

Be aware of the world of learning

- JULY 27, 2015

This is the last part on the series 'Distance education: Distant but at your fingertips' filed by reporters Anu Abraham, Hari R Pisharody, V V Viju, Rajeesh P, Raghunath published in the Mathrubhumi daily.

The distant education sector needs a transparent control mechanism. Though Keralites are in the forefront on its literacy on information technology, many of them would not have heard of e-PG Pathshala and NPTEL.

Many who register for distant education courses are awaiting study materials from universities dispatched through post. But a majority of them are unaware of the vast world of knowledge that is readily available at their fingertips.

NMEICT

The National Mission on Education through ICT (NMEICT), funded by the Ministry of Human Resources Development, has launched a project e-PG Pathshalatwo years ago with an aim to provide study materials and aids of global standards.

Postgraduate students of colleges inside and outside the state will be the beneficiaries. The study materials on 71 subjects were prepared in the first phase and uploaded after an expert group approved it. As many as 1,283 modules in various topics are still available in epgp.inflibnet.ac.in

CEC, Vyasa channel

The Consortium for Educational Communication (CEC) is one of the inter university centres set up by the University Grants Commission with the goal of addressing the needs of higher education through the use television as medium. UGC's Vyasa channel with four bands functions under them.

The details of classes and subjects will be published in CEC website. The classes in Vyasa channel are available in YouTube too. Also CEC runs Ekalavya channel for BE, MCA and MSc students.

Though e-PG Pathshala is available on several topics, but many of them are lacking in modules. Despite the appointment of teachers, the revisions are going at a snail's pace.

IITs too extend a helping hand

Even IITs are assisting students of engineering, science, social studies streams by providing

them study material. The National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), a project funded by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), is a joint initiative of seven IITs and IIS in Bengaluru.

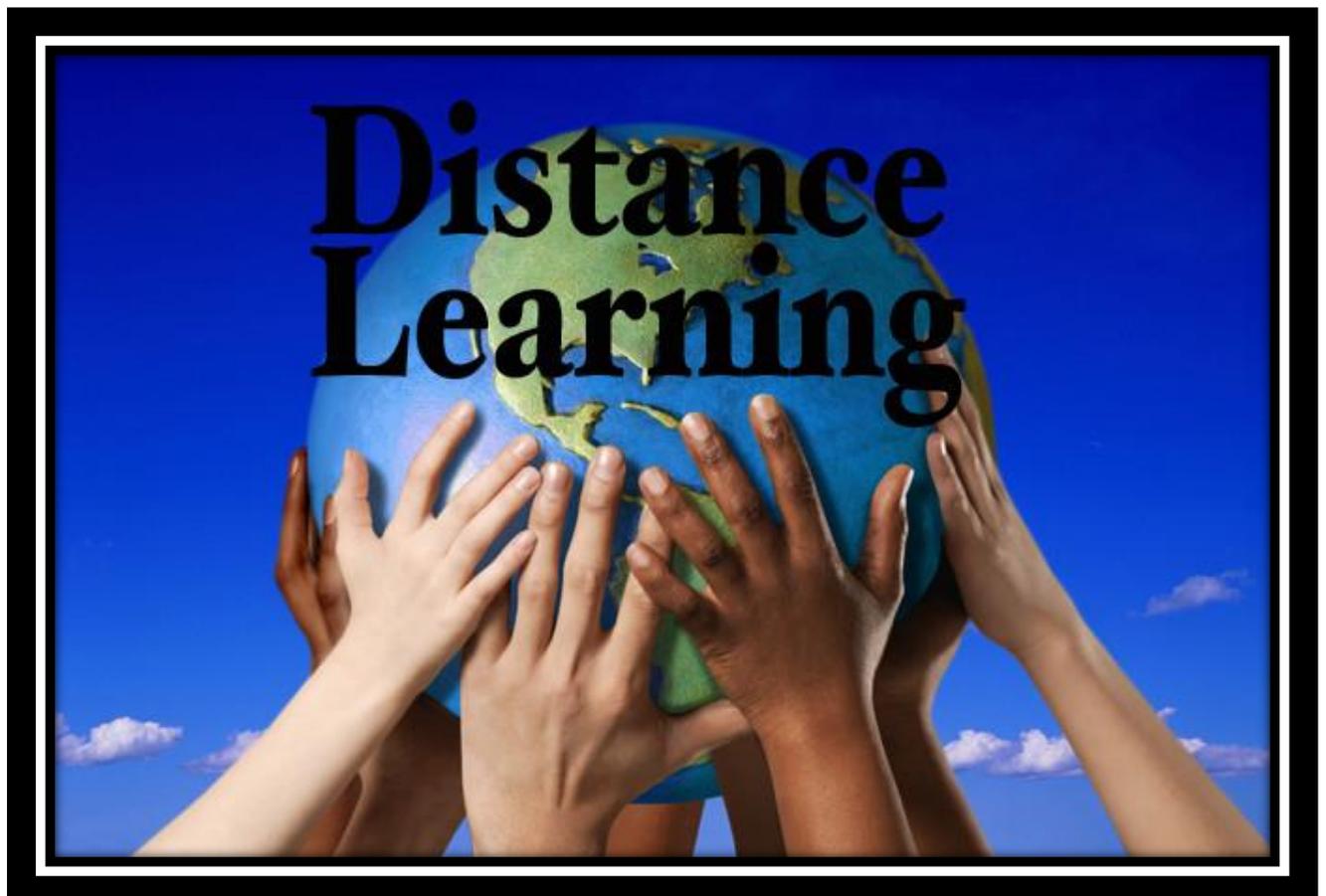
Having a pool of 600 teachers across the country, the NPTEL has so far made available 459 video courses and 400 web courses along with classes by teachers from IITs and notes in PDF format. For more details, students can visit nptel.ac.in.

In Kerala, Calicut University and MG University have decided in principle to provide online course materials instead of off-campus centres.

In Calicut, under the Educational Multimedia Research Centre (EMMRC) which is operational since 1998, classes taken in studios are aired live. As a first step, classes were prepared for BSc Maths and BA English students. The video files of the classes are available at www.sdeuoc.ac.in

Needed Open University

A technical university will soon be launched to manage the engineering education sector. But there is no governing body for distant education in Kerala. Earlier, a move was initiated, but it stopped halfway. As many as 13 states have started universities and most of them are functioning properly.



In fact, the distant education sector needs a transparent control mechanism. Students can be easily guided. Experts say the move can stop mushrooming of educational institutions, manage all affairs including courses, redress complaints and make available online classes.

Students please note

Those adopting distance education mode should ensure that the centre is approved by UGC/varsities.

The course should be approved by distance education bureau. Such details are available in websites of UGC and varsities.

The syllabus needs a thorough scrutiny.

Engineering diplomas are not approved anywhere. Don't fall prey to such advertisements.

To clear doubts approach university distance education centre.

If complaints are unresolved, then approach distance education bureau

A note for universities

Priority should be given to provide study materials online

Proper counseling and guidance to students

Centres must be allowed to function after detailed inspection

Fees must be fixed by varsities

Check misusing of varsities' name and emblem

Be strict over attendance of students and qualifications of teachers

Same syllabus and mode of teaching for students of regular and distance education streams.