

MKCL to experiment 'digital schools' idea

Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Limited plans to introduce 'digital schools' concept across 450 secondary schools in the state

By Pankaj Maru

Monday, November 09, 2009 MUMBAI, INDIA: Government of Maharashtra promoted Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Limited (MKCL) is working on an ambitious project to introduce 'digital schools' across 450 secondary schools run by an educational institution named Rayat Shikshan Sanstha in the state.

According to MKCL's Managing Director Vivek Sawant, the 'digital schools' concept allows students to learn various subjects and curricula not just by informed methods but by performed methods that require lots of software support, innovative e-content and learning facilitation support of teachers.

“The performed method will enable students to perform even science experiments in the simulations environments and will get experience of discussion forms, chats and social networking environments so that they are better prepared for the 21st century's cultural ethos in the knowledge economy and society. That's the basic idea of the project,” Sawant told CyberMedia News in Mumbai.

Further, Sawant said this year this scheme will be introduced at Rayat Shikshan Sanstha – an educational institution which has about 450 schools and we aim to touch some 3,52,000 students by using Ncomputing's technology. “This is a pilot project and its results will help get the initiative spread across the state,” he hoped.

Pune based MKCL will provide the e-content for the project in English, Marathi and Hindi languages. However, according to Sawant, MKCL will develop the content in other languages also but after some years as schools in Maharashtra provides educational in 10 different languages like Urdu, Gujarati, Sindhi, Telugu, Kannada and others.

The 'digital schools' concept will use MKCL's e-learning framework called E-learning Revolution for All (ERA) platform. ERA provides personalized learning environment for the students with access to e-content and various services like forums, chats and rich voice over in different languages to allow learning via hearing educational content.

“It not only provides learning content but also provides interactive and practice sessions with assignments and case studies. Apart, it has certain utilities whereby students can collaborate with other students and teachers. Also they can collaborate with remote experts using the distributive classrooms,” Sawant explained about ERA.

Other features of ERA include tools for assessments, evaluations and facility for developing content, which is similar to a content factory where people sitting remotely creates and contributes new content for learning, he added.

Moreover, Sawant concluded that the content factory is part of ERA, which also has other management systems such as content, assignments, distributive classrooms, on-line evaluation and assessment and feedback. Recently, MKCL's 1000 learning centres were computerized by Ncomputing's X-series technology and devices to spread computer literacy among rural populations.