IIT-M designs virtual reality tools to combat maternal, newborn deaths

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The SmartNRP tool will be used for training the health workers in Tamil Nadu

Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT-M) researchers are working with National Health Mission of Tamil Nadu to improve newborn and maternal health. An IIT-M team at the Centre of Excellence on Virtual Reality (VR) and Haptics, called Experiential Technology Innovation Center (XTIC), identified that skill training of the health workers was a major challenge that India was facing, specifically at the primary health centres in rural settings.

Dr Darez Ahamed, Mission Director, National Heath Mission Tamil Nadu, released the 'SmartNRP project' IIT Madras fealthcare workers to reduce Maternal Mortality Rate (NMR) in India in the presence of Prof V Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras, Prof Mahesh Panchagnula, Dean (Alumni and Corporate Relations), IIT Madras, Prof M Manivannan head of XTIC, Dr J Kumudha, expert Neonatologist and other stakeholders.

Using VR, Gaming Technologies, cloud, and AI/ML, the SmartNRP tool will be used for training the PHC health workers in Tamil Nadu under National Health Mission (NHM) to take the technologies forward. This will be scaled subsequently to other states in India where NMR is very high.

Dr Darez Ahamed released the 'SmartFHR project' to reducing Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR). It is aimed at monitoring foetal health using smartphones anywhere and anytime without clinical assistants. This project also will be scaled subsequently to other states where MMR is very high.