

# EducationWorld

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## LEADERS CHANGING INDIAN EDUCATION

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- Ajit Wadekar

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- Galloping demand for ethical hackers

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Young India Films

**Parenting  
Education**

## Tribal children champion

**DR. ACHYUTA SAMANTA**, founder director of KIIT University and the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences, Bhubaneswar (Odisha). Born in rural Odisha (formerly Orissa), Samanta experienced grinding poverty in his youth despite which he put himself through school and college graduating with a Masters in chemistry from Utkal University in 1987 and starting his career as a college lecturer.

Starting with a capital of Rs.5,000, within the span of a mere 15 years, this deeply religious education entrepreneur has built two great institutions — the for-profit KIIT University comprising 23 colleges of professional education with an aggregate enrolment of 15,225 students, and the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS),

reportedly the world's largest boarding school which provides free-of-charge K-12 and collegiate education to 15,000 children drawn from the state's most backward tribal population. Under an ingenious cross-subsidisation model devised by Samanta, the surpluses of



KIIT University — routinely ranked among the country's Top 50 providers of professional education (engineering, medical, management etc) — are ploughed into KISS to fund the education and upkeep of children in the latter institution which has won unstinted praise from educators in India and abroad.

Having established KISS as a model institution for providing high-quality holistic education to India's neglected tribal children, Samanta has set his sights on replicating KISS in eight tribal areas of Odisha and across eastern India. "Meaningfully educating and mainstreaming children from bottom-of-the-pyramid families is the best prescription for combating the Naxalite insurgency confronting the nation and raising the poor majority out of poverty," says this visionary education leader (see *EW* April 2012 cover feature).