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Amrita varsity launches satellite network

By our Staff Reporter

COIMBATORE, MAY 16. A satellite network linking the four campuses of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham Deemed University for purposes of education and research went online at its Coimbatore campus on Saturday.

Facilitated by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), the live satellite link brought together students and researchers from Amrita campuses at Kollam,

Kochi, Bangalore, and Coimbatore.

Speaking at the Coimbatore campus, the Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology, V. S. Ramamurthy, said that there were not enough teachers to make "education for all" a reality.

Space-based communication technology could bring university education to students, wherever they were located.

"There is no substitute for education. It is not only literacy but also skill development and generation of intellectual property. However, there is a need for a value system along with skill development," he said.

Inaugurating the facility over the link from Kollam, the ISRO Chairman G. Madhavan Nair said: "If we improve literacy, we can pave the way for development. We need to provide youth with technical education, and satellites can help us reach every corner of the country that cables and wires cannot reach."

Satellite links facilitated by ISRO could bring education to the doorsteps to students. With this in mind, ISRO has decided to set apart six transponders for educational purposes, on the 'Edusat' satellite to be launched later this year.

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Over the link from Kochi, the Director of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, S. Banerjee, said that the new system would have a "catalytic effect" on the spread of education. Even people living in Ladakh and Lakshadweep could obtain expert medical advice from doctors in Kochi, by using a tele-medicine link, he added.

From Bangalore, the president of Hewlett Packard, Balu Doraisamy, said the company would establish a joint development centre, 'HP-Amrita Centre', at the Coimbatore campus.

Students would gain by participating in ongoing projects, and the company would benefit from the expertise of the university.

Speaking from Kollam, Mata Amritanadamayi Devi said: "Where there is true love, distance does not matter. Though the sun is far away, the lotus blooms when the rays of the sun touch it."

She felt that the advancement of science had shrunk the world but the human mind still needed spirituality to ease the stress of everyday living.

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