

## **Navratna at NIT**

Professor Venkataramani, NIT Trichy is understandably enthusiastic about ICT implementation at NIT Trichy. He explains the nine chief areas of ICT implementation at NIT Trichy in a gliding manner.

The first is of course the bread and butter – the E-governance domain. NIT Trichy has had MIS – Management Information System for past 6 years. This is used for admissions, fees, bills, grades and so on. However it is intended to be upgraded soon to a new Management Information System – MIS.

The second area is area of Virtual Classroom, helped generously by NKN and NMEICT. Virtual Classroom allows sharing of faculty members and facility to rope in external faculty. While NIT Trichy did try A-View, this has limitation in that video lectures are stored on remote machine and hence NIT Trichy preferred to switch to its own implementation of virtual classroom. Virtual Classrooms require Video Conferencing, False Ceiling and Air Conditioning. NIT Trichy was generously helped by TEQIP – Technology Education Quality Improvement Program (TEQIP).

The third area is in the area of Clicker technology, enabled through Aakash Tablets provided by IIT Bombay. Clicker technology allows the faculty to administer a quick quiz, which gets loaded on to tablets instantly and this is used to administer series of questions at different times during the class session. Apart from being able to test student's abilities, clicker tests if students are attentive and alert in classroom.

The fourth area is in Archived Lectures. This does not only include external faculty lectures, but also includes lectures by NIT Trichy faculty.

The fifth area of intervention is in LMS – Learning Management System, to harness the power of Social Media. NIT Trichy is actively evaluating LMS modules of various vendors before deciding on appropriate LMS module for NIT Trichy.

The sixth area of intervention is enabling interaction between industry and NIT Trichy faculty through technology instead of traditional face to face meeting. This would enable NIT Trichy faculty to share expertise with industry better.

The seventh area is in administering NPTEL courses and BTech (Hons) courses through video conferencing. Thus elective courses for BTech(Hons) will be delivered through virtual classroom rather than traditional methods of teaching.

The eighth area is in developing low cost virtual class room. The way this is done is that instead of using inbuilt camera on laptop, external camera is used to deliver quality video conferencing facility with moderate investment of as less as Rs. 20,000.

The ninth area is in being able to collect feedback from alumni of NIT Trichy by using technology to better enable outcome based education as is the new paradigm being suggested and implemented everywhere.

NIT Trichy technology implementation breaks several myths. First is that educational institution implement technology only in administration and governance and not in teaching and learning. The second myth is that technology implementation need necessarily be extremely expensive.

NIT Trichy has gone about technology implementation, in a wherever and whenever possible mode; neither abandoning it considering it impossible, nor going Big Bang approach leading to immense resistance and fund shortage.

There is much learning from NIT Trichy technology implementation for education institutions, chiefly that educational institutions must take tiny steps to incorporate technology and not wait for the giant leap when they would be miraculously transformed over night.