

## Did not receive enough support for Aakash tablet project: Kapil Sibal



Union Communications and Information Technology Minister Kapil Sibal said on Tuesday that there was lack of support from various government departments for the Aakash tablet project. "We did not receive cooperation from various departments, but still we are able to provide the tablet to the people," said Sibal.

He also said that the specification of the Aakash 4 has been finalized and the Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals (DGSD) has floated a tender. "The tender is on. The tender will be finalised sometime in January. All those entities which will meet the tender conditions will be entitled to manufacture the tablet," he said. "The Aakash tablet will be manufactured by entities. Depending on the volume of production, it will be available to anybody who wants to buy it," he added.

Commenting on the scope for subsidy on the tablet, Sibal said, "It is upto the government and ministries, like Rural Development Ministry, HR Ministry or the Finance Ministry, who want to buy it and provide subsidies. Those who can afford the tablet can buy it. But those who cannot afford it can buy it from various ministries, if they are selling it at a subsidised cost.

On pricing of the tablet, Sibal said, "We will see what the price is. Originally we wanted it to cost around Rs 2500, but that was without excise and other duties. So if you add these costs, then its price will go up from Rs 2500.

The Aakash is aimed at university students for digital learning via a government platform that distributes electronic books and courses.