

75 percent Indian engineering students unemployable: Report

Discussing a report by software industry group Nasscom which says that 75 percent engineering students in India are unemployable, education experts here Saturday said that the Indian higher education system must give skill building and practical training equal importance as academics to give them an edge.

A.D. Sahasrabudhu, director of the College of Engineering, Pune said that one of the major reasons why engineers, even from reputed institutes, are not easily employed because they lack hands-on skill.

'The focus in most institutes here is always on academics and theory. Thus a mechanical engineer may actually not know how to change a part of a machine. Therefore even if a high scoring student gets placed in a good company, eventually that lack of practical knowledge catches up,' Sahasrabudhu said during a panel discussion at the sixth Higher Education Summit organised by Federation of of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

'From our experience we now know that practical, hands-on training is very crucial in the education system,' he added.

In their latest report released in the last week of October, National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom) said that Indian IT firms reject 90 percent of college graduates and 75 percent of engineers who apply for jobs because they are not good enough to be trained.

And because there is such a dearth of competent people, companies like Infosys increased its training of employees to 29 weeks from this year. That's seven months of training, the report added.

Richard Kerly, a Scottish university professor, who had participated in the discussion said: 'Just recently I came to know that Citi Bank had started its recruiting process here, but was not going to campuses placement cells.

'The possible reason is that students here, although brilliant, don't have an edge when it comes to putting theories to practice.'

Sudhir Matthew, Dean, Ecole Hoteliere Lavasa, Lavasa Corporation Limited, Pune said: 'The scene is very similar in the hospitality industry. Lack of hands-on trained students have forced hotel chains like the Oberoi, Taj and ITC to open their own hotel schools where the students are trained as per their needs.

'Tourism will grow at a rate of 8.8 percent till 2015 in India, making it one of the fastest growing markets but there is a serious lack of skilled hands. Academics combined with practical training is therefore very important to meet this shortage which is estimated at 3.2 million.'

(© IANS / India eNews)