In the beginning….

Suzanne Roy took part in a “pooja” to bless the land and construction tools.

Flight Instructor Mandeep Priyakant Patel (right) and cadets

Air Commodore Ravindra Karve and cadets

Maintenance team

CAE Global Academy in Gondia, India – The Winged Dream

“We have turned our dream into a reality. CAE Global Academy, Gondia in India is now operational with 147 students currently learning how to be future pilots.” – Suzanne Roy, Regional Leader, India

Nitu Dey, one of Gondia’s first employees

In June 2008, what is today known as the CAE Global Academy in Gondia (called Rajiv Gandhi National Flying Institute, or NFTI), was an empty field – with no roads, electricity or running water (except for what the monsoon had left behind!).

The NFTI team

The team has grown to over 30 people, but Air Commodore **Ravindra Karve** (Flight Instructor-in-Charge), **MK Singh** (Chief Engineer and QCM), **Kulbir Singh** (Ground Instructor), **Rajesh Joshi** (Manager Finance), **Mahantesh Pyati** (Human Resources), **Karthik Kurapati** (Aircraft technician) and **Nitu Dey**, (Front Office and Head Scheduler) have been there almost from the beginning. “I cannot say enough about the tremendous work done by the NFTI team,” said Suzanne. “They truly are the heart and soul of the Academy, and their dedication and support have played a huge role in creating our success to date.”

The team welcomed its first cadets in November, 2008 and three months later, saw them take their first flight with the Diamond single engine aircraft DA-40 supported by a (FNPT II) Flight and Navigation Procedures Trainer.

Support from other CAE locations

Building a flight academy has been a global effort. **Danny Neubarth**, Technical Specialist, Global Facilities (based in Montreal) was heavily involved dur-

ing the initial construction phases. **Michel Thibault**, Group Leader, Global Facilities (based in Montreal but temporarily relocated to India), is overseeing the remainder of the construction plus expansion projects at the CAE training centre in Bangalore and the CAE/HAL helicopter training centre.

Gary Morrison, Senior Regulatory Specialist (based in Dallas) played an important role in the start-up of NFTI, working closely with the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and on-site team to receive the proper accreditation for the school.

First Open House

In October, the Academy opened its doors to the cadets, their families and everyone involved in the flight academy. It began with a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony and the 14 cadets each received a pair of wings and a plaque to commemorate their first solo flights.

Construction Status

The apartments for cadets and employees now have been completed, as has the Administration Building. The entire campus is ready with Fully Furnished Apartments for cadets and employees, Administration Building, Sports Centre, Cafeteria, Foot Ballv ground and the list continues.

Recognition from Indian dignitaries

On February 9, 2010, the Honorable Praful Patel, Minister of State for Civil Aviation, and the Honorable Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for the Ministry of Human Resource Development, addressed a local gathering at Birsi airport for local Gondia residents, students of NFTI and IGRUA (the Indian Government's national flying institute managed by CAE, and a CAE Global Academy).

Minister Patel spoke about the vision for the academies and the tremendous progress made to date. He explained how NFTI came into existence, beginning with the government's search for a company which could bring its global professional expertise to India to meet the growing demand for pilots. It resulted in NFTI, a joint venture between CAE and the Airport Authority of India.

Minister Patel speaking to cadets

Facts about India's aviation future

One of the fastest growing markets:

- 200 aircraft on order for delivery over the next 4 years;
- 2,700 new pilots needed over the next 5 years.

NFTI Stats

147 cadets currently enrolled

66 employees, including 11 ground and flight instructors

Current capacity: 120 cadets

Expected capacity: 200 cadets

Background photos: Cadets at Gondia

Gunnery Trainer

Front row (l to r): Anupam Chanda, Raghavendra Rao, Ash Sarin, Martin Gagné, BV Ramanamurthy, Mychel Xavier. Back row (l to r): Vince Sondermeyer, Ranga, V Sundararajan at the integration site

T-72 and T-90 driver simulators at the integration site in Bangalore

Incredible teamwork by CAE sites in India, the UK and Canada

The Beginnings

In November 2008, the Indian Army asked CAE India and three competitors to deliver four tank simulators (T-90 Driver, T-90 Gunner, T-90 Crew Gunner (Commander) and T-72 Driver) under tight timelines. The driver devices were to include miniature six-degree-of-freedom motion systems to help replicate all the obstacles felt during ground exercises. Each simulator was to be integrated into an air-conditioned container for operation and transportation by road, rail and air, the first time CAE was to design a trainer with a motion system to be operated within a container.

Gathering Momentum

Time was at a premium and the project capitalized on combining the knowledge base of the CAE sites in India (CAE India, CAE ST), the UK and Canada, resulting in efficient and economic solutions, and incredible team dynamics.

Hardware design proved to be a difficult task with little data to work from. The design team, made up of personnel from India and Canada, rose to the challenge and used innovative means to gather data for complex mechanical systems such as instruments, gunner and commander controls, optics and the driver controls. It included multiple visits to the Ottawa War Museum to see a T-72 tank, and simultaneous visits to sites in India where the actual tanks were available. The design and build of platform, enclosure and control systems was finalized in eight weeks - thanks to an exceptional and well-coordinated team effort between hardware engineering and manufacturing stationed in India and Canada.

Software efforts were challenging also, but innovative ideas came from all sites, breaking new ground in areas such as detailed ground handling of a tracked vehicle over sand dunes. CAE UK ground simulation expertise was a huge asset in coaching India and Canada.

Pulling Together

Most of the hardware was delivered and assembled in early May, and in a few short weeks, the simulators were being tested. From around the world, the hardware and software teams really pulled together to reach this extraordinary achievement.

Current Status

Only CAE and one competitor met the delivery deadline. User trials took place in July and August, followed by Quality Assurance and Maintainability evaluations and trials. The CAE team from across the globe proved that no challenge is insurmountable - through organization, innovation and a “team first” attitude, CAE delivered a product that made no compromise to realism, fidelity and quality.

By Tony Menna and Carlo Fiorentino