

India to connect with African hospitals, universities

Displaying its prowess in the field of information technology, India will be setting up an e-networking infrastructure in 53 African nations to share its expertise in the field of medicine and education.

The government of India initiative will connect 12 hospitals in the country with five African hospitals to assist in remote diagnosis and staff training. Seven Indian universities will also be networked with five African universities for providing tele-education as part of a \$53 billion project.

HCL Infosystems Ltd will be the technical partner in the multi-billion project setting up infrastructure in India and the 53 African nations.

Ajai Chowdhry, chairman and chief executive officer of HCL, said India being a developing country has a similar set of challenges as many African nations.

'We have to understand the challenges complex markets like India and Africa face and work towards enabling IT as a means for development. This pan-Africa e-network project is a significant step towards allowing this expertise to benefit African countries in their developmental efforts,' he said.

The 17 Indian and African hospitals will be then connected to 53 remote facilities in Africa. The tele-medicine and video conferencing capabilities will enable e-diagnosis and advice for patients at these facilities.

Similarly, the 12 Indian and African universities will be further connected to 53 learning centres in the pan-Africa project providing remote learning and virtual classroom education to students in the continent.

'There is a huge potential for increasing the pace of development in Africa by usage of IT by institutions of learning,' Chowdhry added.

The network will also connect all 53 heads of states of the African continent through data, voice and video.

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