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ANANYA MUKHERJEE
Vice Chancellor, Shiv Nadar University

PARO ANAND
Children's Author; Winner of Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar

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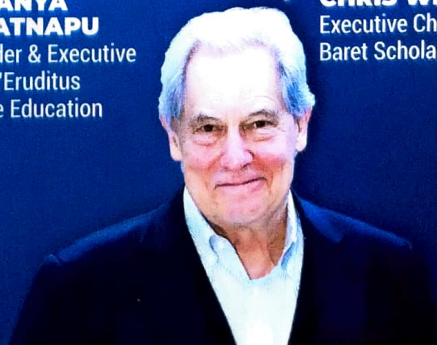
PERSPECTIVE

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LAST WORD

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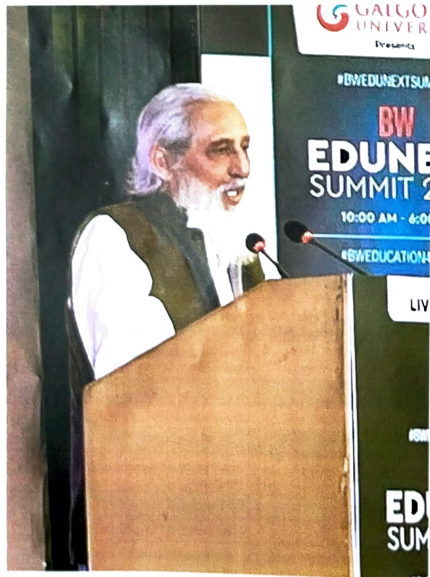Co Founder & Executive Director, 'Eruditus Executive Education

GLOBAL INSIGHTS

CHRIS WHITTLE
Executive Chairman, Baret Scholars

Academia Ponders Upon AI's Impact At
BW Education's Edunext Summit

At the BW Education EduNext Summit & 40Under40 Awards, **Anil Sahasrabudhe**, Chairman – Executive Committee, National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and other eminent academicians shared valuable insights into the future of education in India

B W *Education*, in association with *BW Businessworld*, hosted day-long event 'BW Education EduNext Summit & 40Under40 Awards' at India International Centre, New Delhi, on 31 January 2024. The event saw participation from industry stalwarts and experts who involved in various panel discussions, powerpoint presentation and keynote address. A book based on parenting was also launched on the occasion. Later in the day, the award ceremony took place.

KEYNOTE:
Quality & Excellence Does Not Come So Easy

Anil Sahasrabudhe, Chairman, National Board of Accreditation (NAAC), in his keynote address shed light on the transformative journey India's education system is embarking on. With a focus on innovation, collaboration and leveraging technology, Sahasrabudhe outlined a vision that extends beyond accreditation, aiming to create a holistic and dynamic learning environment. The chairman commenced by acknowledging the pivotal role of educational institutions in assessing educational institutions. He emphasised the need for institutions to embrace accreditation willingly, revealing that only about 25 to 30 per cent of institutions currently opt for institutional accreditation.

Answering a question by Team *BW Education* regarding the decision to do away with gradation in accreditation of higher education institutes, he said, "There are two aspects to it. The first aspect is, despite a lot of thrust on accreditation, not more than 25-30 per cent institutes come forward for institutional accreditation. And as far as programme accreditation of National Board of Accreditation for engineering, management and others is concerned, not even 10 per cent programmes are accredited. We want that all the institutes should follow a minimum quality benchmark. When the gradation was there, there was stigma attached to low grades. Whereas we want all the institutes to come forward."

He pointed to the practice of institutes providing data 'which was not truthful', engaging consultants and other practices to get the desired grades. Those measures will not be required when there will be no grades.

Talking about the other aspect, he said, "Quality and excellence does not come so easy. Institutes that aspire to do better should challenge themselves and globally compete to become level 5."

The new system of levels 1 to 5, he clarified, will not be equivalent to grades. It will not be easy to get to level 5. Only institutes like IISc Bangalore, IIMs or IITs could get to level 5, he said.

Sahasrabudhe announced a shift, with the focus on the newly introduced Automated Permanent Academic Account, providing a unique ID for every student in India. This innovation aims to link with the Academic Bank of Credits, facilitating easy verification of student credentials by employers.

The chairman stressed the potential of gamification and comics to make learning enjoyable for students, revolutionising the conventional education system. Furthermore, Sahasrabudhe shared insights into the efforts to promote multilingualism in education. He unveiled an indigenous translation tool called Anuvadini, developed to facilitate the translation of educational content into various Indian languages. The tool, currently in its learning phase, is poised to challenge global translation tools within a year, he said.

Highlighting the collaboration between startups and educational institutions, Sahasrabudhe urged startups to engage with institutions and provide insights into the changing dynamics of the job market. He encouraged startups to bridge the gap between industry requirements and academic offerings, fostering a culture of innovation and adaptability.

Throughout his address, Sahasrabudhe highlighted the role of technology in shaping the future of education. He lauded initiatives like the National Educational Alliance for Technologies, promoting personalised learning through adaptive tools. The chairman also commended efforts in the internship space, where technology, including AI, is utilised for matchmaking between students and industries.

PANEL 1

Unlocking the Potential of Emerging Technologies in Education

In the panel discussion on this theme, Himadri Das, Director General, International Management Institute (IMI), New Delhi, said, "The biggest boon for students in the last year is generative AI since it allows one to develop large language models on very specific customised tailored content."

Discussing the use of technology during the Covid-19 pandemic, the director explained that while technology was used to enhance content delivery, it did not change the way students learned.

"The ultimate learning pedagogical objective should be a flipped classroom model. Students learn concepts and theories on their own and come to the classrooms to learn applications and cases from the faculties," he added.

Meanwhile, Abhay G Chebbi, Pro Chancellor, Alliance University, stated, "Generative AI has taken us to a scale where we can truly augment ourselves; to do this we need to recognise that this is good not just for the country or society but for us as individuals... Institutions must funnel technology as a tool and chart out a plan."

Umashankar Venkatesh, Professor, Marketing, Great Lakes Institute of Management, Gurgaon, stressed on accessibility over quality.

Saurabh Chaubey, CEO, iHUB Anubhuti, IIITD Foundation, said AI can make education more personalised, immersive and cost-effective. "The possibilities that can open up with edtech and technology are immense - from customising textbooks to examinations and even to selecting careers."

Yogendra Patidar, Director, CIVOM, stated that educational institutions' expectations depend on how we look at the goals. "How strongly we discover the programme will help us enable the technologies around it, that where we can set it right. The role of a teacher has also changed with regard to technology, with traditional approaches being replaced with a guide-by-the-side approach," concluded Patidar.