



Press Release

NIIT University launches the Asian Lens Forum

First of its kind initiative to sensitize young generation to Asian heritage, culture, history and values

New Delhi, February 18, 2014: Established with a vision to bring about innovation in higher education and learning in emerging areas of the knowledge society, the not-for-profit NIIT University (NU) unveiled another unique initiative - **The Asian Lens Forum**.

The Forum is an attempt to sensitize the coming Asian generations on the rich and diverse legacies of Asia with an aim to create a sense of identity, direction and vision as a beacon for the “Asian 21st Century”. By fostering a better understanding of the past, the inherent objective is to establish a robust foundation for Asia’s youth, to build an aspirational future. The Asian Lens Forum will also act as a launching pad for the faculty and student bodies of NU to undertake research and disseminate knowledge about challenges, achievements and roles of Asian societies in the globalized world.

The launch event of Asian Lens was attended by eminent personalities like award-winning journalist and author **Pallavi Aiyar** who has written “Smoke & Mirrors” - an outstanding book on China, and just launched her recent book “Punjabi Parmesan”; **Arun Maira**, Member of the Planning Commission, former India Chairman of Boston Consulting Group, author of “Remaking India: One Country, One Destiny” and “Transforming Capitalism: Business Leadership to Improve the World for Everyone”; and **Deepak Nayyar**, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Delhi, who has had a distinguished career in academia interspersed with short periods in the government, and author of “Catch Up”.

There was also a recorded message by well know educationalist and author **Prof. Rajiv Malhotra** who has written extensively on civilizations & cross-cultural encounters, including his path breaking book “*Being Different: An Indian Challenge to Western Universalism*”. Also present were **Rajendra Pawar**, Founder, NIIT University; members of the NU Board including **Harpal Singh**, Chairman Emeritus, Fortis and **Dr. Rajendra Pandey**, President, NIIT University.

The conversations at the event were anchored by NU Visiting Professor, **Dr Jean-Pierre Lehmann**, Emeritus Professor of IMD Lausanne, and an exceptional Asianist who has invested a majority of his scholarly pursuits in understanding Asia and globalization, and has written extensively on these subjects.

Speaking on this significant launch, **Rajendra Pawar, Founder, NIIT University** said, “*The rich and diverse cultural heritage of Asia and India is probably second to none. However owing to centuries of dominance by western culture and economy we seem to have forgotten our legacy. Asian Lens is an attempt to enable today’s youth to appreciate and understand their legacy and draw inspiration from it.*”



During the 19th and 20th centuries many of the Asian countries were colonized or otherwise subjugated by the West. The Asian mosaic of civilization was severely damaged, if not completely overwhelmed by Western imperialism. This dominance extended to every arena of economic, social and cultural life in a way that the Asian view of the world, and indeed of itself, got distorted by what one may call the Western Lens. Consequently, it would not be an overstatement to suggest that much of what Asians know of themselves is from the prism of western writers, historians and thinkers.

However, since the turn of this century, one is witnessing the emergence of a new global reality: The Resurgence of Asia. Notwithstanding this significant development, there continues to be a major dependence on the Western Lens for Asians to study their individual societies or indeed for developing an understanding of a broader Asian regional context. The proliferation of “Asian Studies” centers, departments and institutes throughout North America, Australia and Europe (trained to think and research by the use of the Western Lens) will, if anything, accentuate the distorting effect and prevent “truer” contextual understanding of Asian realities.

According NIIT University Visiting Professor, **Dr Jean-Pierre Lehmann**, *“The need of the hour, therefore, is to set up comparable entities in Asia that study Asia through Asian eyes”.*

Mr. Harpal Singh, Board Member, NIIT University & Chairman Emeritus, Fortis further added, *“NIIT University strongly feels that Asians can play their rightful role in the building of a just and successful 21st century society only if they truly appreciate the heritage that has made them what they are today.”*

NU realizes the need and importance of developing new and potentially superior understanding rather than creating a new body of knowledge that is parochial, self-centered and narrow. Asians and citizens from other geographies must, in the future, have the opportunity to "Know" about Asians from new and alternative lenses, as they reflect and think about what kind of future they would like to build for themselves and for the global community.

About NIIT University

*Set up with the vision of being the leading center of innovation and learning in emerging areas of the Knowledge Society, the not-for-profit NIIT University is dedicated to building great careers and ensuring excellent job opportunities to all its students. It has been developed as a center of excellence to provide exceptional education based on the **four core principles that make learning industry-linked, technology-based, research-driven and seamless.***

*The NIIT University offers **BTech Programmes** in Computer Science and Engineering, Biotechnology and Electronic and Communication Engineering; **MTech Programmes** in Educational Technology, Embedded Solutions and Convergence, Computing and Communications and in Bioinformatics; and PhD programs in*



all the above disciplines. The University also offers MTech Programme in Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Dual degree integrated **MTech Programmes** in Computer Science and Engineering, Electronic Communication and Biotechnology are also offered by NU. These contemporary and industry-relevant programmes are customized to prepare skilled professionals and researchers for high-end mobile computing and wireless, communication technology and biotechnology jobs. Highly qualified faculty, state-of-the-art laboratories, associations with research labs and research universities in USA and UK, strong wireless stimulation, performance and modeling concepts are other unique features of these programmes.

The University also offers an **MBA Programme** (NU- MBA) designed to help aspiring professionals build meaningful connections to the real world of business and become successful leaders of the future. Through the Mentorship Programme, each MBA student will be mentored by an eminent CEO and coached by an industry professional. NU- MBA trains future CEOs to deal with the challenges and opportunities thrown up by emerging economies such as China and countries in Africa through its International Immersion programme. The University has also launched an industry-linked programme in **MBA (Banking & Finance)** in collaboration with ICICI Bank.

NIIT University has entered into a partnership with Autodesk to promote '**Design Thinking**' as a course across all disciplines of BTech programmes. Further, a design oriented post graduate programme will be launched by NU shortly. **The Asian Lens Forum** has been set-up at NIIT University to sensitize young generation and to create a sense of pride in Asian/Indian heritage, culture, history and values amongst youth. The Forum will also act as a launching pad for the faculty and student bodies of NU to undertake research and disseminate knowledge about achievements and role of Asia to the world.

Vibrant social and recreational activities form the heart of Campus Life at NIIT University, with a host of student activities interspersed along the central walking spine. The Campus provides students a wide array of sports activities like volleyball, basketball, tennis, a golf putting range and gymnastics. Furnished student hostels make life comfortable for students. Temperatures are maintained at the Campus all year around using an energy-efficient, geothermal cooling system, with minimal carbon footprint. For further information please visit www.niituniversity.in.

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