

Using mobiles to impart education

Taking forward its motto of 'Education anywhere and anytime', the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) will soon impart students capsule courses on dance, music, art, public health and other subjects through mobile phones.

"Looking at the mobile phone penetration in our country, we thought of using the medium to impart education. Its called M-education," said V.S. Rajasekharan Pillai, vice chancellor IGNOU.

"Education and technology cannot be seen separately. Taking education, especially vocational education, to rural India will soon become easier through mobile handsets," Pillai told IANS.

IGNOU believes in imparting quality education to the masses. These easily accessible modules would be implemented in collaboration with the Communication and Manufacturing Association of India (CMAI).

"The courses will be offered through text, video and graphics mode. We will start by imparting education on music, dance, art and crafts. We are sure people will latch on to it," the vice chancellor said.

He said the central government is to provide the wireless and broadband connection to all the colleges across the country. "And here our programmes will become more popular and easy to access."

"The 3G mobile is becoming popular in India and we will soon have mobile TV. These courses and this mode of education then will become a huge hit.

"What we are going to start is a revolution in the Indian educational scenario," he added.

Pillai said IGNOU would provide public health course capsules on nutrition, public health, AIDS awareness, and many other educational contents.

"The mobile phone is a great leveller in society as far as dissemination of education is concerned. This will prove a new paradigm in imparting knowledge to far-flung areas in the country and assist in bridging the divide using wireless and mobile technology," CMAI chief N.K. Goyal told reporters.

Bharat Bhatia, Digital Director of Asia of Motorola Mobile, told IANS: "We in Motorola believe in taking meaningful technology to the grassroots at an affordable price. In this endeavour with IGNOU we shall try to make our phones more interactive so that it helps our customers get more benefits."

Pillai said students won't have to pay anything extra for the new service.

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