

Now, classroom content of IITs can be accessed by MIT students

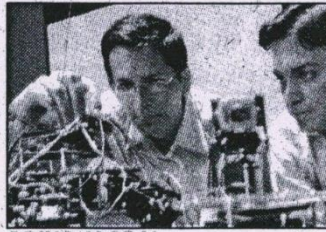
Hemali Chhapia | TNN

Mumbai: The Indian Institutes of Technology have agreed to a proposal by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to join their OpenCourseWare community. This move will enable MIT students to access classroom content of the IITs online at a click of the mouse. However, this is not the only way by which the IITs are opening their doors to the world; lectures from IIT classrooms will soon be available on Apple's multi-media platform iTunes. YouTube already has a separate channel for IIT courses, which, as of December 2011, had 63.64 lakh viewers.

When MIT had first invited the IITs to join the OpenCourseWare community in 2007, the IITs felt their initiatives were too young to join the world of open source learning. But four years on, the IITs feel that they

have caught up with the other members of the open source community, who had started making their course material public a long time ago.

"We have finally decided to



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join the Open Education Resource Consortium. This move will help us share open source tools. It's an academic enhancement exercise," said Mangala Sunder Krishnan, NPTEL coordinator from IIT-Madras. Several other universities like Yale, Peking, Harvard Law School, Notre Dame, Tufts, UC Irvine and Utah State have al-

lowed MIT to host links to their courseware. The Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, is also a member of MIT's OpenCourseWare.

The IITs have their own initiative on similar lines, the National Programme for Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), which seven of the old IITs and the Indian Institute of Science had jointly launched.

The NPTEL has over a thousand courses in technology and the humanities. But there is an elementary difference between the efforts put in by the American universities into open courses and the NPTEL. While the former is an enriching exercise, not completely substituting class work, the NPTEL encompasses all topics in every course, from their introduction to the end, allowing students to sit at home and study.