



A Dream For India Inc. - Making IIMs Out Of Private B-School

How many IIMs are there in India. Six. Right. Now try this. How many IIMs does India need? 10, 15, 20, 50? No, it is hundred, if we believe the management guru with a difference—the Lagaan Professor Dr Biswajeet Pattanayak. As part of the AICTE teams that evaluate the management institutes in India for recognition/accreditation, Dr Pattanayak was amazed and sad at the sorry state of the affairs at many of these institutes. He observed that there are the elite B-schools, both in the government as well as private sector, which have been fulfilling the needs of the Indian as well as international business and industry for quality managerial manpower. But the number of these excellent business schools could almost be counted on finger tips. What is surprising that though there has been manifold increase of business activities and corresponding increase in demand for professional managers after the liberalization and globalization of the Indian economy, there has not been any significant increase in the number of B-Schools which can be termed excellent. One must not forget that in the today's scenario it is not the private sector only which is looking for professionally qualified managers, but also the government sector and the NGO sector.

Needless to say, there is a huge gap in the demand and supply as far as the well-trained management graduates are concerned. So, when a former professor of IIMs says that there is a need for a hundred IIMs in the country, he is perhaps not exaggerating. But, with government lacking the resources, even additional five IIMs would be a dream only. So, the need of the hour, says the Lagaan Professor, is to bring the private B-Schools to the level of IIMs and beyond. While in the IIMs, it is easy to look down upon their private counterparts. But, if an academician is really concerned about the quality of management education, then one should take up the challenge of making an IIM out of a private institute.

Elsewhere, Dr Achyuta Samanta, a lecturer of chemistry decides to go beyond a cosy job of teaching and becomes an 'educational entrepreneur' by building institutes of excellence in the so called backward state of Orissa. In his quest for making Orissa the dream destination of quality education-seekers, he sets up institutes in engineering, computer applications, medicine, etc. When he acquires a B-School, he

looks for an outstanding academician to turn-around it. His quest brings him to the Lagaan Professor. When an institution builder meets a visionary management guru, the idea of making an IIM out of a private B-School is surely going to fructify and manifest itself in letter and spirit. So starts the journey of Institute of Business Administration and Training (IBAT) in search of excellence.

IBAT, Bhubaneswar has been a ten-year-old institute with reasonable reputation in the initial years of its existence. In January 2003, IBAT took a big leap forward in the direction of its turnaround and march towards the target of becoming an IIM level B-school, when it got the coveted Lagaan Professor to lead it. Dr Biswajeet Pattanayak, who was the Director in Indian Institute of Bank Management, an RBI institute, at Guwahati, took tremendous personal risk just to make his vision for the Indian management



Dr Biswajeet Pattanayak, Director, IBAT

education a reality. The risk he has taken in heading a private B-School can be judged from the fact that with his kind of achievements in such a short span of his career, he could have headed any national level institution and enjoyed the relatively pompous lifestyle and the aura associated with the post. But he is a protagonist, not a man who preaches something but does not practice. He is a man who dares think big and unconventional. A guru who does not believe in the theories of other academic gurus but in mundane reality. A man who is very practical to recognise that the shadows of human beings are not the same during different times of the day, rather it changes according to the location of the sun in the sky. An already acclaimed name in the industry and academic circles what with his rich experience in some of country's very big companies and NITIE and two IIMs, Dr Pattanayak became well-known in the general public, aptly titled the Lagaan Professor, due to his adoption of Oscar-nominated movie Lagaan as real-life learning in management.

As soon as he took over, Dr Pattanayak started the turnaround of IBAT with text book precision showing an urgency that is unparalleled not only in the academic history of India, but perhaps also the industrial history. Faculty is the backbone of any academic institution. Being a management guru with HR flavour, and an academician with vast industry experience to boot, he went on a hunt for the best management teachers in the

