

Designing in India, by India for the world NID Ahmedabad conferred exalted status

Think of *design*, and kaleidoscopic images of aesthetically designed articles will float before your eyes. Any idea who might be behind this myriad array? More often than not, it would be an alumnus from the National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad. One of the top design schools across the globe, NID has always evoked respect and awe not only for the Institute per se, but also for the amazing designs, a product of the fertile minds honed in the hallowed portals of NID, dotting the entire world.

And yet, despite having traversed a long way ever since its inception in 1961, there was a twinge of something amiss. Students flocked to NID, but emerged with only a Diploma.

Then came the historical moment in 2014, when the NID was declared as an “Institute of National Importance”, a first for any design school. In fact, the very first Bill that this Government introduced in the Parliament was the NID Act, 2014. This reflects the commitment of the present Government in taking forward 'design' as a tool for improving the quality of products and services of Indian industry. It's a tribute to the faculty and students of NID that the Bill was passed unanimously by both the Houses of Parliament in record time. The Rajya Sabha passed the Bill on 7th July 2014 and Lok Sabha the very next day. The Bill got the Presidential assent on 17th July, 2014.

The Act has paved the way for a quantum jump in design education in the country. Conferring of bachelor/masters degree (B.Des/M.Des) will also pave the way for further doctoral studies/academic research in design. International benchmarking for design education will give an impetus to the design movement, and an edge to the alumni in competing globally with quality products.

Design will also act as a catalyst in “Make in India” initiative by benefitting micro, small, cottage and medium industry clusters across the country by design intervention strategies through the Design Clinic Scheme. NID, Ahmedabad has chugged ahead this year with the establishment of a Railway Design Centre with a corpus of Rs10 crores (US \$ 1.6 million) from the Indian Railways. Over the next 10 years, this Centre is expected to bring in revolutionary changes in passenger and freight transport facilities through sustained design research and development exclusively dedicated to the Indian Railways. Obviously, the lifeline of Indian economy – the Indian Railways - will get a fresh lease of life itself as NID takes on the onerous task of designing passenger friendly coaches and stations. The journey doesn't end there. From Earth to Space, the list is endless; NID also has a tie-up with Space Application Centre.

Design is all set to get a fillip in India. Though envisaged as a part of the National Design Policy way back in 2007, the pace of setting up of four new NIDs has picked up only recently. Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh), Jorhat (Assam), Kurukshetra (Haryana) and Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) will soon be home to these new design schools, taking designing in India to another level altogether.

So next time you think of design, just think NID.

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(Based on the inputs from the Ministry)