

## Skill gap hits IT industry

Written by Parthasarathi Biswas | Pune | Published: May 24, 2015 3:40 am



A file pic of Hinjewadi.

The \$11 billion IT and ITES industry in Pune, of late, has been facing the heat in more ways than one. The industry, which is set to see creation of more than four lakh jobs in the next 10 years, has now been hit by a severe crunch of manpower. Both industry watchers and the report of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) have pointed out that the gap is particularly acute in the skilled section.

Pune, over the years, has witnessed the growth of the IT/ITES industry, which is also responsible for the growth of the city in all fields. After Bengaluru, Pune has earned the distinction of being an IT hub with all major IT companies having their presence here. Growth of the industry in the city was propelled by the conducive eco-system in the form of large number of engineering colleges and also the right infrastructure.

Rapid changes in technology over the years has unfortunately not been reflected in the curriculum, which has now given rise to a skill gap. The NSDC report has forecast that between 2012 and 2022, 4, 41,655 jobs would be created in the sector. More than 50 per cent of the jobs would be in the skilled segment while demand for semi-skilled or minimally skilled jobs would be less. The industry would in fact be the second highest employment generator in the district after organised retail.

The report, however, also mentions that the potential IT/ITES employees have several skill gaps which would hamper their absorption in the talent pool. In particular, the report points out to lack of in-depth understanding of hardware-related information, lack of client-handling skills and insufficient knowledge across domains as the major skill gaps in the area.

Industry reports have indicated that highly skill oriented domains like data, communication and mobile would be the next drivers of the industry and the skill gap mentioned in the NSDC report can result in the industry missing the next growth trajectory.

Talking about the skill gap observed in fresh graduates, Mritunjay Singh, executive director and chief operating officer of Persistent Systems, said one of the major problems facing the fresh graduates is their insufficient understanding of basic concepts. Citing an example, Singh said that while mobile computing is proving to be the next growth driver for the industry, the curriculum does not reflect it.

Industry insiders say that in a strained economic condition, companies do not want to spend much on training and would prefer

candidates with some skill sets who can be made billable soon.

Singh's concern was also echoed by Vijay Mhaskar, Pune site leader of Avaya. "The curriculum should give idea to the students of basics of communication and other domain which will be the growth verticals of the industry. However, not much is happening in that front," he said.

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