

Big demand for small enterprises

Pics: Kevin Antao

From Egypt To Botswana, 76 Foreigners Flock To EDI Prog

Rupam Singh Gupta | TNN

Ahmedabad: At a time when every street in Egypt led to Tahrir Square in Cairo, Dalia Sayed Bayomie preferred to step on Amdavadi soil. An economic researcher with Egyptian commercial service in the ministry of trade and industry, she is here to study business research methodology and data analysis at Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI). With head covered, the small-statured Dalia belies her 10-year stint with the Egyptian government. Does being a woman in an Arab nation come in the way of executing her work? "No way. In fact, my minister is a woman. There's no discrimination between a man and a woman in my country," she says smilingly.

She refrains from commenting on the political turmoil in her country, but politely puts in that she is relieved the upheaval has stopped because it was all corruption and not democracy. Happy to be going back to a free Egypt, she says, "India's growing prominence in the business world is being felt globally. It was a good idea to come here and study more about what I'm already doing. My department works as a facilitator between external bureaus (in different countries) and Egyptian business communities," she adds.



Foreign participants at EDI. Dalia Sayed (below right) from Cairo at the institute

"The techniques applied in research methodology are almost the same everywhere," says J Yagnik, faculty, EDI, adding, "But EDI's model and method of teaching is gaining popularity in other countries and this is also the reason why the number of participants is increasing every year."

This year, 76 participants from various African and Asian nations are attending the two programmes at EDI.

Agrees Botswanian Thutego Shubo, a health recruitment/retention officer with the American embassy in her country. She is here to study research methodology in the Indian context and how best she can apply it while conducting research on HIV/AIDS back home. But, Thutego is surprised at the minimal presence of women workforce here. "It's men everywhere. I was looking forward



to meeting women at work places after reading so much about growing number of Indian women in different sectors," she says. She is amused when told about Gujarat being the hub of co-operatives, the vital role women have played in these co-operatives, and how these enterprises contribute immensely to the economy and also help create meaningful jobs.

"Creating jobs for ourselves is the need of hour, and so is the importance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs)," says Hardi Emrie bin Rosly, a lecturer at Malaysian Academy of SME Development.