

COVER STORY

ICT, Innovation, Impact

'I's of the Future

REPORT: eASIA2008 Conference & Exhibition, 11-13 November, KLCC, Malaysia

Several Asian countries have made enormous progress in the arena of ICT awareness, knowledge, and skill. Some have completely outpaced others in particular areas to become global leaders. But most of these countries have a long way to go as far as returns from ICT is concerned. Many new market segments and new domains will probably see a big growth in times to come. A leading position in these new growth areas is crucial, if Asia wants to play in the first league of productivity and progress, combined with a strong policy system. eASIA2008 was just another attempt and approach of exploring all those opportunities leading towards a Digital Asia.



The organisers

eASIA 2008 conference and exhibition was held in Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre from November 11-13 in Malaysia by the Centre for Science, Development and Media Studies (CSDMS), the leading non-governmental organisation engaged in advocacy, research and community building in ICT for development and knowledge management issues. Hosted by the Ministry of Water, Energy and Communications, Malaysia, and in partnership with several other agencies, the event brought together over 800 delegates from 45 countries in three days of intensive discussions, consultations, deliberations, sharing and networking covering five developmental tracks- eGov, mServe, Digital LEARNING, Asian Telecentre Forum, and eHealth.

This three-day mega event was planned to create a unique platform for knowledge sharing in different domains of ICT for development and facilitate multi-stakeholder partnership development and professional networking among governments, industry, academia and civil society organisations of Asian countries. The objective was to bring together ICTD experts, practitioners, business leaders and stakeholders of the region onto one platform, through keynote addresses, presentations, thematic workshops, exhibition and in the process provide an excellent opportunity for participants to interact with a wide and diverse development community, to carry forward the vision of the region and consolidate them into an actionable programme.

The Outcome

eASIA2008 brought out a number of important outcomes that are crucial for addressing the present and future challenges of the ICT4D sector in Asian countries. The delivery of the event was in such way that the growing need for a multi-stakeholder participation of five overlapping domains of ICT4D, namely - rural development, e-government and e-education, e-health and mobile services, was addressed under a single knowledge-sharing platform allowing people and organisations working in

apparently isolated domains of ICTD, to intertwine with each other and engage themselves in mutual experience sharing and understanding of convergent issues in their individual pursuit for development.

The conference as well as the report aims to identify new ICT and Development related questions, roadblocks, progresses, and debatable issues, triggered by the popular opinions to provide a new impetus to the ICT4D discussions

The conference deliberations and discussions through various sessions saw some major outcomes like identifying key policy issues and implementation challenges the Asian countries face, recommendations for policy action, collaborations, new alliances, and stronger multi-stakeholder partnerships, some business driven models defining innovations and sustainability factors of ICTD projects, and also addressed, identified and evaluated some emerging markets.

The purpose of this conference as well as the report is to identify new ICT and Development related questions, roadblocks, progresses, and debatable issues, something triggered by the popular opinions to provide new impetus to the ICT4D discussions, which can also make a reference note towards policy level preparations, a study on the Asian minds on education technology, and an approach for the development of the community.

The Partners and Participants

Other than the privilege of having the support of KTAK as the host organisation of the event, eASIA this year saw many new partnerships under new tags. Information and Communication Technology Agency (ICTA) of Sri Lanka and the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology were the Country Partners

of the event. The thematic conferences were supported by the track partners. Some universities of repute, like NUS, OUM, UNIMAS, STOU, UiTM, etc were associated with the event as the academic partners. The worldwide

leader in software for personal and business computing, Microsoft, was the principal sponsor of the eASIA2008 event, while chipmaker Intel Corp was the gold sponsor.

The representatives ranged from top government bureaucrats, policy makers, and officials, donor agency representatives, corporate leaders, academicians and researchers,

Key Facts

- eASIA 2008: Asia's premier ICT4D event
- Objective: Platform for knowledge sharing and facilitating multi-stakeholder partnership in different domains of ICT4D
- Date & Venue: 11-13 November, KLCC, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Organisers: CSDMS, elets, and co-hosted by Ministry of Energy, Water & Communications, Govt of Malaysia
- Structure: Five thematic tracks, namely, egov, digital Learning, eHealth, Telecentre Forum, and mserve, and 50 power-packed sessions
- Participants: 800 delegates and 100 corporates from 45 countries
- Exhibiton: 19 exhibitors showcasing latest technology, e-Solutions, services and initiatives from Asia and beyond

NGO practitioners, and experts and consultants, some prominent name among which are telecentre.org, IDRC, Rockefeller Foundaton, Global eSchools and Communities Initiative, The World Bank, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Commonwealth Medical Association, Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Ministry of Energy, Water and Communications (MEWC), Malaysia's Ministries of Education (MOE), Higher Education (MOHE), Finance, and Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan's Ministry of Health, Malaysia's Multimedia Development Commission (MDEC), Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU), India's

Technology, Singapore, Institute of Information and Communication Technology Bangladesh, etc among others.

The Grand Inauguration

The first day plenary of the conference set the stage for the next two days of consultation on telecentres, eGovernance, Digital Learning, eHealth and mobiles for development. Inaugurating the conference, Deputy Minister for Energy, Water and Telecommunications Datuk Joseph Salang said, his ministry was working to transform its rural telecentres, known as Pusat Internet Desa, to hubs of socio-economic development. The new initiative, known as the Malaysian Telecentre Social Entrepreneurs' Club, will transform telecentres to foster



Dr M P Narayanan, President, CSDMS at the inauguration

entrepreneurship and encourage learning in these communities, he said.

Salang explained this was in line with the government's national broadband plan. He added that local clinics and libraries would also be included as part of the government's broadband agenda. Commenting on eAsia 2008, Joseph said the event was a platform for ICT players to network and establish partnerships for cooperation and collaboration. He also urged the ICT industry to build on each other's strength to create activities and growth in developing nations while creating markets for themselves. 'Studies have found that



Dy. Minister for Energy, Water and Telecommunications Datuk Joseph Salang inaugurating eASIA 2008

Ministry of Communication & Information Technology, Open University of Malaysia, UiTM, University of Malaya, South East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO), Gedaref Digital City Organisation(GDCO), Forum for Information Technology Nepal (FIT Nepal), Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Bangkok, OneRoof Inc., USA, Pakistan Telecommunication Corporation Limited (PTCL), University of New England Armidale, Australia, University of Kelaniya Sri Lanka, School of Electronics & Info-Comm



Inauguration Ceremony

Microsoft ad page 9

developing countries have a lower rate of returns from ICT compared to those that are developed.' He said this was attributed to an inadequate infrastructure to support ICT development in the economy.

'In addition to infrastructure, the region is also witnessing a prolific growth in content creation. The growth in ICT infrastructure, applications and content provides the opportunity to set standards, including next generation services for the world,' he added.

CSDMS President Dr M P Narayanan and Director Dr Ravi Gupta highlighted the vision and the key objectives behind the conference and exhibition. Dato' Dr. Halim Man, Secretary General, Ministry of Energy, Water & Communications, Malaysia, Karl Brown, Associate Director - Applied Technology, Rockefeller Foundation, USA, Jyrki Pulkkinen, CEO, Global eSchools and Communities Initiative (GeSCI), Dublin, Ireland, Richard Fuchs, Regional Director, East and South East Asia, International Development Research Centre, Yasmin Mahmood, Managing Director, Microsoft Malaysia SDN. BHD, Abdul Rahman Abu Haniffa, Director - Government Affairs, Malaysia & ASEAN, Intel Dr. Joseph Amuzu, Adviser, Social Transformation Programs Division - Health Section, Commonwealth Secretariat, UK also reiterated that the way forward for ICT4D in Asia was to collaborate and strengthen the initiatives through renewed partnerships and sharing of expertise.

In another plenary session following the grand inaugural ceremony, some more key speakers had an enriching discussion on Development 2.0 while putting forth an an Emerging Markets Perspective on the theme. Florencio Ceballos, Programme Manager, telecentre.org, Dr. S. Ahrulraj, President, Commonwealth Medical Association, Toru Nakaya, Director, International Cooperation Division, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan, and Prof Anuwar Ali, Vice Chancellor & President, Open University Malaysia made their deliberations in the plenary.

eASiA 2008 Exhibition



The Exhibition

The conference also served as an exhibition host of some of the latest e-solutions, services, initiatives and case studies from across Asia and beyond. Exhibitors from professional service providers, IT vendors, telecom vendors, satellite providers, consulting firms, government agencies and national/international development organisations participated in the exhibition. KTAK, Microsoft, MSC Malaysia, MAMPU Malaysia, SMART Technologies, University of Malaya, OUM, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), UUM, QAI Global Institute, Promethean, OneRoof Inc, Ministry of Communication & Technology, Thailand, Hitachi, EP-TEC Solutions, etc are a few to name in the list of exhibitors.

Session I: e-Education: The Asian Experience

The Digital Learning track conference was inaugurated alongside the eASiA 2008 on the second day with the keynote session on e-Education: The Asian Experience. The first key note presentation was presented by Prof. Rashid Navi Bax, Deputy Director General, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia on e-Education in Malaysia: Policies and Initiatives. e-Education in Malaysia has been chosen as the main policy to increase accessibility of higher education of the country and has great potential especially with providing tertiary education to the workforce as well as



Dr Rashid Navi Bax, Ministry of HE, Malaysia

alternative routes for rural and urban population and people with disabilities (Note : current enrollment OUM has reached about 55,000).

In his presentation, Dr. Rashid Navi Bax said that currently, the 9th Malaysia plan is on in the country. e-Learning was introduced and initiated in the 8th Malaysia plan (2001-2005). The higher education of learning in Malaysia can be seen in broadly two categories: a) Public Institutions of Higher learning; b) Private Institutions of Higher Learning. While the Public Institutions of Higher Learning has 20 Universities, 27 Polytechnics, 37 Community colleges with 403,009 students enrolment; the Private Institutions of Higher Learning has 41 Universities/University Colleges, 4 Foreign University Branch Campuses, 526 Colleges with 419,778 students. During the 8th Malaysia Plan (2001-2005), the e-Learning progress saw an increased use of Internet; Smart School Community projects implemented

e-Education has been chosen as the main policy in Malaysia to increase accessibility of higher education and for providing tertiary education to the workforce

by Multimedia development; conceptualising and implementing Malaysia Grid for Learning (MyGfl), a repository and a directory for sharing digital content; and engaging with and involving the private sector initiatives to provide facilities and training in selected schools, among many other developments.

Prof. Navi Bax also emphasised on the Public Private Partnerships, which contribute towards ICT infrastructure & Info structure, Smart school courseware, and Internet access via SchoolNet. During this plan period National e-Learning Consultative Committee (NeLCC) established the public sector e-Learning blueprint.

Accelerating e-Learning Acculturation is one of the focus of the 9th Malaysia Plan with special focus on e-Learning initiatives in formal education sector, rural communities, senior citizens, persons with disabilities being given



Sofian Azmi, Curriculum Development Division, Ministry of Education, Malaysia

tools to increase usage of ICT for socio-economic well being, private sector being encouraged to provide conducive environment for e-Learning. Prof. Navi

Bax felt that there is a need to create e-Learning culture among Government workforce. He also insisted that National Vocational Training Council (NVTC) blueprint should include content standards, systems, accreditation processes to implement e-Training programmes.

Sofian Azmi, Senior Assistant Director, Curriculum Development Division represented the Ministry of Education Malaysia and made his presentation on 'MOE Malaysia: Towards Digital Learning' which was focused on Vision 2020 leading to a Knowledge-based economy. The mantra that Ministry of education in Malaysia follows is 'Learn anytime and anywhere' by exploiting ICT in teaching and learning approaches. Almost all schools are connected via Internet Virtual Private Network (IP VPN).

In the Education Development Master Plan 2006-2010, which coincides with

the 9th Master Plan of Malaysia, the six key thrusts are nation-building, developing human capital, strengthening national schools, bridging the education gap, enhancing teaching profession, and accelerating excellence of education institutions. Sofian also informed that at the policy level the MOE has initiated Smart School Project, Teaching and Learning of Science and Mathematics in English (PPSMI), School Access Centre, Computer Laboratory, SchoolNet, EduWebTV, Malaysian Grid for



Toru Nakaya, International Cooperation Division, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan

- High Costs: Equipment, Telecom rates
- Inadequate human resources
- Emigration of trained personnel
- Outdated curricula
- Hardware, infrastructure: sourcing & development
- Lack of incentives for schools and teachers, lack of job security
- Lack of awareness, uncertainty about role of ICT in curriculum
- Lack of software, collaborative platforms
- Lack of government vision, excessive bureaucracy
- Speed of change – pressure to upgrade, maintain and sustain initiatives
- Geographical isolation, wide dispersal of populations
- Evolution model: ICT in admin -> ICT in curriculum -> ICT in learning culture

An 'Ideal' learning environment can be built by investing in people and education systems, training teachers, building strong education leaders, reforming key standards across ICT, curriculum and assessments

Learning (MyGfL), to create informative schooling culture, nurture thinking and creativity and to leverage ICT initiatives in school.

He further elucidated that the Malaysian government is committed to provide computer laboratories to encourage e-Learning by bringing the world into the classroom for all schools by 2010. The challenges that the Government is confronting are:

- Remote schools and electricity supply
- Infrastructure – building and internet connection
- Parents' expectations
- Training

He concluded his presentation by emphasising that there is a need to deploy nationwide smart school teaching concepts, materials, skills and technologies to school for which a concerted effort from all stakeholders can spearhead towards realising this aspiration.

Toru Nakaya, Director, International Cooperation Division, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan made his presentation on University of the South Pacific (USP).

The USP headquarters is located in Fiji with two supplementary campuses. The USP has provided distance learning courses since 1969 with the assistance of postal services and short wave radio. Currently, the USP has a total of 15,000 students. The mode through which they conduct DFL is Internet, Print-base, Flexi School (Intensive lecture), Video. Common Obstacles noted during the USP's Research on ICT in Education in the Pacific Nations are highlighted by the speaker, which are-



Seik Kaa Hee, Intel, Malaysia

Siek Kah Hee, Education Programme Manager, Intel Malaysia, deliberated



Audience

on various educational programme offerings of the company in the country. The programmes include Intel Teach for professional development of teachers on effective use of technology, Intel Learn for 8-16 year old students offered in government community technology centres, Intel ISEF for supporting authentic science learning through science fairs, and Intel Higher Education for accelerating the advancement of university curricula and research and encourage students to choose technical careers. The Intel education programmes are spread over China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Australia.

He further elaborated that an 'Ideal' learning environment can be built by investing in people and education systems, training teachers, building strong education leaders, reforming key standards across ICT, curriculum and assessments. He also stressed on implementing holistic policies to foster access to ICT by giving all schools access to Internet, implementing Universal Service policy, Spectrum policy and initiating VoIP & Wireless Broadband.

Session II: Planning an Asia Knowledge Forum

The Asia Knowledge Forum had its first planning meeting alongside the eASIA2008. It is a Forum designed to assist some of the poorest Asian countries in mobilising best practices and knowledge around issues of integrating educational technology into



Ashish Garg, GeSCI

learning environments. The Forum will endeavour to establish national and international partnerships to ensure the success of such structures. It will also provide a mechanism for exchange

and networking between member countries and to promote cross country collaboration and communication. It would also explore opportunities for synergizing knowledge through the convergence of regional experiences and knowledge sharing from across the globe.



Dr. Jyrki Pulkkinen, GeSCI

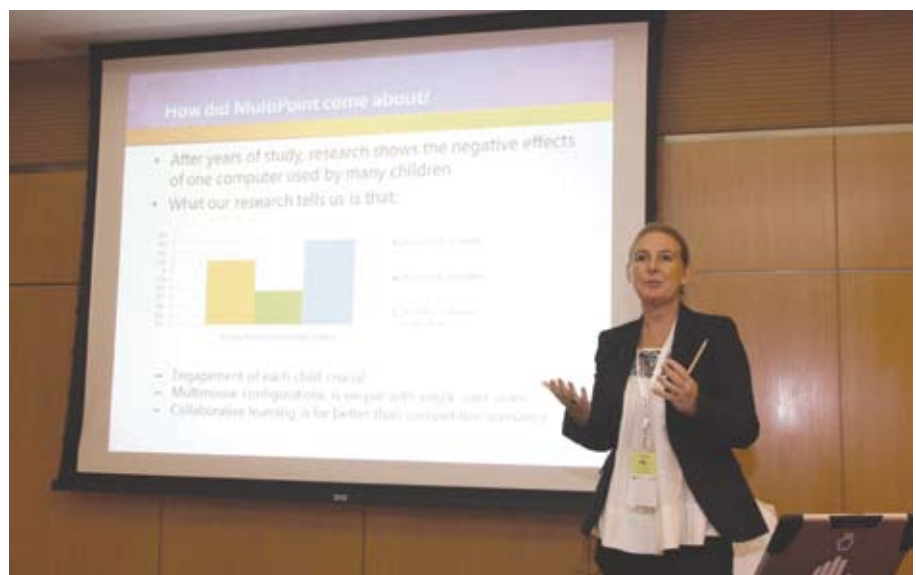
The planning meeting on 'Asia Knowledge Forum' was convened by Global eSchools and Communities Initiative (GeSCI). The aim was to bring together ministries of education, opinion leaders, scholars and educators from Asian countries to exchange, collaborate and become engaged in an ongoing dialogue that will ultimately lead to the development of appropriate, innovative and possibly ground-breaking policy solutions to the impediments on ICT and Education that confront policy makers.

The session started off with a background presentation by Ashish Garg, Asia Regional Coordinator (and Country Programme Director, India),

Global eSchools & Communities Initiatives (GeSCI). In her brief presentation, Ashish stressed on the need of an Asia Knowledge Forum, its expected outcome, and the impact that it seeks to create while, simultaneously addressing the challenges that the Asian region faces as far as ICT and education is concerned and providing a platform for the member participants to share their experience and replicate the good practices. She also emphasised that AKF could be a platform to attract the various governments of the Asian region.

Dr. Jyrki Pulkkinen, CEO, Global eSchools & Communities Initiatives and the chair of the session shared his vision on the forum and spoke broadly about the significance and need of a joint and social understanding that can pave ways in organising the education. He said, ICT in education is not a technological but a social innovation which can bring about transformations in the society and in the education system.

Ichiro Tambo, Executive Advisor to Director General, Economic Infrastructure Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan, in his keynote address echoed the transformative role that ICT has played in the education scenario and the way the concept and notion of education has been redefined. He shared with the participants about the changing scenario of the world of



Microsoft Workshop: 21st Century Teaching and Learning



Microsoft workshop in progress

presentation on ‘Power of Digitisation in Learning’, by Lim Soon Jinn, Heulab Deputy CEO. The session continued with a joint presentation on ‘Affordable Computing to Transform Education’, by Camille Mazo, Business Development Manager Education, UPG APAC and Sriddej Khruasuwan (Pom), Training Programme Manager / Technical Support – UPG, Microsoft Thailand Limited.

Session IV: Building Capacity for a Learning Community

The session was chaired by Devadason Robert Peter, Sr Specialist-ICT, South East Asian Ministries Educational Organisation (SEAMEO) RECSAM, Malaysia. He threw light on the importance of capacity building for today’s teaching and learning community, which includes teachers, educators, learners, and the educational functionaries.



Zainab Hussain Siddiqui, Pakistan Telecommunication Corporation Ltd (PTCL), Pakistan

Zainab Hussain Siddiqui, Senior Manager, Pakistan Telecommunication Corporation Ltd (PTCL), Pakistan



Ichiro Tambo, Economic Infrastructure Department, JICA, Japan

Working in partnership with country governments, GeSCI supports the development of effective frameworks including policy and strategy formation on ICT in Education. This provided GeSCI with a unique insight into the specific challenges and solutions in using ICT for Education in developing countries.

Session III: 21st Century Teaching and Learning

In yet another successful session, Microsoft coordinated a workshop titled ‘21st Century Teaching and Learning’, which provided the audience with an opportunity to know about various technical solutions that the teachers and learners can avail while effectively integrating ICTs in education. The general introduction to the session was given by Azizah Ali, General Manager, Public Sector, Microsoft Malaysia SDN BHD, following which there was a

education. The role of school teacher has now been reduced to that of a facilitator. ICTs have tremendous potential to change the spectrum of education. Role of education needs to be redefined and changed. He urged that country governance needed to be restructured according to the need of information based knowledge society.

Following his presentation, all the participants were asked to share and articulate the challenges and gap areas that they could identify in their respective countries with reference to ICT and education.

e-Learning offers a unique opportunity to combine the power of technology and global network with the infinite economic potential that is realised when people acquire, create and apply knowledge and skills

presented her paper on ‘Promoting Human Resource Capacity Building through e-Learning in Pakistan’. Through her presentation she endeavoured to address the issue of access to education in Pakistan. She emphasised on capitalising on ICT opportunities considering the dismal state of education infrastructure.

Zainab further highlighted that PTCL is poised to be an instrumental agent in Pakistan’s economic and social growth. e-Learning offers a unique opportunity to combine the power of technology and global network with the infinite economic potential that is realised when people acquire, create and apply knowledge and skills. PTCL is the largest converged services carrier in Pakistan with 5.7 million customers. PTCL is the largest CDMA operator in the country and leading infrastructure provider to other telecom operators and corporate customers, it has 55% broadband market share and broadband presence in 121 cities and is a pioneer of IPTV service in Pakistan. She informed the audience of the launch of Easy Learning, which is a Global Skills Development Programme designed and developed by Serebra Learning Corporation, Canada. The EasyLearning system was designed by Serebra to overcome significant e-Learning issues, such as inconsistent infrastructure support and intermittent online access that have long been impediments to the dissemination of educational material.



Profulla Chandra Barman, BRAC, Bangladesh



Adiya Ansari, BRAC, Bangladesh

The challenges that she shared are manifold including infrastructure, broadband and dial-up Internet penetration, computers, affordability of ICT equipment, language barriers, learning culture, etc.

The other presentation of the session was on the vision and educational programmes of Bangladesh-based BRAC (Building Resources Across Communities), jointly presented by Profulla Chandra Barman, Manager, Pre-Primary Programme, & Adiya Ansari, Senior Teacher Trainer. While Profulla Barman presented on ICT programmes in rural library/community learning centres, Adiya Ansari made her presentation on Computer Aided Learning. Both the speakers discussed some crucial challenges in their country which are to familiarise the rural students and teachers with modern computer technology, to provide conceptual clarity, problem solving and real life examples for mathematics and science, self learning provision for both teachers and students, and above all, the challenges of power outage for long hours and low voltage in most of the areas.



Bhagya Rangachar, CLT, India

Bhagya Rangachar, Founder Trustee, CLT India made her presentation on the e-Patashale Initiative. She primarily spoke about the challenges that the learners face when ICT is taken to school education. Her concern was that e-Contents are mostly used as fillers for a computer class. There is a challenge of perception as well. It is crucial to perceive what the learners want before providing the e-Content to the child. The content, images and the delivery are not localised. Her main focus was that the localisation and customisation of content can take us closer to our goals of integrating ICT tools with conventional classroom teaching. She also stressed that the multi-media content can be an inclusive medium when we pay closer attention to the beneficiaries’ current practices and their immediate needs and challenges.



Manish Sharma, NComputing

Manish Sharma, Vice President, Asia Pacific, NComputing talked on ‘A Proven Strategy to Lower ICT Acquisition and Operational Costs in Education.’ As the theme suggests, he stressed on the fact that PC capacity massively exceeds user needs and in most of the cases the users do not use the capacity resulting in wastage of power and of capacity. He highlighted the NComputing approach of maximising one’s investment in PCs by sharing the excess power of one PC with many users for as little as US\$80/user. In his presentation he also demonstrated the cost comparison analysis of NComputing approach.

Session V: Open and Distance Learning Practices

The third and last day of conferencing began with the session on 'Open and Distance Learning Practices' which was chaired by Prof Mansor Fadzil, Senior Vice President, Open University Malaysia. He gave an overview of the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) practices from the perspective of Open



Mansor Fadzil, Open University Malaysia

University Malaysia. The University broadly employs blended pedagogy, which includes online learning, self-managed learning, and face-to-face tutorials. Prof Fadzil also shared with the delegates that the technologies that they use to impart learning are radio, Internet radio, Internet (CMS & LMS), Mobile devices, audio-video cassettes, satellite programmes, audio/video conferencing, etc. The long term perspective for ODL, according to him, is that the quality will be increased with more diverse, reliable and cost effective e-contents and technologies on offer.

Prof. Rozhan M. Idrus from School of Distance Education, Universiti Sains



Rozhan M. Idrus, School of Distance Education, Universiti Sains Malaysia

Malaysia presented on Mobile Learning via SMS in Physics Education. He emphasised that the Short Message Service or SMS function can be utilised as an asynchronous form of communication with a student, fostering a sense of connectivity between the lecturer and student and facilitating a supportive learning environment. Anwar Harun Bin Abdullah Munir from Asia eUniversity made his presentation on 'Ways to rebuild and restructure Digital Library (ICT) with Intelligence Diet'. His point of focus was on the various dimensions of organising ICT assisted digital library. He defined a digital library as a library in which pool are stored in digital system and easily reached by computers. With the help of ICT the digital content will be deposited locally, or accessed distantly through computer networks. A digital library may be termed as information repossession system also.



Chetan Mahajan, Apollo Group

Chetan Mahajan, Vice President - South Asia and Middle-East, Apollo Group Education discussed on 'Collaboration in Online Learning'. He urged delegates to explore possible insights from the largest and most successful online university in the US and emphasised that collaboration and teamwork often are not given their place in online education while contents though important are often overrated. He spoke primarily about University of Phoenix and the pedagogical model that it adopts.

Session VI: Towards a New Agenda in Higher Education

The session was chaired by Dr. Jyrki Pulkkinen, who set the stage by raising



Prof. A K Bakshi, Institute of Life Long Learning, Delhi University, India

three issues/concerns as far as ICT and education is concerned. The three concerns are technological aspects, pedagogical issues and institutional issues. He emphasised that there is a strong belief on digital content, meaning that ICT means to access learning content. There is a very thin emphasis and mention of the communication aspect and collaborative dimension of ICT. There is a need to brain storm on innovation and creativity. He observed that the scalability and affordability no longer remains a serious concern with the stakeholders.

After his enriching speech, he invited Prof. A K Bakshi, Director - Institute of Life Long Learning, Delhi University, India, to make his presentation on Higher education from the perspective of University of Delhi. He shared with the audience the initiatives that the institute has undertaken. He also focused on how the academicians have been engaged in developing digital content for various university courses while redefining pedagogy.

The other speaker Dr. Abirami Devi, Senior Manager, Everonn Systems Ltd, India made a presentation on 'Unleashing the Strength of Universities in India.' The focus of her presentation was on how to strengthen the universities with ICT and its advantages and challenges involved in bringing the linkages between universities.



Dr Abirami Devi, Everonn Systems Ltd, India

Session VII: e-Learning Delivery Models: Re-engineering Pedagogy

Eric Lee from the School of Info-Comm Technology, Singapore made a presentation titled 'Interactive Book with G-Scanner Technology' and threw light on how together with textbook, e-Learning and G-Scanner, it becomes easy to re-engineer the delivery of teaching and learning.



Eric Lee, School of Info-Comm Technology, Singapore

Capt K J S Brar, CEO, Designmate, India deliberated on the issue of Delivering Quality Content to the Learners and Teachers.

The track conference of eASiA2008 came out with some major recommendations, like implementing holistic policies to foster access to ICT, give all schools access to Internet, Key Access Policies–Universal Service policy–Spectrum policy–VoIP & Wireless Broadband, etc. The participants called for strengthening of cooperation and linkages between educational institutions and organisations across the globe.

Valedictory Session

The Valedictory was graced by Jyrki Pulkkinen, CEO, Global eSchools and Communities Initiative (GeSCI), Dublin, Ireland, Ichiro Tambo, Executive Advisor to Director General, Economic Infrastructure Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan, Maria Tess Camba, Director, Commission on Information



Karl Brown, Rockfeller Foundation at the valedictory session

and Communication Technology, Government of Philippines, Philippines, Karl Brown, Associate Director- Applied



Ravi Gupta, Director CSDMS, addressing the valedictory

Technology, Rockfeller Foundation, USA, Florencio Ceballos, Programme Manager, telecentre.org. Dr. Ravi Gupta, Executive Director, CSDMS & Convener, eASiA 2008 rendered special thanks to all the stakeholders and participants for making the conference and exhibition a huge success. On the occasion, he also extended an invitation to all the participants and delegates to attend the next eINDIA2009 conference which will be held in August next year. ■



Key speakers at the valedictory session

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Invest in People and Education Systems: Train teachers, Build strong education leaders, Reform key standards across ICT, curriculum and assessments
- Implement holistic policies to foster access to ICT, give all schools access to Internet, Key Access Policies–Universal Service policy–Spectrum policy–VoIP & Wireless Broadband, etc
- Support Rural Education by Wireless link, Provide equal opportunity, Affordability through innovative financial schemes, Locally relevant service & content bundles, Access into rural areas through connected communities, more through proactive public-private partnership
- Heavy collaboration–Gov + Educators + Community + Industry + Civil Society + Multilaterals + Corporations
- Provide conceptual clarity, problem solving and real life examples for mathematics and science
- Self learning provision for both teachers and students
- Revolutionize the economics of computing –eg Desktop virtualization hardware and software, etc
- Collaborations between ODL institutions for cross-border education, International offering of programmes
- Information repositioning system, like , encouraging documentation of ICT initiatives, teaching learning processes, a digital library, etc
- Administrators to facilitate students to have Internet access off campus and help them with trouble solving.

eASIA 2008 Glimpses

