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COVER STORY

Dr. Chenraj Roychand

Jain Group, Bangalore

Dr. Chenraj Roychand (formerly Jain) is founder chairman of the Jain Group of Institutions (JGI), which comprises 85 education institutions with an aggregate enrollment of 45,000 students in preschool, K-12, undergraduate and postgraduate education.

An entrepreneur, educationist and philanthropist who began his career as a salesman earning Rs.50 per month, Roychand promoted the first JGI institution — Sri Bhagawan Mahaveer Jain College — in Bangalore in 1989, and its first school — Jain International Residential School (JIRS) also in Bangalore — in 1999.

What prompted you to enter education?

In the 1990s, the Indian economy was booming and parents were exploring new education options which ensured all-round development of children and youth. The lack of institutions combining international academic standards and Indian values was the driving force behind my entry into school and higher

education. Moreover, I realised that knowledge is the key to development of the Indian economy.

What were your early challenges?

Making people accept new, unconventional education curriculums and the decision to include sports as an integral part of mainstream education were initial roadblocks hindering the realisation of my vision.

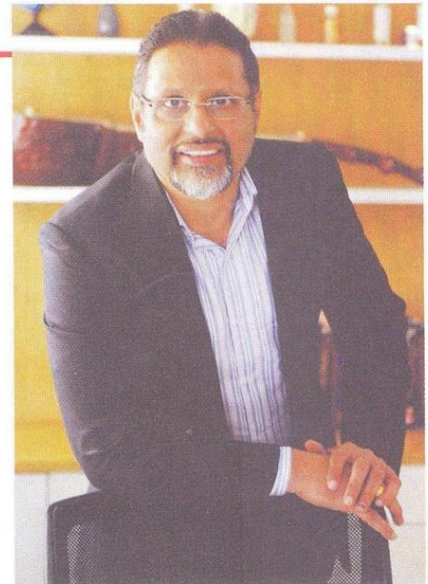
How did you overcome the challenges?

Fortunately challenges only strengthened my conviction. The JGI Group had a training and research centre for teachers set up long before I envisioned JIRS. The centre researched innovative pedagogies for new-age learning and aided the conceptualisation of JIRS.

How helpful are the Central and state governments?

I did not face any problem while dealing with the government as we have always believed in abiding by rules and regulations.

Unwind/de-stress. I find interacting with students is a wonderful way to de-stress. It leaves me feeling rejuvenated.



Future plans. We intend expanding our educational institutes throughout India. Sixty percent of them are located in rural areas and 30 percent in urban India. We believe in facilitating inclusive economic development, by providing educational opportunities in both rural and urban areas.