

# India as a crucible of creativity: Unleashing the power

## MINDS ON THE MARGIN

others' ideas. How can this be done?

One such portal that tries to bridge this gap is [www.techpedia.sristi.org](http://www.techpedia.sristi.org). It is an evolving platform that has more than 5,000 project titles and summaries from different technical education institutions. Let me illustrate: Does your car have a black box? Does any car have a black box, so that one can analyse the reasons behind an unfortunate accident or track its performance? The car of even the richest man in the country does not have a black box. No major automobile-manufacturing firm has developed a black box for its vehicles.

The answer to such a problem is there on [techpedia.sristi.org](http://techpedia.sristi.org). Four girls from a government women's polytechnic at Latur in Maharashtra, Sailee Sudhakar Reddy, Priyanka Suryakant

of such inspired teachers who have encouraged students to be creative.

The dean of DA-IICT has shown an interest in encouraging student projects to be put up on the portal. We hope that other technical institutions too will encourage their students to share their creativity on this portal and encourage horizontal learning, promote innovations and help to solve the problems of the small-scale sector.

Professor Suparva of SVNIT liked a project on language emulators developed by Sunit T and Arjun Parekh of Birla Vishwakarma Mahavidyalaya. Another student has developed a cow dung-based herbal mosquito repellent, so badly needed in the monsoon.

How did it happen? Student volunteers led by Hiranmay Karlekar at SVNIT have made a remarkable contribution through a countrywide network

of students. They are mobilising such projects to be pooled at this portal. Several other students have also contributed, like Ajay Garg from Pune.

I hope other students take up this challenge and convert India into a crucible of creativity for solving the problems of the small-scale sector; informal innovators and others from all over the country, and even the world. I will discuss next week the experience of an interesting study underway in Ahmedabad. What is the science of fasting by Jain Munis and community members? If we have to encourage young people to appreciate these institutions that not only make us healthy, but also help us connect with our inner spirit, we have to help them understand the underlying science of these wonderful tradition practices advocated by almost every religion.

**ANIL GUPTA**

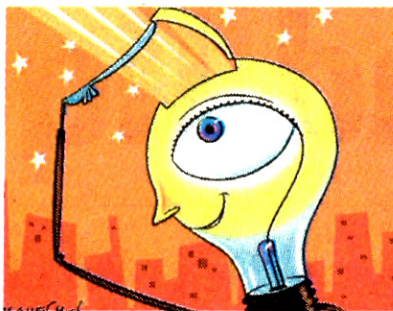
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**N**ow that the new academic session has begun and college students are making new friends, identifying new dreams and planning new adventures, it is time to explore how the technological talent can blossom, how the technical problems of micro- and small-scale enterprises, labourers and other disadvantaged sections of society can be put on the agenda of these students who have to select projects to meet their year's requirement.

Unfolding the creative potential of

six lakh students of technology is a challenge that we have not even started to address. I am happy that the Gujarat government has at last begun to increase the seats for technical education. But the scale of the increase is too small given the regional needs. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have 80,000 to one lakh students in the various technical disciplines. Not only the numbers but also the quality count.

Unless the students are encouraged to solve real-life problems, they cannot gain the confidence that will make them good professionals. At the same time, to make small enterprises - which provide the most number of jobs - competitive, innovations are imperative. Without such a portal, they cannot learn from each other or build on each



Salve, Manjushree Anurath Bhise and Dipali Gangadhar Sadekar, has developed the first black box for automobiles under the guidance of CV Omergekar.

Insurance firms will find this project useful, as will auto companies. Small and large entrepreneurs can improve on this technology and set up businesses around it. There are a large number