

20,000 colleges to be connected by video conferencing software

About 20,000 colleges across the country would be soon connected through a video conferencing software which will enable students to attend lectures of well known faculties through online classes.

The decision by the central government was followed by a meeting recently between Higher Education Secretary Ashok Thakur and 60 vice chancellors of colleges and universities from across the country to acquaint them about the software 'A-view'.

The software has been developed by Kollam-based Amrita University under the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology programme.

The e-learning platform would help in conducting live distance education classes by enabling trainers and teachers to reach out to multiple remote classes and participants using the Internet.

It would also address the shortage of highly-qualified and experienced teachers at institutes by providing all students and teachers access to the best teachers and trainers. The software would provide a platform for social collaboration among teachers and students using information and communication technology, officials in the ministry said.

The programme would especially come as a boon for universities and colleges in remote places where getting good faculties is a challenge in itself.

"A-view is a very attractive programme especially for us here in the remote areas. We have around 100 colleges affiliated to us and they are all in remote places," said Bekington Myrboh, Pro vice chancellor of North Eastern Hill University in Shillong.

At present, about 450 universities including Mumbai University, NITTTR Calcutta, Pondicherry University, IIT Hyderabad are using the platform, connecting 2,000 colleges.

"We are running a programme known as 'enlighten yourself every Saturday' and we telecast this programme to all colleges through A-view," said Rajpal S Hande of University of Mumbai.