

## **IIM-B symposium analyses growth and sustainability**

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*B-schools can be interface between business, government and society*

Bengaluru, January 5:

“Given the dominant role that management schools play in preparing leaders, they can be a powerful catalyst for the kind of change we hope to see in the area of sustainability,” said PS Narayan, Vice-President and Head – Sustainability, Wipro.

Addressing the three-day symposium on ‘Advancing Sustainability Research and Education’ at IIM-Bangalore, Narayan drew attention to ‘Earthian’, Wipro’s sustainability education programme, under which schools and colleges across the country partner with Wipro to achieve sustainability.

“One of the many things we do, as part of Earthian, is offer summer internships to students. They get to do internships in organisations that work in the area of sustainability,” he said.

The three-day symposium, which has drawn researchers and practitioners from the US and India, was jointly organised by IIM-Bangalore, UNC KFBS Chapel Hill, Wipro and Earthian.

### **Growth and environment**

PD Jose, Symposium Co-Chair, IIM Bangalore, said, “There are fears that rapid economic growth can adversely affect the environment. The world is looking at us to see how we handle these challenges.”

The time has come to see what management schools can do as an interface between business, government and society to address these challenges, he added.

He hoped the symposium would address issues such as the guiding philosophy of teaching a course on sustainability in management schools, the changing role of business in society and the need for faculty to develop new capabilities and to explore collaborative opportunities.

Jayashankar M Swaminathan, Symposium Co-Chair, UNC KFBS Chapel Hill, said the symposium would look at challenges and opportunities for companies that operate in India and the United States in a range of areas that include operations, strategy, marketing, communications and more.

“We should challenge each other’s perspectives and we should also look at the role of government and legislation and their impact on companies and communities,” he added.

He said joint research; seminars, workshops and now the three-day symposium were part of the IIMB-UNC KFBS journey, under the Obama-Singh 21st Century Knowledge Initiative Award, initiated four years ago.

### **Need for research**

Devanath Tirupati, Dean Academic, IIM-Bangalore, said there was a need for solid research in the area of sustainability as good research could foster quality education. Deeming IIM-B an “early starter” in management schools offering courses, research projects and internships in the area of sustainability, he listed the initiatives taken by the premier B-school in academics as well as on campus, that reflect its commitment to the cause.

The symposium will have paper presentations by researchers from IIM Bangalore, IIM Calcutta, IIT Mumbai, TERI Delhi, XLRI, UNC KFBS Chapel Hill, Mays Business School, IIM Kozhikode, XIM Bhubaneswar, IIFM Bhopal, IIM Shillong, IIM Indore, TMTC Pune, panel discussions by practitioners and a workshop by Vijay Padaki, Founder, Bangalore Little Theatre.

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