**1.1.1 What is a computer?**

The term computer is used to describe a device made up of electronic and

electro mechanical components. The computer itself cannot perform any task

and is referred to as hardware.

A computer system consists of three elements.

Fig 1.1.1 Components of a Computer System

1. Hardware

2. Software

3. People

**Hardware :** The physical components which you can see, touch and feel in

the computer system are called hardware Eg monitor, keyboard, mouse

etc.

**Software :** Software is used to describe the instructions that tells the computer

how to perform a task. Software is categorized

1) System softwares ( eg . operating systems, etc)

2) Application softwares ( MS-word, excel, accounting packages etc)

**People :** People who operate the computer and also create computer software

instructions.

**1.1.2 Computer hardware**

Basic components in a computer system are central processing unit (CPU),

memory, the input device and output device.

2 ComputerHardware

Micros **Computer systems** –, Minis and Mainframes.

**Micro computer** : Micro computer is also called as personal computer or PC.

It has a processor based on a single silicon chip. Personal computers come in

three different physical sizes, pocket pc’s, lap pc’s and desktop pc’s. Pocket

pc’s and lap pc’s belong to portable category. Microcomputer is used in small

businesses.

Ex : IBM compatible or IBM clone and Apple Macintosh systems.

**Multiuser microcomputers.** Until recently microcomputers were personal

computers for individual use only. But now days several microcomputers can

be networked together for simultaneous used by several people.

**Mini computers:** Mini computer is simply a small mainframe computer. It is a

reduced version of mainframe. Attached printers are not so fast. So it has less

storage capacity less processing speed of that of mainframe computers. They

are usually used by small businesses. For example research groups, engineering

firms, colleges etc. use mini computers.

**Mainframe computers:** A mainframe computer is a large expensive machine

whose processing speed is very high and has large amount of secondary storage

and fast printers. A large mainframe computer may be used to meet the

data processing requirements of the entire organization.

**Examples:** airline booking systems, Railway booking systems , weather forecast

etc.

**1 --**Extreme Programming (XP) is a software development methodology which is intended to improve software quality and responsiveness to changing customer requirements.