

Aakash project has picked up speed and is ready for release : Kapil Sibal

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Union Minister of Human Resource Development Shri Kapil Sibal today inaugurated the 10,000 teacher training programme conducted by IIT Bombay under the Talk to a Teacher project of the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NME-ICT) of MHRD. It is the first time in the world that a simultaneous training of 10,000 engineering college teachers is being conducted leveraging the broadband network and ICT tools. This training programme is conducted through 168 remote centres located all across India. The lectures in this course are delivered from IIT Bombay by Professors from IIT Bombay and IIT Madras. Through the software A-VIEW, audio-video connectivity is provided between all the centres and IIT Bombay. The course consists of lectures, live interactions and lab sessions. This method of synchronous education has been developed at IIT Bombay, under the leadership of Prof. D. B. Phatak. This method of education allows the participants to go to a convenient centre. It also allows the participation of a large number of lady teachers, who normally are unable to join contact programmes at distant locations, owing to family commitments. A-VIEW software development and this mega workshop are a part of the Talk to a Teacher, funded by the National Mission on Education through ICT, an initiative of the Department of Higher Education, MHRD. The Minister said that he was happy that the Aakash project has picked up speed and is ready for release. Unlike other tablet devices, Aakash can also be used to create computer programs, in Python, C, C++ and Scilab, for example. In addition to being a computer, Aakash will also be an access device, in applications, such as e-governance. The Minister thanked IIT Bombay for doing a wonderful job porting many useful software on to Aakash. The Minister interacted with the remote centres from Kanyakumari, Rajkot, Srinagar and Nagpur. A representative of IIT Bombay symbolically presented an Aakash Tablet to the Minister. The Minister suggested that the IIT Bombay Director Prof. Devang Khakhar presents Aakash devices to the Heads of a few institutions which host the remote centres of the 10,000 teacher training programme. With this, the first major initiative for empowering the teachers of the Country and improving their quality through effective use of the connectivity provided to universities and colleges under NME-ICT commenced.

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