

er said. Ikea India has announced plans to open 100 stores in India by 2015.



THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS
BANGALORE THURSDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2014

City Explores the Novelty of Mandarin

by Nivedita Niranjankumar

Bangalore: Learning Mandarin seems to have become a popular option in the city. With the number of organisations conducting Mandarin classes growing fast, trainers say Bangalore, more than any other city, has realised the importance of the language.

Abhisha Agarwal, director of Mandarin School of India, says one of the reasons for the interest in the language is the fact that almost every company here collaborates with one in China.

This makes it important for employees to learn the language. Every year, the school teaches nearly 100 students. "The students who come in are from various fields," she says.

Nimit Chitalia, a student who recently joined Mandarin classes, says he just wanted to find out what this language was all about. "French is a very popular language among students. But Mandarin was something new and very different and that is why I joined the classes. My dad also started learning with me because he had business in China."

A recent visit to China made Nimit take up learning the language with even more determination. "It is fun, I really like it. I plan to do a PhD in the language," he says.

Wai Kann Somana of Sino India Communication Services, has been teaching Mandarin for the last 14 years. She says the recent years have seen a spurt in the

number of students. "While there are people looking for job opportunities there, most of them are learning for trade purposes. From production to distribution, visiting China or playing host to Chinese businessmen, knowing the language gives people an advantage," she says. She adds that a majority of the students are from corporates, with their bosses arranging the classes.

"Serious students opt for courses in colleges. The language is very difficult and it takes time to become completely fluent in it. There are six levels and most students opt for all six," says Seema, coordinator at Forefront Academy, which provides year-round coaching in English and other foreign languages.