

LETTERS

FACTS ABOUT THE CII

Sir, Olga Tellis in the news item *FICCI, CII, ASSOCHAM and Virtual Reality* (*The Asian Age*, April 2) has made a very definitive statement that organisations like the CII have 30 to 40 committees but they have nothing for education and manpower training. In fact, she seems to give the impression that institutions such as ours are totally oblivious of the issues pertaining to vocational education and training. Let me present the facts about CII. CII set up a National Committee on Technical Education and Training (TET) way back in 1987 to focus on issues related to workers' training and re-training. What started as a national initiative has, over the years, cascaded to the regional and state offices of CII — with all of them having set up specialised committees to deal with this subject. All these committees have been very active. Our work on TET spans three broad areas: policy issues; awareness creation through workshops; seminars and experience sharing missions within and outside the country; and partnership building between industry and the training institutions. In all this we have brought experts from the UK, Australia, Germany and Singapore to share experiences and ideas. CII is also the only industry body in the country which runs a hugely popular Work Skills Competition at the regional and national levels. Winners of the regional awards qualify for the national competition. CII member companies participate actively in the competition which is conducted with the help of the directorate general of employment and training. Workers love this competition. Regular delegations of workers visit factories in different regions to study best practices on the shop floor. Productivity missions have also visited factories in Korea and Taiwan to pick up ideas and learnings on vocational training. In addition, QC circles competitions are organised by all the regional offices of CII on an annual basis.

To develop a productive partnership with the Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), CII, at the regional level, has signed MOUs with select ITIs to work together on curricula ~~update~~ **updating**; streamlining admission procedures; improving the delivery of training; and, helping in placements. At the policy level, CII is represented on the National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) and interacts closely with the directorate general of employment and training in the Centre and states. Identifying new training needs; suggesting methodologies for improved training; and facilitating a better "fit" between training and industry needs — all form part of our policy work. Clearly, if there are some key priorities of the CII, technical education and training is definitely one of them. Even as we in CII carry on with these initiatives, we have plans to further strengthen our delivery mechanism by creating a dedicated TET Advisory and Consultancy Services group, as we have done for TQM energy management, environment etc.

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