



**Press Information Bureau  
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**Low Cost access –Cum-Computing Device Unveiled by Shri Kapil Sibal**

The Union Minister for human Resource Development, Shri Kapil Sibal unveiled a low cost computing-cum-access device, here today. The price of the device exhibited today is expected to be around \$35 per piece, gradually dropping down to \$20 and ultimately to \$10 a piece. Since this effort of continuous reduction in price and enhancement in capabilities would require a constant endeavour for R&D, IIT Rajasthan and some other IITs and technical institutions are setting up research teams to cover a wide range of issues in achieving our ultimate goal in terms of price and quality.

The three cardinal principles of the Education Policy viz., access, equity and quality could be served well by providing connectivity to all colleges and universities, providing low cost and affordable access cum computing devices to students and teachers and providing high quality e-content free of cost to all learners in the Country. National Mission on Education through ICT (NMEICT) encompasses all the three elements. Connectivity to Universities and Colleges has already started. Nearly 8500 Colleges in the country have already been connected, high quality e-content in various subjects is being created and under the National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), nearly 500 web based and video courses are available and uploaded on “sakshat”, YouTube and NPTEL portals and another 1100 courses in various disciplines of engineering and science are getting generated in 4 quadrant approach.

The ministry started its efforts , subsequent to lukewarm response from known corporates in this sector, by holding discussions on this concept with a group of Professors / experts at IISc, Bangalore, IIT Kanpur, IIT Kharagpur, IIT Madras and IIT Bombay. B.Tech and M.Tech students were guided to produce the mother board for such low cost devices with ample flexibility to change components. One mother board design was generated under Ministry's guidance in the B.Tech project of a student at VIT, Vellore. The cost of bill of material worked to 47 \$ at that point of time. The PCB of the mother board was got fabricated at IIT Kanpur. It could be seen that by customising the device to the needs of learners across the country, and utilizing the processor capabilities of processors suitable for the purpose, it was possible to substantially reduce the prices of such access-cum-computing devices. Then started a wave of collaboration with such interested partners.

. A number of teams have been moving back and forth independently but constantly interacting with the HRD Ministry and improving upon design parameters and customization guidance for Indian students. The efforts of some of the teams working with those design philosophies were presented today. The

aim is to reach such devices to the students of colleges and Universities and to provide these institutions a host of choices of low cost access devices around Rs. 1500/- (\$35) or less in near future.

**MV/Hb**