

## **Education sector poised to attract FDI**

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MUMBAI: Even as the Indian markets go through a bad phase, foreign private equity investors are eyeing educational institutions to invest in.

"By the end of fiscal 2009, education sector will have received total FDI of Rs 1,000 crore. Investors from US, Middle East and EU still believe in India's long term growth potential and they are on the lookout for right entities to invest in," said Sunil Shirole, managing director, YEN Management Consultants, who is instrumental in striking such deals and was recently on a world tour to meet investors to gauge their sentiment.

Recently, Qatar-based Altanmiya group struck a multi-million dollar deal with Thane based Prolific Systems & Technologies, which is into vocational training in industrial automation and has ambitious expansion plans both onshore and offshore.

"This investment shows our confidence in the Indian economy, the viability of human capital as a profitable business, and its necessity for progressive success both economically and socially," commented Eugene Koshy, COO of Altanmiya, who refused to disclose the deal value.

Altanmiya expects 15 per cent internat rate of return on their investment in Prolific Systems.

According to Shirole, other foreign players are also looking at investing in education sector. These include US-based Leaw Sterling Partners (having total asset base of \$1.5 billion), Qatar based Educational Holding group (corpus \$2 billion), CDC group (assets of \$4 billion), a semi UK government owned PE fund, and many others.

With the pace of growth, industries will keep requiring a large number of trained professionals who should be endowed with quality education in specialised streams. This has added immensely to the growth potentials of all educational institutions in India.

"Some big educational institutes are approaching me to arrange FDI for them to meet their mega expansion plans. All of them have plans to go for public fund raising in the later stage," added Shirole.

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