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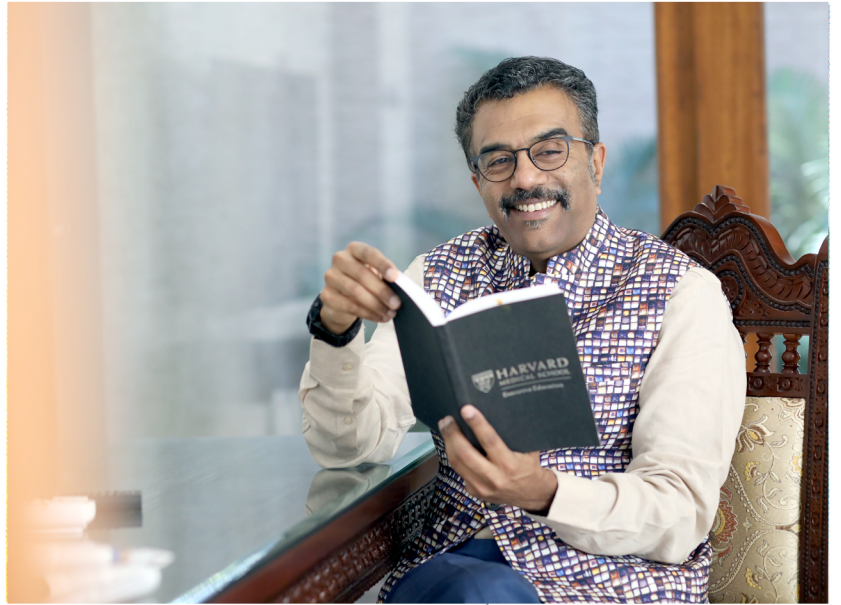
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Outlook 2045: When India becomes the skill factory to the world

■ By Chocko Valliappa



As Outlook celebrates its 25th anniversary, I thought it would be interesting to gaze 25 years ahead and find out what India looks like in 2045. Our nation would be on the cusp of completing a century with a population of anywhere upwards of 1.5 billion people. It would be the most populous country and will also be the second largest economy in the world behind China and ahead of the US.

Flashback to 25 years ago when India was just waking up to liberalization and the average growth of population calculated on the basis of total fertility ratio was 3.4. Today it is 2.2 and, in many states, less than two. It's instructive to see where and how Indian families spend. The West has small families but aspirations for self, whereas Indians with small families spend more on education of their kids.

This has led to the creation of the hugely successful Indian middle class. India graduates more engineers in the world than anywhere else. Controlling 15 per cent of the world economy India would need lots of skilled workforce. The skills required in the future will be quite different from the present. There would be less manual effort and more automation.

India will positively become the capital of Automation, Robotics, AI and ML. Our engineers will be leading the world in the Industry 5.0 era. Earlier a car manufactured in Detroit had to employ locally for the whole car. In the 80s and 90s many of the car parts got manufactured in China. In the industrial 4.0 era some of the designing and programming of machines moved offshore. But in Industry 5.0 where 3D printing of parts will become a reality, these parts will be printed globally. But the skill sets for designing these, and managing these machines will come out of India. India will become the hub for global manufacturing.

The advancement in technology like 3-D printing will totally change the supply chain and consequently the transportation demands. The transportation industry will see a huge transformation. There would be more companies working on

keeping people healthy, cleaning up pollution.

The new education policy has rightly focused on research. The New World will require new thoughts and a problem-solving mindset. There will be many more challenging problems in the future. With over 4 billion people living in densely populated cities there will be more infectious diseases and viruses. Pollution will also be a major problem to solve. The rising temperatures and rising water levels will make life different and these will be the problems youngsters will need to solve.

To meet the needs of the future, the government needs to liberalise education and have shift-based colleges, double enrollments. A third of the curriculum could be moved online. This way the cost of education can be reduced to a fraction and we can quadruple our higher education output. This is the way to leapfrog education.

As a country we are at the razor's edge. The nation will be adding 300 million people. We need to provide them with opportunities and livelihood. In the new world, there would be no jobs for the unskilled. This requires a completely new skills plan. The current system of skill training where the government gives skill training partners money is a complete waste, as it leads to corruption and low outcomes.

We need to provide a job every second for the next 10 years to sustain our growing population. The skill training needs to come from the industry. Instead of routing through skilling partners, the industry or employees need to get direct access to finance for training. This could be set off against PF or other dues. They should be paying to the skill providers, leading to better outcomes and job creation.

India has the potential of becoming the supplier of talent and skills to the world. Already, countries like Japan are looking to India and schemes such as TITP (Technical Intern Training Programme) are resulting in jobs for skilled Indians in Japan. Soon the world could be our oyster.