



*Dr.* \_\_\_\_\_  
**ASHWIN  
FERNANDES**  
*Founder, PACT Foundation*

## A Changemaker for Education in India

**Dr. Ashwin Fernandes**, Regional Director for QS Quacquarelli Symonds in the Middle East, Africa, & South Asia and CEO for QS I-GAUGE Rating System, has been with the QS Quacquarelli Symonds group since 2012. QS Quacquarelli Symonds is the world's leading provider of services, analytics, and insight to the global higher education sector.

In his current role as Regional Director, he works closely with universities in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia to better understand the local context and to support universities and higher educational institutions in their quest for excellence and capacity building.

He is an ambassador of the quality movement in these regions and has advocated the need for independent evaluation mechanisms. He actively promotes the use of Rankings and Ratings for various purposes, be it students aspiring for higher education in reputed institutions across the globe, government agencies looking to have their universities compete globally or academics looking for partners focused on research initiatives.

He is also responsible for liaising with governmental and public agencies to create a strong affiliation with QS, which would help in better understanding the local institutions and changing market dynamics.

In the course of his professional engagement, he has met with senior leaders from the region and is often invited to speak at several conferences and events on university rankings, ratings, education, higher education, etc. He has also been a panelist on various discussion forums and presented his recommendations on thought-provoking topics.

He has met His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE; His Highness Sheikh Hamdan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, former Minister of Higher Education in the UAE; Honourable Late Pranab Mukherjee, former President of India;



Shri Dharmendra Pradhana, Union Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Minister of India, amongst others.

He is part of the founding leadership team of QS I-GAUGE and was instrumental in establishing the framework for QS I-GAUGE rating services. QS I-GAUGE is India's first nationwide higher education rating system for universities, colleges and schools pan India.

Dr. Ashwin has visited universities in over 30 countries and has a deep understanding of the working of many internationally acclaimed universities. He has lived in four countries and travelled to numerous others.

He has a Doctorate of Philosophy (D.Phil.) along with a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Marketing degree and a Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com.) in Financial Accounting, Auditing and Taxation.

# GLORIOUS CONTRIBUTION IN SCRIPTING THE STORY OF NEW INDIA

## Facilitated meeting of QS CEO Nunzio Quacquarelli with PM Modi

As a Regional Director of QS, Dr. Ashwin is working closely with the Government of India to enhance the global rankings and ratings of Indian Universities and Institutions. He is passionately working towards realizing the dream of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to make India a global knowledge superpower. Having extensive experience in the field of education, he is guiding the institutions of higher education in India to drive institutional excellence and create an ecosystem to achieve world-class learning outcomes.

Dr. Ashwin played a pivotal role in inviting Mr. Nunzio Quacquarelli, CEO and Managing Director of QS Quacquarelli Symonds Ltd., to India in 2021 and facilitating his meeting with Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. During their meeting held on 5th October 2021, they had a productive discussion about aspects relating to the education sector in India.



Dr. Ashwin during the meeting between Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Mr. Nunzio Quacquarelli, CEO and Managing Director of QS Quacquarelli Symonds Ltd. in 2021.

## New dawn of transformation in the higher education sector of India

Due to the consistent efforts of Dr. Ashwin to bring about transformation in the education sector of India, the institutions of higher education in the country witnessed a significant rise in the coveted QS World University Rankings 2023 and QS Asia University Rankings 2023. The giant strides of Indian institutions of higher education were reflected in the QS World University Rankings, as a total of 41 Indian institutions featured in these rankings, while nine institutions made it to the top 500 in the world. Continuing this remarkable progress, 19 Indian institutions featured among the top 200 universities in the QS Asia University Rankings 2023, with IIT Bombay leading in India. This was the highest number of Indian Universities ever that have made it to these prestigious rankings.



Dr. Ashwin speaking at a webinar on "Research, Innovation, and Ranking," hosted by the Union Ministry of Education to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the launch of National Education Policy 2020.



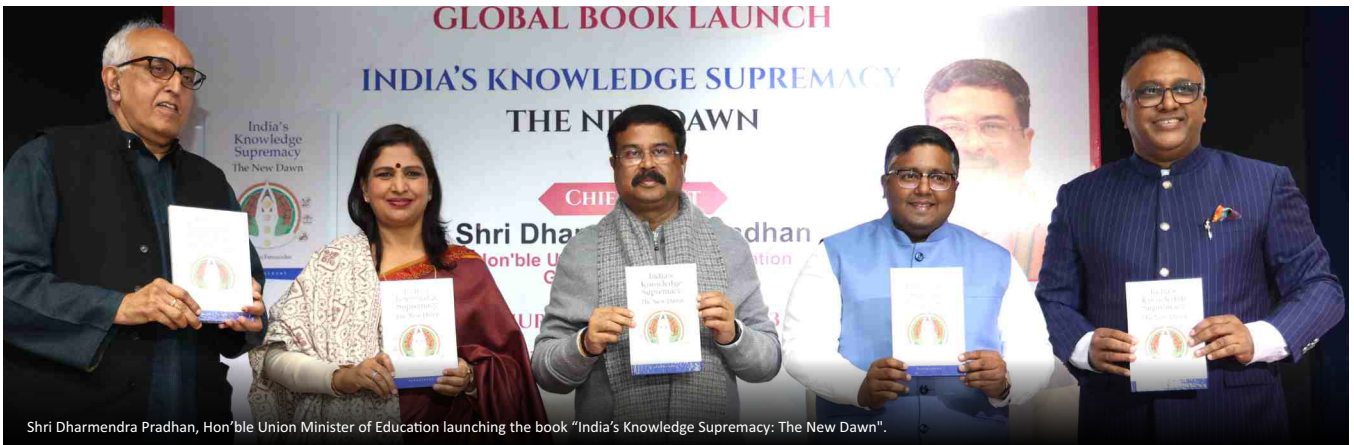
Dr. Ashwin was invited to speak at the Vidy Bharati Uchcha Shiksha Sansthan event in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, to present a global perspective of higher education in India.



Dr. Ashwin led a delegation of Indian universities to the annual Higher Ed Summit, Asia Pacific, in Jakarta from 8th-10th November, 2022.

## Author of Book titled "India's Knowledge Supremacy: The New Dawn"

Dr. Ashwin is the author of the book titled "India's Knowledge Supremacy: The New Dawn" which delves deep into the evolution of higher education in India throughout history. Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon'ble Union Minister of Education, has launched the book on 19th January, 2023. This book is his massive contribution to motivating Indians in India and the diaspora to understand where we were, what happened to us, and how we are progressing. The book also provides an insightful and thought-provoking look into India's rising status as a superpower and the importance of the New Education Policy that is launched under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi.



Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon'ble Union Minister of Education launching the book "India's Knowledge Supremacy: The New Dawn".

## Founder of PACT2030 Sustainability Initiative

Dr. Ashwin is the founder of PACT2030, which stands for Pledge, Act, Change, Transform – 2030. This is a social enterprise which has been constituted to empower academic institutions to think beyond their boundaries and care for the world. Institutions have started to commit towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on an ongoing basis, but we know that the power of togetherness is much mightier. As the name suggests, PACT2030 has a long-term vision and is a scalable model on global platforms.

PACT2030 brings together like-minded leaders, founders/heads, and chancellors of academic institutions, policy makers and the government to engage all the intelligent forces for creating a better world. PACT2030 was established as a formal initiative in November 2021 and champions change, not just by bringing leaders together; but by ensuring that they commit to the long-term vision of change for a better world.



Launch of the PACT Sustainable Initiative in Goa with BJP senior leader Shri Avinash Rai Khanna.

## Institution of Happiness (IoH) Initiative to increase happiness launched in New Delhi

With a vision to encourage and motivate the higher education institutions of India that are performing exceptionally and setting benchmarks in academic excellence, Dr. Ashwin organized QS I-GAUGE Academic Excellence Conclave in New Delhi in May 2022. On the occasion, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, Union Minister of Women and Child Development, and Minister of Minority Affairs, gave "Institution of Happiness" awards to universities and institutions from across India. The institutions were also honoured for making the happiness quotient an integral part of students' lives on campus.



Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, Hon'ble Union Minister for Women & Child Development, and Minority Affairs during the QS I-GAUGE Academic Excellence Conclave.

## Establishment of UPCRAM and GARIMA

Dr. Ashwin played a crucial role in the establishment of Uttar Pradesh Centre for Ranking and Accreditation Mentorship (UPCRAM) and Gujarat Accreditation and Ranking Institute Mechanism and Arrangement (GARIMA) which aim at evolving systems and procedures for elevating institutional standards so as to achieve better accreditations and rankings. UPCRAM was inaugurated by Smt. Anandiben Patel, Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh, on 17th October, 2022, while GARIMA was launched by Shri Bhupendra Patel, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat, on 7th July, 2022.

Dr. Ashwin was also a key stakeholder in facilitating enriching discussions at the first-of-its-kind, two-day Gujarat Education Symposium that revolved around sharing knowledge and expertise to elevate the national and international rankings of institutions of higher education in the state. The symposium on the theme "Building World-Class Universities in Gujarat" brought together more than 240 education stakeholders from the state to pave the way for discussions on an outcome-oriented approach for synchronising curriculum with the Global Ranking Framework and building world-class universities in Gujarat, the home state of Shri Narendra Modi.



Dr. Ashwin speaking at the two-day Gujarat Symposium.