

● SKILLS TRAINING

Education takes 'tech' wings in Rajasthan, AP

Rajasthan is seeking to transform its education landscape in partnership with Microsoft, while an ambitious Skill University is on the anvil in Andhra Pradesh

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TECHNOLOGY HELPS MAKE teaching and learning more meaningful and fun. While in the desert state of Rajasthan, an ambitious project is taking shape to improve the integration of technology in teaching and skilling of students and educators in government colleges, in Andhra Pradesh plans are afoot to set up a Skill University to deliver new-age technical and vocational learning.

Recently, Microsoft India signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the department of college education in Rajasthan to improve the integration of technology in teaching and skilling of students and educators in government colleges. Through this initiative, the government aims to build tech capacity and enhance digital literacy among students and faculty in colleges under the ambit of the department of college education, as well as improve digital citizenship in the state. Kiran Maheshwari, minister of higher, technical and Sanskrit education, government of Rajasthan, said, "This initiative would enhance employability of



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youth in the state in addition to empowering them with technical education. The collaboration with Microsoft will prove vital for nurturing the technical development of youth in the state." She added that on completion of the first phase, the train-

ing will be imparted to additional students. The department of college education is undertaking initiatives for the benefit of students and during this academic session, it is introducing programmes related to employment generation.

Under the aegis of Digital Learning Programme, the department of college education is starting Microsoft Office specialist training in 50 government colleges from August to November. Microsoft will train a total of 9,500 students and 500 faculty members from across 50 colleges in the state during these four months. Students will be awarded certificates on the successful completion of the course.

Microsoft will also train educators from government colleges through the Microsoft Innovative Educator Program, building capacity for skills in innovative use of ICT in the classroom. Professional development content for educators such as the Microsoft Teaching with Technology (TwT), will also be made available through the Microsoft Educator Network. Microsoft will also provide free resources, tools and software, which will enable educators to garner learning and participate in global discussion groups and mentoring sessions.

Meanwhile, Bengaluru-based business services provider Qess has entered into an MoU with Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APEDB) to setup a Skill University in the state. The university is expected to ramp up in multiple phases which would create employment opportunities in the state. The partnership aims to create a model of education which can deliver modern technical and vocational learning in various domains. Qess is one of the largest employers in the country with a gross employee addition of over 100,000 last year. It is amongst the largest training and skill development partners to the ministry of rural development and National Skills Development Corporation.