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Education Experts on Union Budget 2022 – Part II

February 2, 2022

Editorial Team



Digital continues to be the watchword of education. From setting up a digital university to launching the Digital DESH e-portal, the second paperless budget has given a lot of importance to the digital initiative in education. Did Union Budget 2022 meet the expectations of the education sector? Let us have a quick look at the education experts' reactions and find out the answer for that.

Dr. Dishan Kamdar, Vice-Chancellor, FLAME University

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Dr. Dishan Kamdar,
Vice-Chancellor,
FLAME University

“The plan to increase the 'One Class One TV Channel' from 12 to 200 TV Channels in all States in India will enable students to learn through radio and DTH channels thereby overcoming the problem of internet connectivity”

The decision to establish the digital university is a disruptive and futuristic decision that will benefit a large number of students even from the remotest part of the country by making world-class education accessible. This will surely give wings to the dreams of deserving students and meet the goal of providing high-quality education to all students across the country.

The plan to increase the 'One Class One TV Channel' from 12 to 200 TV Channels in all States in India will enable students to learn through radio and DTH channels thereby overcoming the problem of internet connectivity. The two decisions truly reflect the Government's aims to leverage technology advancements and use them as tools to meet the educational aspirations of a large number of students in the country. They have set an example that is worthy of being emulated by others.

Nitish Jain, President, S P Jain School of Global Management

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Nitish Jain,
President,
S P Jain School of Global Management

“Education is what propels the economy and the country forward, and I am confident that Budget 2022 will go a long way toward ensuring that education remains at the top of our country's priorities”

From the standpoint of higher education, the budget is headed in the correct path by focusing on improving the digital infrastructure in the country. Moving ahead, the execution, and how quickly these things move will be the most important factors to watch. Education is what propels the economy and the country forward, and I am confident that Budget 2022 will go a long way toward ensuring that education remains at the top of our country's priorities.

Dr. Akhil Shahani, Managing Director, Thadomal Shahani Centre for Management, Shahani group and CEO, Ask.Careers



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“Allowing foreign university campuses to set up in Gujarat's GIFT city will hopefully be an interesting pilot initiative that could encourage foreign universities to expand into other Indian states”

Considering the experience of e-learning in the pandemic, it is good that the government is seriously looking at integrating online technology to make our education system more inclusive for the less-resourced segments of the population. However, it is important to realise that online technology is no substitute for good quality brick & mortar schools & colleges, as many students have fallen behind over the last 2 years of the lockdown. So, it would have been important for the government to have focussed on efforts to train more teachers & support the building of more institutions. Another good initiative is the increased focus on skilling and upskilling to improve employability among our youth. Along with the new skill-oriented National Higher Qualification Framework being issued by the UGC, I see better integration between the academic & vocational streams of education. Allowing foreign university campuses to set up in Gujarat's GIFT city will hopefully be an interesting pilot initiative that could encourage foreign universities to expand into other Indian states. A couple of initiatives that were not addressed was the reduction of GST rates for Edtech services & allowing private for-profit investment into India's schools & colleges, which could have greatly helped expand quality education across India.

Dr Silpi Sahoo, Chairperson, SAI International Education Group



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“As expected the government has well thought to reduce the digital learning gap between the urban and rural by introducing ‘1-Class-1-TV channel’ covering multiple regional languages, which will not only counter the Learning losses but will bridge the learning gap”

Right from the Finance Minister’s use of a Tablet to propose the budget explained that India is on the path of a digital revolution in the near future. As expected the government has well thought to reduce the digital learning gap between the urban and rural by introducing ‘1-Class-1-TV channel’ covering multiple regional languages, which will not only counter the Learning losses but will bridge the learning gap. The PM’s e-Vidya will be further expanded from 12 to 200 channels to facilitate supplementary learning.

For the implementation of NEP 2020 great stress is implied on shifting the focus on Upskilling, therefore the launch of Digital DESH e-portal for skilling, upskilling and reskilling will be the key to newer dynamics. To develop the 21st century skills of critical thinking amongst students setting up of virtual labs and skilling e-labs will be valuable. To enable quality learning for each child quality e-content will be made through various means. Teachers will be trained to use better e-teaching outcomes and enhancement of learning experiences. Huge focus was laid on e-services in rural areas, it is proposed that all the villages will be laid with optical fibres by 2025, and villages will be at par with the urban areas.

Setting up of Digital University is a great step towards accessibility of quality world class education for all. As per the NEP 2020, Foreign Universities will be set up and Gujarat to set up the model Foreign University to make education accessible for all.

An increase in the overall financial allocation for the education sector for 2022-23 to Rs 1.04 lakh crore from Rs 93,224 crore (Budget estimate) in 2021-22 in view of Samagra

Shiksha is certainly a welcome move. It's a great education budget; belling the cat at the right time though the implementation is to be thought upon. We are looking forward to a quick implementation of the proposals.

Prashant Jain, CEO, Oswaal Books



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“One Class One TV Channel will expand the reach of education to the leisure of homes across the economical divide and centers of excellence will help focus on quality education than mere figures of literacy”

The vision of the Budget is welcoming not only to the current needs but also to the global demands of the future. While there is a clear emphasis on digital education and skilling programs which will boost the learning outcomes and methods of learning. But for students and teachers who have nearly lost 2 years of learning and patience respectively due to the pandemic may find the remedy a little delayed. One Class One TV Channel will expand the reach of education to the leisure of homes across the economical divide and centers of excellence will help focus on quality education than mere figures of literacy.

These are all novel initiatives. But most of them will not see the light of the day for years to come. Presently the government needs to ensure that the existing budget allocated to the School and higher education is done efficiently to overcome the crucial learning loss.

Dr. Sunil Shukla, Director General, Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII), Ahmedabad

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Dr. Sunil Shukla,
Director General,
Entrepreneurship Development Institute
of India (EDII), Ahmedabad

“I am happy that the Union Budget for the financial year 2022-23 emphasises on key sectors such as education, health, infrastructure and MSMEs, thus focussing on growth and inclusive development”

I am happy that the Union Budget for the financial year 2022-23 emphasises on key sectors such as education, health, infrastructure and MSMEs, thus focussing on growth and inclusive development. Announcements like a digital university for providing online education in multiple languages, digital ecosystem for skilling and livelihood—the DESH-Stack e portal that aims at empowering citizens to skill, reskill or upskill through online training, setting up of 750 virtual labs in science and mathematics, and 75 skilling e-labs for simulated learning environment showcases the intent of the government towards further augmentations and developments in the skilling ecosystem and the education domain.

I appreciate that Startups have been encouraged through various measures – extending tax benefits for a year, earmarking 25 per cent of defence R&D budget for the industry – the vision has rightly focussed on building an environ which fortifies innovation, enterprise, academia and inclusive welfare. Interlinking of Udyam, e-Shram, NCS and ASEEM portals, and the extension of the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) for one more year and expansion in its guarantee cover is further intended to formalise the economy and enhance entrepreneurial opportunities. All in all, I look forward to India gaining pace as an entrepreneurial nation.

Prajodh Rajan, Co-founder and Group CEO, Lighthouse Learning

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Prajodh Rajan,
Co-founder and Group CEO,
Lighthouse Learning

“The implementation of One Class One TV Channel program of PM eVIDYA to be expanded from 12 to 200 channels, should help mitigate the learning loss our children have endured during the past two years as schools remain closed”

The much awaited Union Budget has delivered many positive developments for the education sector. The implementation of One Class One TV Channel program of PM eVIDYA to be expanded from 12 to 200 channels, should help mitigate the learning loss our children have endured during the past two years as schools remain closed. This will definitely support supplementary education in regional languages for students across classes 1 to 12. A boost in the digital infrastructure across the country is essential and the mention of the completion of 5G spectrum auction in 2022-2023 will certainly help enable education institutions to attain the much needed learning outcomes. The Digital DESH e-portal set to be launched will help the youth in skilling, upskilling and reskilling so that they are ably employed and can contribute to the country's economic growth. We will soon be a super-energised and digitised economy!

Nadira Hamid, CEO, Indo-Canadian Business Chamber

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Nadira Hamid,
CEO,
Indo-Canadian Business Chamber

“Foreign Universities, especially from Canada can for the first time operate in the country and concepts like Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comic (AVGS) have found recognition”

The intent of the Government is clear. Infrastructure and the digital economy is where growth and jobs will come from. Canada’s largest pension funds and investment firms have recently invested billions of dollars into investments within infrastructure, real estate and even start-ups in India. This budget opens up a plethora of opportunities for Canada and will propel the Indo-Canadian relationship to greater heights to achieve enhanced economic development. Foreign Universities, especially from Canada can for the first time operate in the country and concepts like Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comic (AVGS) have found recognition. These are definitely bold and visionary statements. We welcome the budget which will see pronounced interaction between India and Canada.

Pawas Tyagi, Co-Founder, edustoke

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Pawas Tyagi,
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edustoke

“A clear emphasis on digital content development and delivery and overall efforts to digitize education is applauded as is the upgradation of Anganwadi”

A clear emphasis on digital content development and delivery and overall efforts to digitize education is applauded as is the upgradation of Anganwadi. Coupled with 5G rollout – this budget should accelerate more accessible quality education in the country.

Rajiv Bansal, Director- Operations, Global Indian International School (GIIS), India

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Rajiv Bansal,
Director- Operations,
Global Indian International School (GIIS),
India

“Focus on reskilling and upskilling at a higher education level and launch of the Digital DESH e-portal will enhance vocational learning and job readiness, making students independent and result oriented”

FM Nirmala Sitharaman talked about the impact of the pandemic on the education sector and highlighted the need to strengthen the education system by improving e-content quality, emphasising on teaching training, adopting innovative mediums of instruction, etc. to positively impact learning outcomes. The Union Budget 2022 highlighted the importance of adopting a progressive and inclusive approach by educational institutions across primary, secondary, and higher education. Announcements like eVidhya scheme and ‘One Class One TV Channel’ expands the learning horizon of the students and brings inclusivity as the regional languages are promoted equally. Adoption of technology and digitisation will help a student evolve into becoming a truly global citizen and will encourage lifetime of learning. Focus on reskilling and upskilling at a higher education level and launch of the Digital DESH e-portal will enhance vocational learning and job readiness, making students independent and result oriented. As a key member of the Indian education system, GIIS congratulates the Govt. for presenting a progressive and inclusive budget for the education sector. We are confident that digitisation and technology will help in building a more effective and rewarding education system in the years to come.

Sriram Subramanian Co-founder and CEO, Clever Harvey

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Sriram Subramanian,
Co-founder and CEO,
Clever Harvey

“One area where the budget fell short of our expectations is the ongoing disparity in GST rates applied to physical and digital learning materials”

We welcome the government’s move to cap the long-term capital gains surcharge at 15%. It will go a long way towards ensuring investor confidence not just in startups but in equity generally. Also, we appreciate the special focus on creative vocational fields like animation, graphics, and game design in this year’s budget. India has one of the largest talent pools for this, and this initiative will be instrumental in helping us move further up the value chain.

Given the battering and levels of disruption faced by the education system over the last three years, the emphasis given to mental health was another major highlight. It was, in my opinion, more important than ever, especially for students, and the budget does go a long way toward putting in place a mechanism to address it.

Furthermore, one area where the budget fell short of our expectations is the ongoing disparity in GST rates applied to physical and digital learning materials. I suppose the goal of the lower rate policy on physical learning materials was to promote education, and given that the majority of education consumption has shifted to the digital domain in recent years, we expect some sort of parity in the GST treatment between the two.

Ujjwal Singh, CEO and President, Infinity Learn

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Ujjwal Singh,
CEO and President,
Infinity Learn

“The extension of the PM eVIDYA initiative 12 to 200 TV channels will give the segment the requisite boost”

The Budget 2022-23 has an inclusive approach. We are pleased that the Government has recognized the importance of digital learning provided by the EdTech companies in India. The extension of the PM eVIDYA initiative 12 to 200 TV channels will give the segment the requisite boost. Further, the availability of regional language educational modules from Class 1 to 12 will enhance the literacy rates in India’s hinterlands, over and above the metro cities. This will serve as the driver of socio-economic change, enabled through technology. Education specifically has taken a new direction that has made technology-based learning, whether online or blended, indispensable for our education systems. Digital learning holds the potential to empower the country’s grassroots level population through democratized access to education, thereby facilitating continued learning sans infrastructural challenges, pan-India.

Sumeet Mehta, Co-founder and CEO, LEAD

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Sumeet Mehta,
Co-founder and CEO,
LEAD

“As an educator, I welcome the emphasis on creating digital and free-to-air channels of education. However, at the same time, the budget appears to circumvent physical schooling”

Overall, this has been a progressive budget as it accelerates the government’s efforts towards inclusive and sustainable development. As an educator, I welcome the emphasis on creating digital and free-to-air channels of education. However, at the same time, the budget appears to circumvent physical schooling. I sincerely hope that is not the case. While online learning was inevitable due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it would never be as effective as offline learning, which brings out the best in students in terms of learning outcome and performance. Online education can at best only play a supplementary role in education. I would have also loved to see a greater focus on improving the teaching and learning processes in our schools vis-a-vis infrastructure and tech-enabled curriculum. Going forward, I hope there will be policy changes in that direction.

Dr Maithili Tambe, CEO, The Academy School, Maharashtra

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Dr Maithili Tambe,
CEO,
The Academy School, Maharashtra

“Teaching every child was the biggest challenge any school could face. Through One Class, One Channel, it will become much easier to reach every child”

Two important points on education are worth highlighting in the Union Budget. First is the digital infrastructure: due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, the whole education system had to shift online. Teaching every child was the biggest challenge any school could face. Through One Class, One Channel, it will become much easier to reach every child. Second is the upgradation of Anganwadis: they are usually taken as daycare centres, but it is a base for any education system. Equal importance should be given to early childhood education as well. That said, the implementation of these measures should be effective and time-bound.

Siddhartha Gupta, CEO, Mercer Mettl

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Siddhartha Gupta,
CEO,
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“The launch of Digital University recognizes the role Tech would play in keeping education disruption less in the future. An announcement in this direction augurs well for the Ed Tech startups which have recognized this gap and are trying to innovate and transform the segment”

Aligning Skill programs with Industry is very positive news. Covid has taken the wind out of the Skilling initiatives of GOI over the last 2 years and there was a need to promote continuous skilling avenues, sustainability, and employability. Another welcome move is to re-look the national skill qualification framework (NSQF). This will further improve the Skill levels of youth and their ability to get jobs. We are proud of our partnership with GOI on Digital Literacy. Budget speaks about empowering citizens to skill, reskill or upskill through online training. It will also provide API-based trusted skill credentials, payment, and discovery to find relevant jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities. We have been working on Digital Credentials and would love to expand this to Skill credentials through Digital means as well and bridge the gap between Education and Industry. The launch of Digital University recognizes the role Tech would play in keeping education disruption less in the future. An announcement in this direction augurs well for the Ed Tech startups which have recognized this gap and are trying to innovate and transform the segment.

Ambrish Sinha, CEO, UNext Learning

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“The permission to allow foreign universities to offer courses in FinTech, Financial Management, and Science and Technology is also a positive step in improving the quality of education in our country”

A 11.85% increase in the Union Budget allocation to the education sector is a much-awaited announcement, especially in the post-pandemic era. The establishment of a digital university in a hub-and-spoke model in collaboration with the best public HEIs is very good news. This will not only provide students with access to world-class quality education but will help increase GER too. The introduction of multi-lingual e-content will also help boost online education across regions. The permission to allow foreign universities to offer courses in FinTech, Financial Management, and Science and Technology is also a positive step in improving the quality of education in our country. The emphasis on skilling, upskilling and reskilling of youth by launching the DESH-Stack e-portal will promote online training, and introduce API-based skill credentials, payment and discovery to find relevant jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities. It will subsequently help bridge the skill gap in the job market.

The budget focused on making up for the loss of formal school education due to Covid. The Finance Minister announced the expansion of the ‘One Class One TV Channel’ of the PM e-Vidya programme to 200 channels to provide supplementary education to students in classes 1-12 in regional languages. It was stated today that the BharatNet project would be completed by 2025. This will enable high-speed broadband service to rural India and will directly boost online education. So, overall, a pragmatic budget for the education sector.

Rishabh Khanna, Cognitive Scientist, Co-founder, Suraasa

Accessibility to quality learning is a huge challenge for the country, especially in the digital mode of delivery. I think that the Digital University and 'One Class One TV Channel' are very thought through ideas to ensure that no children are left behind due to language, resource, or digital barriers. Skilling and Upskilling have been the talk of the EdTech town for the longest time (for all the right reasons) and it's great to see the government working towards that too. The FM also talked about teachers being trained to be able to deliver quality learning outcomes to students. I think that is one of the most important components of the education system since a trained teacher has the potential to transform lives of many children and create impact at scale. I am excited to witness the implementation of proposed initiatives and how they impact education across the country.

Dr. Jitin Chadha, Director, IIAD

The Union Budget for 2022-23 reworks traditional concepts of what education has meant in the past. The emphasis this year has been on e-learning by proposing to set up a digital university founded on a hub and spoke model. This will imply that learning is not affected despite the challenges that the coming times may bring with it. It will also enable the higher education landscape to keep up with the advancements in technology while offering students quality education that is characterized by a greater focus on collaborative work better suited for today's globalised world. This year's budget is progressive in its outlook and vision and bodes well for the future of both education and the youth of the country.

Vinay Kumar Singh, Executive Director and CEO, Thomson Digital (India)

The Union Budget 2022 for Education indicates that good governance is the focus for building GDP growth over the next 25 years. Digital DESH, Digital University project, One-Class-One channel through PM eVidya for supplementary education in regional languages for rural development, and fiber optic connectivity for last-mile digital reach in villages are laudable moves. Designating 5 Centers of Excellence will ensure funds for the growth of institutions. The most important aspect according to me is the focus on digital learning to universalize quality education. In a post-pandemic world, this is the need of the hour. Overall, I find the budget to be forward-looking that builds upon past work and enabling structures that will help in the execution of the new education policy.

RCM Reddy, MD & CEO, Schoolnet India Ltd

The government's enhanced focus on education in this year's Union Budget signals a welcome shift in policy priorities, backed by a substantial increase of almost 12% in

allocations from last year. This is an acknowledgement of the large-scale impact of the pandemic on schools. A focus on digital learning, as well as the provision of enhanced learning aids through the PM e-Vidya scheme, will give a new impetus to strengthening the school education system. Schoolnet believes that this can be translated into positive impact on the ground by following an ecosystem approach which includes creating adequate digital infrastructure in schools, improved teacher training, and making available world-class pedagogical aids for those in the middle and bottom of the pyramid to enhance learning outcomes. Affordable Private Schools, which cater to nearly half the schoolgoing population, also need to be included in the scope of activities to achieve meaningful outcomes. I welcome the announcements for the education sector, which are aligned with Schoolnet's vision of providing all students, particularly in the middle and bottom of the pyramid, with equal access to world class education.

Vivek Prakash, Co-founder and CEO Codingal

Education has been among the worst hit sectors by the pandemic and we support the government's vision of promoting an inclusive education ecosystem through initiatives under eVidya. Emphasis on digitalisation in the learning system with quality e-content across all Indian languages will truly democratise learning and reach to the nooks and corners of the country. We hope India's edtech players will be able to contribute meaningfully in helping India reach its digital education vision.

Divya Jain, Director & Founder, The Class of One

The Union Budget announcement gave a cursory look to the education sector for primary and secondary levels. However, announcement of launching Digital ecosystem for skilling and livelihood is quite a positive move for the educational institutions offering higher education. Startups like us are relieved to hear that in terms of tax relief, an extension of the period of incorporation by one year until March 31, 2023 is given. Expansion plan for One class, one TV channel' program of PM eVIDYA from 12 to 200 TV channels promotes inclusion of students from all backgrounds, and ensures lack of digital devices does not come as a hurdle for cognitive development of the students.

Vivek Jain, Chief Business Officer – Shiksha.com, Naukri FastForward

This year's Union Budget increment in the funds compared to the previous year is a good sign. The Digital University is a great initiative, especially, in this pandemic situation as there is a lot of uncertainty around it. 200 channels from 12, covering multiple regional languages under the one class – one channel program will also boost coverage of education in the remote sectors with a minimal cost.

Siddharth Chaturvedi, Director, AISECT Group

The Union Budget 2022-23) is forward-looking with its focus on augmenting key areas of development. As we work on our mission of providing skill-based education, the Government of India's focus in this area will bolster skilling and pave way for creating better opportunities for a vast pool of untapped talent in Semi-urban and rural India. The policy framework will give an impetus to online education, making it accessible to all. As an organization, we strive to promote education in regional languages to provide equal opportunities in a diverse nation like India. The expansion of One class, one TV channel program will play a pivotal role in realizing the potential of providing education in regional languages. With these futuristic measures, we aim to chart greater heights in the education and skilling space.

Vaibhav Singh, Co-founder, Leap Scholar

The 2022 budget is promising for the education sector in promoting digital learning. Initiatives announced like the PM e-Vidya programme and setting up of a digital university will strengthen the broader vision – accessibility of education for all. The proposal to roll out e-passports is a welcoming gesture as it will enable a seamless experience for the travelling population, especially the large section of students flying abroad for their studies. Extended tax benefits for startups announced in the budget will further boost the ecosystem and drive the economy's growth.

Amit Agrawal, Founder and CEO, OckyPocky

It's an incredible high five moment for India and edtech startups – with Union Budget 2022-23 which focuses heavily on empowering students and the youth through key educational and mental health reforms.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's announcement around a Digital University to be set up in India is an encouraging step for the e-learning segment and a critical one towards democratizing online education in the country. The highly beneficial hub-and-spokes model to be implemented by the Digital University will give a boost to several public universities and may provide a fillip to domestic online learning platforms.

It is also heartening to see the government providing supplementary education to children to make up for the loss of formal education due to COVID with the 1-Class-1-TV-Channel approach.

What's however missed is any focus on early childhood education. Finally, taking into consideration the impact of COVID-19 on public mental health, the budget has allocated funds towards a national tele-mental health program for mental health counselling, a

move much needed for everyone, including students who have been physically deprived of schools, peers, teachers, and friends for over 2 years now.

Overall, we see a positive shift in industry trends on the back of today's announcements.

Varun Chopra, Co- Founder and CEO, Eduvanz

The unprecedented times during the past year led to online gateways becoming a channel to take brands, institutions, universities, products and businesses to a wider audience faster than ever before. However, lack of resources left innumerable children at a loss. The introduction of digital universities and High quality e-learning content platforms in multiple languages now, is a good initiative by the government to make quality education accessible to all. Further, the introduction of Desh E-Portal is yet another great initiative to provide more skilling and upskilling opportunities to our youth, in turn helping them with better employment opportunities in the future.

India is a young country having produced 40 unicorns so far, with a youth which has entrepreneurial aptitude in this digital economy. With startups budding more than ever before, announcing an extension for tax exemption to them for yet another year will help us in encouraging them further, giving them more liquidity to grow.

Abhishek Gupta, CEO and Founder, High School Moms and INACE

The government needed to invest heavily in skill-based education. More emphasis could have been placed on policies focusing on a longer-term impact in the education sector in order to bridge the learning gap faced by students during the pandemic. We have the largest population which will soon be employable, but our educational infrastructure is of poor quality. The promise of a digital university is a plus. However, in order to achieve digital inclusion, all stakeholders must be brought together on the same platform.

Arjun Gupta, Founder, Courseplay

The 2022 Budget saw many missed expectations for SMEs and Start-ups. As one of the fastest growing contributors to GDP, the SaaS sector should be promoted more by the central government. Share allocation process for start-ups to be simplified. Low cost tech education in Tier 3 and smaller towns is a huge must, as supply of skilled tech workers is at an all time low compared to demand. Getting government contracts for tech start-ups is still very complicated and should be made easier. Labour Law reforms for tech companies would be appreciated too. The govt needs to stand behind Indian SaaS companies to make India the no. 1 SaaS exporter in the world. Hopefully we will see some of this in next year's budget.

Sumesh Nair, Co-founder & CEO, Board Infinity

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Sumesh Nair,
Co-founder & CEO,
Board Infinity

“Desh stack e portal can be a game changer in the skilling and training landscape. There are very few portals that are able to solve end to end needs for a customer who wants to get skilled”

The concept of digital university is a great move by the government. It increases access to education and gross enrolment ratio. The usual trend of flocking to cities/one specific location for all kinds of education needs to change and can, to some extent, be reversed with this move, if implemented properly. However, the challenges at hand is the quality of education that can be imparted via such medium. If partnerships can be built with best practices where established universities, government bodies and individuals contribute, then this model can be implemented well.

Desh stack e portal can be a game changer in the skilling and training landscape. There are very few portals that are able to solve end to end needs for a customer who wants to get skilled. Desh can hope to solve issues in discovery, skilling and employment niche. One can integrate Desh stack over other initiatives of skilling like National Apprentice Training Schemes, and other NSDC , NASSCOM initiatives as well.

Ankit Arora, Founding Director, Saarthi Education

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Ankit Arora,
Founding Director,
Saarthi Education

“It would have been great to see some budget allocation focused on the re-opening of schools”

The Education budget for 2022 seems to be exciting. The provision of digital education opportunities to children from Grade 1 to 12 through the One class one TV channels and senior students through the digital university are definitely innovative ways to curb the learning gap set in due to the pandemic. However, just providing digital content, even if it is high quality does not ensure quality learning. This will have to be complemented with digital teaching practices that can be adopted by teachers and parents throughout the country. It would have been great to see some budget allocation focused on the re-opening of schools. As schools reopen after a long period, 600+ days in some states – the local and state governments will need budget and resources to put effective SOPs in place to ensure schools can be a safe place for learning.

Ashwin Mittal, CMD and CEO, Course5 Intelligence Ltd.

India’s Hon. Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman’s futuristic growth friendly Union Budget rightly envisioned the roadmap for India entering Amrit Kaal, the 25 year long leadup to India@100. Analytics is the key to successful implementation of the multi-modal PM GatiShakti master plan with its seven-engine focus for economic transformation and inclusive development for India@100. FM highlighted that Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a sunrise opportunity while advocating promoting digital economy & fintech, technology enabled development; and we, at Course5 Intelligence, reiterate the importance of AI-led analytics and insights. The role of analytics is more pronounced post global pandemic accelerating digital adoption by companies globally as they seek

to digitize their core business model to remain economically viable. We, at Course5 Intelligence have been working with Fortune 500 global giants and it is good to see that the Indian Government is now aligned to this progressive global thinking. As FM included Data Centres in the harmonized list of infrastructure, we re-emphasize the significance of Data and Analytics, which is expected to account for 13.9% of the estimated total digital spend (US\$2.39 trillion) by 2024. The boost to startups will facilitate innovation required for Digital India. As the Government invites private participation in strengthening public infrastructure and seamless coordination between diverse pillars, we advocate the growing significance of AI-led analytics in Urban Planning. Clearly, the government is focusing on deep tech at an opportune time. Till now the focus has been on the application layer which provided solutions to problems and business opportunities. A focus on deep tech will only highlight the significant role data analytics and AI can play in providing that strategic depth to the digitalization of India. With our rich experience in AI-driven data analytics and insights, we at Course 5 Intelligence look forward to support the tasks ahead.

Ramya Venkataraman, founder & CEO of Centre for Teacher Accreditation (CENTA) Pvt. Ltd.

This year's Union Budget has proposed some big thrusts on education since it was one of the most impacted sectors in the Covid-19 pandemic, with schools remaining shut for over two years. The digital university announced in the budget can help students access great teachers from anywhere. This should be done in a public-private partnership mode for rapid implementation and supported by certified teachers from local communities, to provide direct inputs where needed. Such a hybrid 'hub and spoke' network can help impart world-class education to the most needy segments. The PM eVIDYA scheme's 'one class, one TV programme' initiative is an interesting effort to deliver educational programming via radio and DTH channels to people without internet access. The quality of explanations and associated support for doubts will play a big role in making this successful. We are working on the implementation of this with a State Government and exploring mechanisms like missed calls, answering questions through SMS, etc. to make such programmes interactive and therefore impactful, added Ramya.

Sujatha Kumaraswamy, CEO, MeritTrac Services

"It is encouraging to see a host of initiatives being announced for the education and skilling sector. Setting up of global universities to offer finance and technology courses with minimal regulations will open up the Indian markets to leading universities and open up doors of collaboration with Indian universities. Focus on urban planning and reforming agricultural programmes is a much-needed step for skilling the large population of India. A hub-and-spoke digital university plan has come up at the right time and will go a long way in ensuring quality education in Indian languages across the

country for personalised learning and upskilling. This will be well supported by training for teachers to make them digital-smart and facilitate better learning outcomes. This budget has addressed various supply-side and demand-side elements for quality education within the country and I look forward to swift and agile implementation of these initiatives.”

Bhavesh Goswami, Founder & CEO CloudThat

“While the education budget was cut by 6%, the government has begun to shift its priority to digital education. The idea of implementing Digital University has been a strategic move towards guiding the development of India’s education. While the exact details were very few, just mentioning a hub-and-spoke model with the best public universities being the hub. This does not directly acknowledge the contribution of the ed-tech sector or seek their expertise to help the government in this endeavour. It will be interesting to see if and how the government will leverage the budding ed-tech sector in increasing the access to digital education as well as making sure the quality of the education remains relevant to the needs of the modern job environment.”

Aditya Mohan Jadhav, Professor of Finance, Area Chair – Accounting, Economics and Finance, T A Pai Management Institute (TAPMI), MAHE Manipal

“The initiatives for the higher education sector, especially setting up of the digital university and allowing World-Class Universities to offer programs in the GIFT City are welcome. We hope that these initiatives are harbingers of the education sector opening up to world class universities.”