

CBSE gets ready for sci-fi meet!

Abhishek Choudhari, TNN Dec 18, 2011, 12.42AM IST

NAGPUR: How about doing school assignments on your smartphone and submitting it online? Or preparing for your test by reading the chapters on the same phone? Wait there is more. The science lab as you know now may soon be a thing of the past. Soon you may be able to do your chemistry experiment online!

No, this is not something out of a science fiction movie, but a possibility which the CBSE will be pondering over this January. The most tech-savvy board in the country is getting ready to gaze into the crystal ball and explore opportunities of making education more accessible with the help of information technology (IT).

The CBSE, along with Kerala Sahodaya and Amrita University(AU), are organizing a three-day workshop which has all the makings of a science fiction meet. The International Conference of Technology Enhanced Education (ICTEE) will be held from January 3-5 at Amritapuri (Kollam) in Kerala and is open to principals from other boards as well.

The program's coordinator Raghu Raman from AU said the workshop will be almost like "looking into the future". Speaking to TOI from Amritapuri, Raman, said, "A few months ago we were discussing with CBSE chairman Vineet Joshi on how workshops are only focusing on problems. We need to take a peek into future and see what is there, say 10 years from now. And from this the idea for ICTEE came about."

Speakers from India and abroad will be talking about technological advances and possibilities in education.

"We are talking about a science lab where all experiments can be done online. We will share more details after its formal demo in December last week. When principals come, we will not reply on powerpoint presentations, we will let them use that actual technology," he said.

Mobile phones are the next bet when it comes to merging IT and education for school children. "Computers, laptops are costly and are cumbersome to carry for school kids. A mobile phone costs hardly Rs8,000 and kids are very comfortable using it. We can provide a platform to access their educational material via phone thus making mobile learning possible. It is all in realm of possibility, with concrete steps taken already for this," said Raman.

He added, foreign universities are already spending heavily on research in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths). The AU too is part of a nine country consortium which is working on 'measuring learning', something which will help educators determine if the students have grasped what was being taught.

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