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Good governance and leadership

- NIKHIL RAGHAVAN

The Indian Institute of Governance aims to design, develop and deliver courses in governance and leadership with an interdisciplinary approach.



(From left) Indian Institute of Governance think tank: Harihara Subramanian, B. S. Raghavan and Dr. V. Balachandran. Photo: Special Arrangement

B. S. Raghavan, an 89-year-old I.A.S veteran, believes that our administrators and policy makers, both in the government and other sectors, still suffer from a colonial hangover. “It was to wipe away this, that Rabindranath Tagore established Shantiniketan. As long as we continue to call our administrators by names such as chancellor, registrar and so on, they will never shed the baggage of a colonial hangover. Title one of them as an ‘Adhyaksha’ and he will start his career with a clean slate and implement what is relevant to Indian society,” he says.

In an attempt to achieve this, engineer and social worker Harihara Subramanian has initiated the idea of forming the Indian Institute of Governance (IIG) which would integrate India’s culture with good governance practices and sensible management which are relevant to the country.

“IIG is an academia in the domain of governance and leadership and will be steered by a team of sterling leaders from all over the country. Its primary objective is to design, develop and deliver well-conceived and crafted courses in governance and leadership, which will be offered through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) as well as Governance And Leadership Courses (GOAL) in classroom and situational learning formats. Our vision is to train and develop visionary leaders for India and the world, to create a pathway for our men and women to go up and steer the states and country from the top, and to become the hub and spokes of Indian governance,” says Harihara.

Several people have joined in to support the initiative. Krishna Srikanth, a young advocate and solicitor, says, “Besides my legal practice, I am a businessman and at some point in the future I would like to involve myself in public life, to serve the people. I do not want to be just another politician, but would like to implement effective governance and management practices for the benefit of society. In this context, I find the course content and the methodology of IIG ideally suited

for my foray into public life. IIG will also benefit scores of youngsters who would like to make a mark in public life as a politician or administrator.”

With e-learning becoming the order of the day, IIG will exploit the online space to make their expertise available to a large segment of aspirants. Raghavan, who is also an advisor of the institute, says that IIG is looking for specific qualities in aspiring takers of IIG’s courses.

“They should have a thirst for knowledge, have absorption powers, should be action-oriented to put to use what they have learnt, must be adaptive and innovative and ready to do mid-course correction of their own work. Finally, the delivery of what they have learnt should be of a better quality. This will ensure that IIG’s goals are met, visions are achieved and the mission is accomplished,” he says.

Padmashri Dr. Bala V. Balachandran, founder and dean, Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai and Delhi, finds the vision of IIG complementary to his own institution. “Graduate colleges such as ours in business education or MBA, have people with lesser experience of 2 or 3 years. But our core competency is knowledge distribution and dissemination (teaching) in addition to knowledge creation and blending academic elegance with business relevance. Thus, the two groups of academics and business expertise have to blend to make sure that the vision of IIG can be implemented, tested, revised, modified, propagated and practised. For achieving a global mindset, sticking to Indian roots is necessary,” he says.

Similarly, S. Vaidheeswaran, MD and CEO of Manipal Global Education Services feels that integrating IIG modules in the courses offered by their institutions will serve the need of future generations of Indians. “Just as corporate governance steers the ethics of doing business, IIG will facilitate the ethics of being a good leader. We feel that as our youth move towards taking advantage of the “Demographic Dividend,” a seamless embedding of social governance will be a big plus to the nation. I am excited to see how we could adapt the IIG curricula at our universities and provide a more holistic development to our students, keeping the rich culture and tradition of India in perspective,” says Vaidheeswaran.

“Our course content has five important components. They are rooted to our culture. It is not approached in a confrontational way and there will be inter-disciplinary integration,” says Harihara. For more details, visit www.iig.asia.

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