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NPTEL's web, video courses for SNDT students

SNDT Women's University, in collaboration with HP labs India, on Wednesday launched the HP Educenter, an engineering learning programme comprising content developed by National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), a collaborative project of IITs, IISc. **PG 3**

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AN initiative of the SNDT Women's University will soon enable its students to have access to high-quality multimedia engineering course content developed under National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) by the seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc-Bangalore) on the university server.

The university, in collaboration with HP Labs, India on Wednesday launched the HP Educentre which is an innovative engineering learning programme comprising digital library solution, multimedia content and computing infrastructure. Accordingly, the curriculum based web and video courses developed by NPTEL will soon be accessible to the students "on demand".

NPTEL is a collaborative project of the IITs and IISc which has developed supplementary content for 128 web courses in engineering/science and humanities and 110 courses in video format in phase-I.

"The project aims at creating a working set-up for capturing, storing and distributing the content and using multimedia in educational processes to be consumed by teachers and students on an on-demand basis," said Ajay Gupta, director, HP Labs, India.

■ **The varsity also started its new initiative "mobile education" which aims at providing access to higher education for those who stay in remote areas**

It was launched by Governor S M Krishna at the institute. Krishna also released a blueprint of the IT courses to be provided by SNDT's Centre for Distance Education, the course content of which will be available on the institute website.

"In the second phase, we would like to work together as partners with universities, colleges and industries across the country and this association with SNDT is a step in that direction," said Mangala Sunder Krishnan, IIT Madras professor and NPTEL web courses national coordinator.

Krishnan said the courses will eventually be made available to all government and government-aided colleges for free, while private institutes will be charged.

Besides the conversion of phase-I video courses into streaming video lectures and access via internet, phase-II will see the creation of additional 500 web and video courses in major science and engineering disciplines as well as management.

"We want to make the content available to all the 220 affiliated colleges of SNDT and eventually put it on our official website. The only constraint is that bandwidth must be robust and we will need at least three terabytes. Currently, HP Labs has donated 1.5 terabyte storage," said SNDT Pro Vice Chancellor S S Mantha.

Further, Mantha said that SNDT will also look at becoming a partner with NPTEL in content development for professional courses in areas where the university has expertise.

"SNDT will now be the user-institute and if premier institutes like it want to participate in content creation, then the courses will have to meet the same quality," added Krishnan.

Meanwhile, SNDT also started its new initiative "mobile education" through which it aims to provide access to higher education for those who stay in remote areas. Accordingly, a pilot project that will initially train candidates in common entrance tests like CAT, was launched. The university will collaborate with Tata Teleservices Limited, HP Labs, ATOM Technologies (development partners), IPTL (propagation partners) and ADC Krone (infrastructure support partners) for the project.