SINGAPORE: A growing number of top business schools around the world are setting up campuses in Singapore.

India’s S P Jain, one of the country's top business faculties, is the latest to join the fray.

And New York’s Columbia Business School has plans to expand its presence in Singapore through executive education programmes.

They believe that having classes outside their home turf will help provide a richer learning experience for their students, and also open up new markets for the schools.

S P Jain, consistently ranked one of the top 10 business schools in South Asia, lit its lamps of learning in Singapore on Friday.

Its S$10m campus here will be used by 250 full-time students, of which only three are Singaporeans.

The largely-international intake also gets the chance to study at S P Jain's other campuses, including those in Dubai and major cities in India.

Said Education Minister and Second Finance Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam: "The Middle East, India and East Asia are the next wave of growth and Dubai, Mumbai and Singapore are the next global cities. I think the students who go through this type of global experiences, of being in more than one campus, would command a premium wherever they go.

"Asia is the place and this new emerging linkage within Asia, between the Middle East, South Asia and East Asia is one which we need people to push and to be part of."

Mr Tharman added that in fact, S P Jain "is another example of how Singapore is now part of the globalisation of Indian talent. India is extending outwards, not just to the States, but it is heavily engaged in the Middle East and now increasingly in East Asia, and Singapore is really a portal for Indian talent."

And the hope by S P Jain is to expand its business influences even wider.

Nitish Jain, President of S P Jain, said: "We will soon have students from the Philippines, Nigeria, Egypt, Jordan."

S P Jain is just one of many leading global business schools which have opened a campus in Singapore.

Others include INSEAD from France and the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business.

The Shanghai Jiao Tong University and the Wharton School in the University of Pennsylvania have also tied up with local universities to offer programmes in business.

Not only is Singapore making more from the global education dollar, but its business education landscape also has significant impact on industry.

Many of the graduates of these business schools go on to become entrepreneurs in the region and utilise the services of Singaporean companies.

Schools in turn want to locate here, because Singapore companies make good case studies of global linkages.

It is a win-win situation for business schools and the island state.

Glenn Hubbard, Dean of Columbia Business School, said: "Throughout Asia, there is an increasing demand for post-graduate business education beyond the MBA degree - the executive education. I think that really reflects the demand for management that is so strong in this rapidly growing part of the world.

"We’d like to be even more of a part of that here. We already do a lot of custom programmes in Asia, helping companies with particular strategic problems. We also have programmes where we bring in managers for our senior executive training."

S P plans to recruit 1,000 students in Singapore over the next five years, while Columbia Business School has a partnership with the Singapore Management University in the Centre for Global Brand Leadership. - CNAir