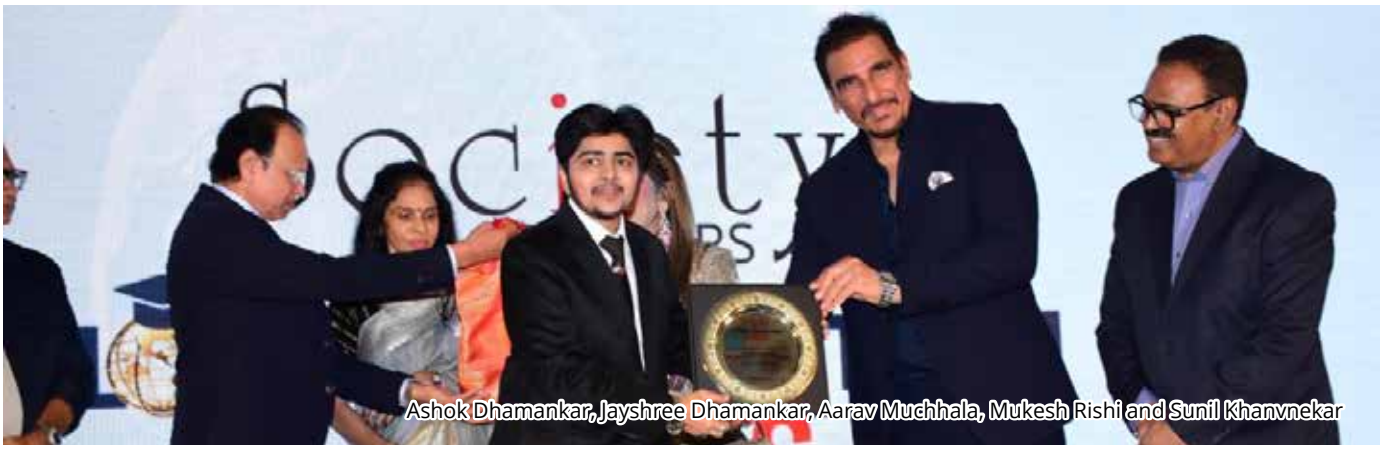
Ashok Dhamankar, Mukesh Rishi, Hon. Minister Smt. Madhuri Misal, Anu Malik, BMC Commissioner Dr Bhushan Gagrani, Kailash and Aarti Surendranath



Ashok Dhamankar, Shuchi Shukla, Principal, Kanakia International School (IB), Chembur, Shaina NC, Dr Yogesh Lakhani and Mukesh Rishi


Mukesh Rishi, Ashok Dhamankar, Anu Malik, Hon. Minister Smt. Madhuri Misal, BMC Commissioner Dr Bhushan Gagrani and Dr Niranjan Hiranandani


Hon. Minister Smt. Madhuri Misal, Shaina NC, Sujay Jairaj Thacker and Andrea CostaBir



Ashok Dhamankar, Jayshree Dhamankar, Aarav Muchhala, Mukesh Rishi and Sunil Khanvnekar



Ashok Dhamankar, Dr Rekha Chaudhary, Pranali Dhamankar, Victor Demello, Shaina NC, Mukesh Rishi and Dr Yogesh Lakhani



Ashok Dhamankar, Mukesh Rishi, Krishna Tiwari, Malti Jain, Ketan Sheth and Sunil Khanvnekar



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Manisha Sheth and Ketan Sheth



Ashok Dhamankar, Mukesh Rishi, Yogesh Agrawal and Malti Jain



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Shivani Dabrai, Sanjay Dabrai, Sanjay Vaidh, Karan Dabrai



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Mukesh Rishi, Karan Dabrai and Malti Jain



Manisha Sheth, Ashok Dhamankar, Ketan Sheth, Mukesh Rishi, Raghav Rishi, Vedant Gill, an associate, Vasant Bhandari, Malti Jain, Jayshree Dhamankar and Sunil Khavnekar



Ashok Dhamankar, Mukesh Rishi, Dr Kamal Siddhu, Kamlesh Hemdev and Dhanesh Chheda



Andrea CostaBir, Ashok Dhamankar, Ketan Sheth, Pankaj Sharma and Malti Jain



Ashok Dhamankar, Shivendra Parihar, Mukesh Rishi, Shri. Gopinath Chandra Das, Kamlesh Hemdev and Dhanesh Chheda



Harish Marathe, Sanjay Vaidh and Faissal Parekh



Shivendra Parihar and Shri. Gopinath Chandra Das



Bechar Patel and Ashok Dhamankar



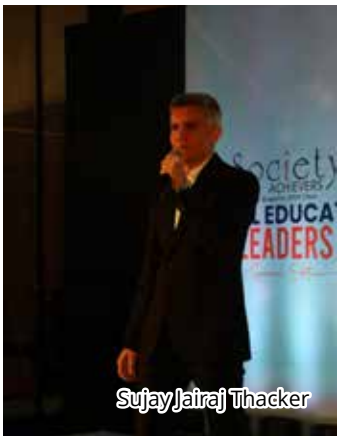


A soulful performance by the students of Navras Art Academy


Swapnali Vishwajeet Kadam


Jayesh Choksi


Nawaz Modi Singhania

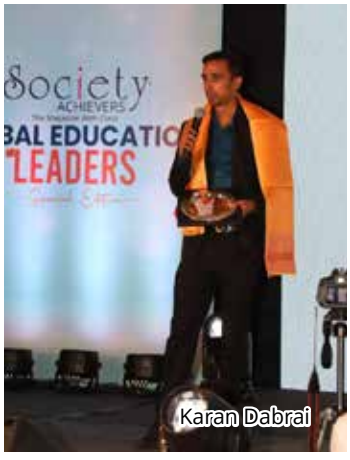

Sujay Jairaj Thacker


Shuchi Shukla


Dr Pooja Misal


Dr Sonal Pinto


Venkat Muriki


Karan Dabrai


Mukesh Rishi


Dr Niranjan Hiranandani


Akshay Laxman and Mukesh Rishi



Pranali Dhamankar, Rekha Chokhani, Jayshree Dhamankar, Vrishi Chokhani, Ashok Dhamankar and Vrinda Chokhani



Pranali Dhamankar, Mudra Chavan, Dhruvika Chavan, Jayesh Chavan, Jayshree Dhamankar, Nisha Parashar, Mukesh Parashar and Ashok Dhamankar



Jayshree Dhamankar and Pranali Dhamankar



Bunty Walia and Ashok Dhamankar



Sonal Pinto and Ashok Dhamankar



Amber Dias, Andrea CostaBir and Swati Balgi



Jyoti Gupta, Krishna Tiwari and Ashok Dhamankar



Mona Khushal Sachdeva and Khushal Sachdeva



Pranali Dhamankar, Sakshi Tandon, Jayshree and Ashok Dhamankar, and Neeraj Tandon



Simran Ahuja



Dr Pooja Misal, Hon Madhuri Misal and Ashok Dhamankar



Educators - Nishi Kumar, Bharati Parihar and Varsha



Shikha Malhotra



Anurah Chabra and Sanjay Vaidh

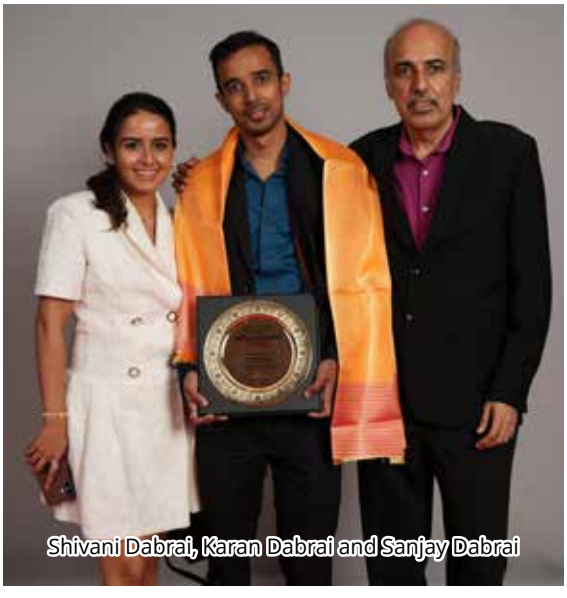

Nawaz Modi Singhania


Sujay Jairaj Thacker


Swapnali Vishwajeet Kadam


Anu Malik


Jayesh Choksi and Harish Choksi


Shivani Dabrai, Karan Dabrai and Sanjay Dabrai


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Aarav Muchhala


Archita Rajpuria


Sonal Pinto


Yogesh Agrawal


Pranali Dhamankar


Dr Pooja Misal


Vinit Ahuja (c) and team


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