

Newspaper Clips

January 19, 2012

Indian Express ND 19/01/2012 p-7

Make Aakash consumer-friendly, Govt tells IIT

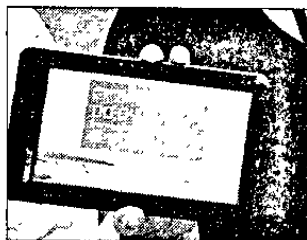
ANUBHUTI VISHNOI
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 18

THE Union Human Resource Development Ministry has asked IIT-Jodhpur to withdraw the military style specifications it had drawn up for the Aakash tablet and come up with tablet specifications suited to a general consumer. The same was conveyed to the IIT authorities in a meeting chaired by HRD Minister Kapil Sibal on Tuesday.

The Indian Express first reported that IIT-Jodhpur and Canadian firm Datawind were bickering over a range of issues involving the government's showpiece \$35 Aakash tablet and the ministry has had to repeatedly step in to defuse the crisis.

The IIT was told to define the testing protocols for the tablet, but Datawind objected, calling these more suitable to the 'rugged' military tablets customised to function in hardy weather.

The \$35 tablet, on the other hand, is a basic and uncluttered device targeted at students and packed with features intended for educational use.



'Withdraw military-style specifications'

IIT-Jodhpur handed out a list of technical specifications for rugged military tablets — the kind that Hewlett Packard developed a few years back for usage under extreme weather conditions. Datawind objected to these specifications, as confirmed by Datawind CEO Suneet S Tuli, and the ministry has now asked IIT-Jodhpur to develop specifications suited for students.

Eyebrows are also being raised over IIT 'developing' military specifications, which, far from being original and customised to Indian needs, appear to be exact copies of the HP rugged tablet specifications.

Aakash was developed following a six-year project, with a Rs 4,772 lakh contract given to IIT-Jodhpur for a "low-cost access-cum-computing device".

'I will strengthen links between India & Johnson'

SOUMITRA DUTTA, 48, an IIT-Delhi alumnus, will become the fifth Dean of the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management at Cornell on July 1. In an emailed interview to Kalpana Pathak, the first Indian-origin head in the institution's 66-year old history says there are several areas of interest that could help differentiate the university from the rest in India. Edited excerpts:

How does it feel to be the Dean of Cornell University's management school?

I am honoured and humbled by the confidence expressed in my leadership by the Cornell community and the Johnson business school. I am also proud to be the first Indian to assume this prestigious position.

Indian-origin academicians are increasingly being named at the helm of prestigious universities in the US. Why do you think this is happening?

There are several reasons for this: (a) There are many more academics now in US schools (so the supply is higher). (b) Indians are communicative and speak English well in general — good communication abilities are important for leaders. (c) Indians are used to diversity and are able to handle multi-culturalism well — an important trait for leading organisations with diverse groups of people. (d) Indians have good work ethic and are disciplined hard workers. (e) Many of the Indian professors come from top Indian institutions like the IITs which provide world class education.

Over a dozen international universities and their B-schools have firmed up their India plans except for Cornell. Would that change after your appointment?

India is a very important market for the Johnson school — many of Johnson's students and faculty come from India. I will certainly look at plan for further strengthening links



ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA

between India and Johnson in the future.

What areas would your management school look at? Other international universities are imparting executive education in India.

There are several areas of interest that could also help differentiate Johnson: (a) Bringing Cornell's universities' many strengths in areas like agricultural sciences, physical sciences and health care to bear upon solutions for India's challenges in critical areas like energy, agriculture, health care, etc. (b) Leveraging Cornell's plans to open a new technology campus in New York city to build links with India's vibrant technology entrepreneurs. (c) Leveraging centres at Johnson such as the Emerging Markets Institute and the Sustainable Enterprise Institute to impart relevant executive education to Indian business leaders.

Academicians are terming your appointment as a

unique one and one that would be benefitting Cornell at this juncture. How?

This is the first time that a major American university has gone outside the national boundaries to hire a Dean. This is unique and reflects the changing nature of the world. America realises that it needs to reach out to the world and integrate global perspectives. My appointment is a reflection of this change.

Recession made American and European B-schools look at India. Do you think this could change as these economies begin to recover?

American and European B-schools are looking at India for several reasons: (a) India is a great source of talent — both students and faculty. (b) India is a vibrant market for programmes and services offered by these schools. (c) India is a vibrant research platform where innovation is thriving and new business models are emerging. These reasons are really not linked to the recession and I think that the interest in India will continue to grow over the next years.

Business Standard, ND 19/01/2012 P-10

IIMs learn the art of fund raising

Institutes may finally set up a fund-raising department to push their expansion plans

SWATI GARG

Kolkata, 18 January

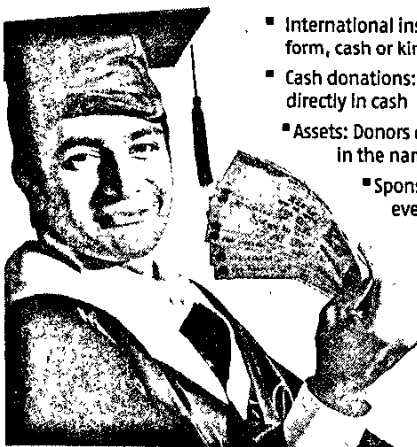
More than 10 months after the group on fund raising for the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), headed by Hari Bhartia, co-chairman and MD, Jubilant Organosys, submitted its recommendations to the Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD), the IIMs may finally have a fund-raising department in place.

At a recently concluded workshop on fund-raising held in Delhi, a structured move in the direction of professional fund raising activities by the IIMs was discussed. The IIMs have so far been dependent on the MHRD grants to fund their expansion and infrastructure requirements.

M J Xavier, director, IIM-Ranchi, said setting up such a department would cost ₹1 crore. To raise funds, the IIMs will engage the services of fund-raising experts, who will work towards increasing the process of engagement and investment with the alumni. "The culture of professional fund-raising has been missing at the IIMs. This idea will make funding, in cash and kind, a part of the IIM culture," said Debashis Chatterjee, director, IIM-Kozhikode.

IIM-Lucknow, IIM-Ranchi and IIM-Rajpur said they too may set up a similar department. IIM-Calcutta in addition to setting up a fund raising department is considering involving the

HOW THE IVY LEAGUES DO IT



- International institutes seek donations in any form, cash or kind from donors
- Cash donations: A donor may want to donate directly in cash
- Assets: Donors can gift a property or real estate in the name of family members or trust
 - Sponsorships: Donors may sponsor events or programmes
 - Endowments: Endowments in cash or kind (property) with principal amount remaining intact
 - Securities: Companies may donate securities seeking the dual advantage of no capital gains tax and tax exemption

dean of external affairs in the process.

"We are working on giving more structure to the process, the final outlay of which will be decided over the next few months. We will tap into the rich pool of alumni present in various positions of influence," said Shekhar Chaudhury, director, IIM-Calcutta.

IIM-Calcutta and IIM-Ahmedabad have an estimated 10,000 alumni, while IIM-Bangalore has 8,000 alumni.

An IIM director, on the condition of anonymity, told *Business Standard*, that once the department is established, they would look at raising up to ₹15 crore.

"While this is what one would want to raise in the first year itself, realistically, this might be a difficult target to reach because of the absence of a culture of donating to educational institutes," the director said.

IIMs need to build a corpus which they have been unable to do for all these years. Whatever money is available is largely in the form of government grants. The IIMs have not been successful in getting any significant donation from outside parties and using that corpus to do things leading to academic excellence.

Today, the bulk of the money that IIMs generate is through the Management Development Programmes (MDPs) or executive education programmes they conduct. In absence of these, they would be running at a loss or just marginally breaking even.

"A corpus is a way out and building one is a priority. If we implement the other recommendation of more teaching and more research, it means less MDPs and in turn less income for not only the professors but also for the IIMs. To make up for that income, either you increase the fee or find some other source of money. Else, the budget of IIMs may go for a toss," chairman of Maruti Suzuki India and author of this report on new governance structures, had earlier told *Business Standard*.

However, Samir Barua, director IIM-Ahmedabad confessed to facing several problems in fund-raising. According to Barua, IIM-Ahmedabad is in the process of raising ₹10 crore, but has so far been unable to do so.

Among the techniques under discussion are the idea of chair professorship, which will be given to an esteemed person in return of a grant for a specific department. The second method under consideration is providing partial/ electronic access to courses for corporates who make donations.

According to B S Sahay, director, IIM-Rajpur, reasons for fund-raising have to be determined before possible donors are approached.

Mint ND 19/01/2012

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BRINGING TRANSPARENCY

Educational institutions to publish balance sheets

Institutes will follow uniform accounting norm and disclose income, expenditure in standard format

By PRASHANT K. NANDA
prashant.n@livemint.com

NEW DELHI

All educational institutes under the central government and those that get grants or approvals from central education regulators will be directed by the government to publish a balance sheet every year, starting 2013, to bring in more transparency to the sector.

The educational institutes will follow a uniform accounting norm and disclose income

and expenditure in a standard format similar to that of companies, according to an initiative unveiled on Wednesday.

"The aim is to bring transparency and openness in our educational institutes," said Kapil Sibal, minister for human resource development.

All Union government institutes, including central universities, Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of Management and National Institutes of Technology will have to adhere to the accounting standards. Besides, all universities and colleges under the University Grant Commission, the All India Council for Technical Education and the National Council of Teachers Education will have to follow the norms. Even schools affiliated to the Union gov-

Sibal says the filing of balance sheets will come into force from the 2013 academic session

ernment-controlled Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) will have to incorporate the accounting norms.

The standards and guidelines have been prepared by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (Icaai).

"Donations coming from within or outside India, grants received and expenditures incurred will all be detailed in a uniform format," said G. Ram-

aswamy, Icaai president.

India has 572 universities and more than 31,000 colleges, where around 15 million students pursue higher education. In addition, there are at least 10,000 CBSE schools.

Sibal said his ministry had accepted the report in principle and "it will come into force from the 2013 academic session". Sibal will discuss the report in the Central Advisory Board of Education, a panel comprising experts, academicians and state education ministers.

"I would like to see this adopted by all educational institutes in the country but states need to come on board too," he said.

Though central government institutes submit their accounts to the government and

the Comptroller and Auditor General of India audits them, private institutes are not obliged to do so. At least 60% of colleges are under private control.

The standards will provide clarity on the deployment of funds, Ramaswamy said. "It will lead to decriminalisation and orderly growth of education," he said.

The Icaai president said that some colleges might be talking about sustainable revenue model but that needs to be spelt out.

"Once the accounting is done, you will put it online in a centralized server," he said. "If you are earning revenue then you have to deploy 85% in education every year. This accounting norm will help analyse and come to a conclusion

on who is doing what."

Jaydeep N. Shah, vice-president of Icaai, said the step will take care of concerns that many private institutions engage in malpractices to fleece students.

A private university administrator in the National Capital Region attacked the move and said it would discourage investment.

"The education malpractice Bill, the education tribunal Bill and even this accounting standard are aimed at one direction—scuttle private investment. If somebody is investing a billion rupees, he would like to get some return," said the official, requesting anonymity. "When government can't provide access to all, why is it then discouraging private participation?"

Economic Times ND

19/01/2012 P-14

The Genetics Gamble

Looking at IITians as sperm banks expands the market

The Chennai couple who advertised online for sperm donations preferably from IIT students is merely skipping a few steps – and the social niceties – that go into the usual arranged-match strategy. Matrimonial columns are proof enough that Indian parents still have deep faith in genetics, even if the melting pot of urban existence is slowly diminishing caste biases. Complexion, height and weight are as important as earning potential, and a preference for 'Class I' civil servants, MBAs, chartered accountants and the like has as much to do with future prosperity as the potential IQ of their progeny, given that clearing public exams demands formidable RAM (random access memory) these days. Though there are enough instances to prove that like does not always beget like – data on how many offspring of IITians also crack the entrance exam would be illuminating – the average Indian parent's belief in DNA remains unshakeable. But lassoing a suitable boy is as difficult as the search is tedious, expensive and time-consuming, and there are simply not that many IIT-IIM graduates, IAS/IPS/Allied Services officials and CAs available – that too at an affordable price.

The next best thing, obviously, is to aim for a small stake in a blue chip if a merger is not possible; the Chennai couple have obviously realised that. For those who believe in the genetics game, the attraction is clear: it is definitely cheaper than snagging a whole IITian or what-have-you, and thinking of them as sperm banks rather than individuals expands the market exponentially. It also opens up alternative sources of funding for 'needy' IIT-IIM students. Of course, there is no telling what other traits could be inherited along with formidable IQs, but that's a risk many may be willing to take.

Business Line ND 19-Jan-12 P15

'India, priority for Irish varsities'

Sravanthi Challapalli

Recently in Dublin

India is a priority for Irish universities looking to draw students from across the world, said Ms Orla Battersby, Head, Education In Ireland.

Speaking to Indian media-persons visiting Dublin at the invitation of the Dublin Airport Authority, she said the country is promoting post-graduate and Ph.D programmes in India.

WHY IRELAND?

The country's safety scores (Ireland was ranked 11th in the Global Peace Index 2011) will be attractive to parents, and students can be assured of a very personal teaching experience, she said. Pointing to companies such as Google, Apple, Pfizer, Citi and IBM being present in the country, she claimed: "These companies don't just focus on our science and technology graduates – their CEOs also highly rate the Irish-educated graduates in the arts and humanities, who they regard as having the creativity, collaboration, flexibility and other

core skills necessary for modern business."

This year seven universities and a ministerial delegation will visit the country to acquaint students with studying in Ireland. IIT Delhi and University of Pune are among those which are conducting research projects with Irish educational institutions.

Students can opt for flexible approaches to international programmes such as blended courses and one-year exchanges.

International graduates can remain in Ireland for a year to find a job or develop a business idea, Ms Battersby said.

EDUCATION COSTS

A note from Education In Ireland says a Masters could cost between €7,500 and €22,000 per annum, while a Ph D could cost €6,000 to €9,000. Living costs range from €6,000 to €9,000.

To a query, she said there were more efforts by the Irish government to focus scholarships on a smaller number of countries, of which India will be given top preference.

IIIT technology to convert speech into text message

G DIWAKAR

Press Trust of India

CITY-BASED International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) is set to develop a mobile technology that would accept speech as input and convert it into language and text, which can be sent as an SMS, a top functionary of IIIT said.

According to Rajeev Sangal, director, IIIT, the project, funded by the ministry of information technology, will be ready in next two years.

"You can talk to the mobile phone. Suppose, anybody does not know reading or writing, they can dictate the phone the SMS, which they would like to send. They should be able to speak it out and then the phone will convert it into text and send it as a message," Sangal said. According to him, seven other institutions are currently

Talk to me

■ The project, funded by the ministry of information technology, will be ready in 2 years

■ The technology will be useful in mobile phones which have smaller screens and keyboard

■ The speech lab of IIIT aims to develop robust speech systems for applications

working on this project. Sangal said, the technology will be useful in mobile phones, which have smaller screens and keyboard.

The speech lab of the IIIT aims to develop robust speech systems for applications, such as speech translation, phonetic engine for Indian languages, speaker recognition for biometrics,

and dialogue systems in speech mode, a senior faculty member said.

Speaking about other projects currently the institute is working upon, Sangal said, the research teams are also engaged in developing an optical character reader for mobile phones.

"The optical character reader will read whatever is written on the screen with the help of a handwriting recognition tool. We can write the instructions in any Indian languages on a mobile phone, using a stylus. The text will be recognised by the cell-phone and action can be taken accordingly," the academician explained.

According to analysts, this technology is useful to expand in to rural Indian markets where mobile penetration is still in the nascent stage due to higher levels of illiteracy.

Can Ultrabooks challenge tablets?

Balaji Narasimhan
Bangalore, Jan. 18

If the spate of announcements on Ultrabook laptops at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas is anything to go by, tablet makers have a challenge on hand.

Acer launched the thinnest Ultrabook ever, Lenovo caught the buzz with its IdeaPad Yoga and others, including Dell and Hewlett Packard, are lining up as many as 75 Ultrabook models this year.

In India, while tablets are expected to show good growth in 2012, notebooks and Ultrabooks are expected to hold their own, according to industry experts. That's because of the Ultrabooks' ability to create content and also because PC penetration is low in India.

Vendor expectations indicate this. Mr Alok Bharadwaj, President, MAIT, said, "In India, industry expects to sell around 45 lakh laptops and 3 lakh tablets in the current financial year. While laptops will witness around 15 per cent growth, tablets will grow at 100 per cent being a new category."

While tablets are showing a lot of promise, Mr S. Rajendran, Chief Marketing Officer, Acer India, said that content creators will not find them useful.

"Ultrabooks are designed to give people the power to create and share content, whereas tablets are lifestyle devices primarily meant only for content consumption."



Attendees look over Ultrabook laptops at the 2012 International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, Nevada, US (file photo). — Bloomberg

He said that both would coexist.

FEATURES

Many Ultrabook manufacturers usually talk about the fact that the device can be used for creating content because of the speed of the processor and the presence of a keyboard, but tablets have an advantage - weight. The iPad2 weighs around 600 gm, while one of the lightest Ultrabooks, the Asus Zenbook UX21, weighs 1.10 kg, which is almost twice as much. But while the iPad is limited to a maximum storage of 64 GB, the Asus Zenbook UX21 can accommodate a base capacity of 128 GB SSD and the presence of a keyboard and USB could make it more appealing to mainstream users.

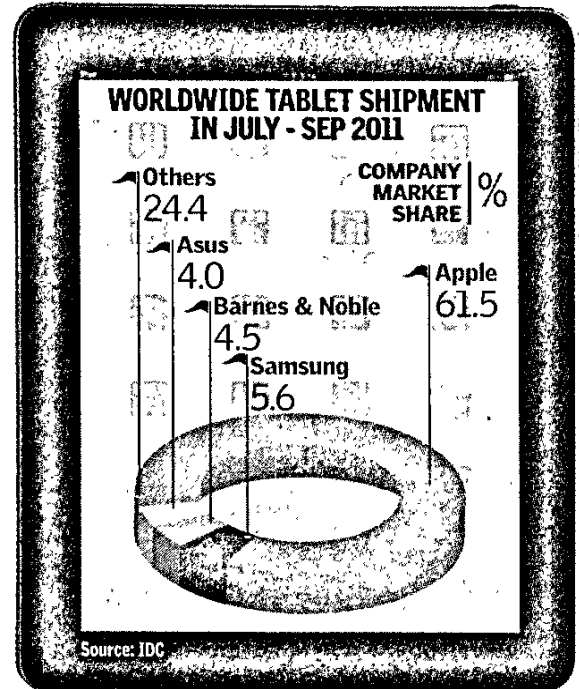
But many in India may only be able to afford one or the other in any given year, and

this could hurt the refresh cycle - laptop users who want to upgrade to a higher-end laptop may decide to stick to the current laptop and instead buy a tablet.

Conceding the possibility of this, Mr S. Ramaprasad, Country Business Manager-MNC Accounts, Intel South Asia, said, "We are fighting for the share of wallet of the customer. But there are first time buyers and repeat buyers and the tablet is a secondary device for a repeat buyer. In India, around 100 million households can afford a PC, but only 20 million have them." Regarding the rest, he said that even if you could penetrate a few, it would be a huge add-on.

LOW PC PENETRATION

The low PC penetration may be the reason why tablets may lose to notebooks - the 20



million who have a PC may look at a tablet, but not the 80 million who don't because they will first want to buy a PC.

Mr Vishal Tripathi, Principal Research Analyst, Gartner, said, "In a country where PC penetration is lower than Vietnam, you can't expect people to buy both the devices."

Refuting the theory that the growth of tablets would hurt the refresh cycle for laptops, he said, "If you have heavy payloads, you can't do

them on a tablet. People who can afford an Ultrabook will replace notebooks with Ultrabooks. An Ultrabook can replace a notebook or a tablet, but a tablet cannot replace an Ultrabook or a notebook."

People who believe in tablets have a lot of faith in them. Mr Sudhir Hasija, Chairman, Karbonn Mobiles, which is launching a tablet in a couple of months, said, "Tablet is definitely the future. Growth will be fast in the Indian market."

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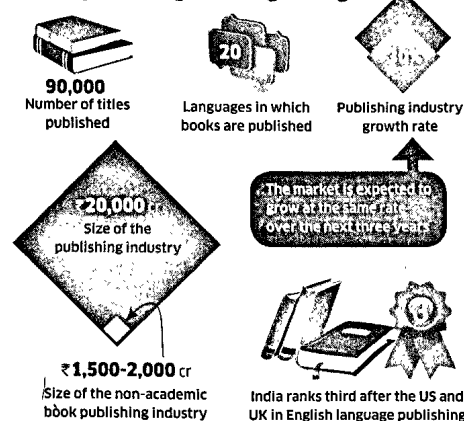
Local E-Books Breaking Cover

More Indian titles will be in the digital format as publishers hope to ride on higher growth rates, lower cost and device explosion

E-Book Excitement

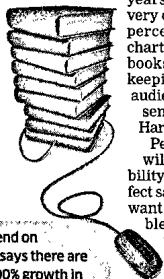
Local publishing majors are lining up their e-book launches riding piggyback on high growth rates & rising tablet & smartphone sales

India's publishing mart is growing...



And an e-book drive may be new trigger...

- **Top Indian** publishing houses like Penguin India, HarperCollins and Amar Chitra Katha are gearing up to release e-books. Penguin is likely to release close to 150 e-books in January
- **Releasing a book** on an e-reader costs less than printing the same. It is assumed. For a customer, e-books will cost 10-20% less than actual books
- **Technology-linked** innovations in India's publishing industry have to be seen in the light of success stories from the US, Europe and Japan
- **In the US**, for one, e-books have been extremely successful. On December 15, 2011, Amazon said it had sold 1 million units of Kindle e-book reader in the previous three weeks.



The success of e-books in India would critically depend on tablet and smartphone sales. Hardware lobby MAIT says there are 300,000 tablet users in India today with expected 100% growth in 2012. Smartphones comprise 8% of the mobile market today

A future driver could be India's reasonably priced tablets sold in great demand in developing countries

INDU NANDAKUMAR & SRIVIDYA IYER

BANGALORE | MUMBAI

A small team at Penguin India's New Delhi office is agog with excitement as the publishing powerhouse - with 250 titles every year - waits for its E-moment - launch of the first set of 150 e-books slated for this month. Not just Penguin, other Indian book publishers are taking the risk to launch e-books to try out the potential of this virgin market at a local level. Top publishing houses like HarperCollins and Amar Chitra Katha are all expected to release their first set of e-books within the next six months.

"We are aggressively converting books into e-books. At this point in time, there is not a big market for e-books here but when the device explosion happens, we'll be there," says Ananth Padmanabhan, vice-president for sales at Penguin India.

HarperCollins India, the Indian subsidiary of American publishing major HarperCollins, will launch its first e-book this year. Right now, it is now preparing the ground for entering the e-book market: developing the technology conversions, working out the legalities and creating the right distribution and sales strategy.

"Online sellers entered a few years back and has since then very quickly grabbed a growing percentage share in the sales charts...now the movement to e-books is a natural progression keeping in view a certain set of audience," says Lipika Bhushan, senior marketing manager at HarperCollins India.

Penguin says entry of e-books will contribute to wider availability of content, but wouldn't affect sales of standard books. "We want the readers to be comfortable with digital content and want it to be available in every possible format." Both physical and e-book markets will flourish. One will not cannibalise the other," Padmanabhan said.

HarperCollins' Bhushan also says e-books would not take over

the physical book bit since there would still be those who would prefer the touch, feel and smell. "It might move towards print-on-demand kind of set-up. But yes, e-books are a serious consideration for additional revenue generation and we have already started to work at it."

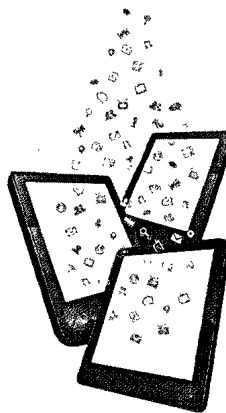
Home-grown publishers such as Amar Chitra Katha - the creators of Jataka and Birbal tales - are also rolling the dice as they prepare to foray into the e-book market. The company is currently creating e-books for the Apple platform, but soon plans to tie-up with other vendors. Penguin, India's largest book publisher by revenue, will launch its e-books across platforms like Kobo, Nook, Kindle and iPad.

There are three key drivers which could transform this initial excitement into a successful foray. First, the growth of tablets and smartphones in India, devices that would host the e-reader. The second is the growth of the publishing industry in India - e-books can piggyback the success of the print versions. And third, but not the least, is the far lower cost of an e-book.

India's publishing industry is growing at a compounded rate of 30% annually and it is expected to grow at the same pace over the next three years, says industry body Ficci. It ranks behind the US and the UK in English-language publishing when measured in number of titles.

But the success of e-books will hinge on higher sales of tablets and smartphones. According to hardware lobby Manufacturer's Association of IT Industry, there are 300,000 tablet users in India today and it forecasts a 100% growth for the current year. Smartphones sales have been rising 8% year-on-year right now.

Sayoni Basu, publisher at ACK Media - which brings out the Amar Chitra Katha titles - says: "The e-book market in India is in the nascent stages. But once the cost of devices reduce, it will be a big market. Also, the mobile market in India is huge, and publishers look for ways to tap that." But



The movement to e-books is a natural progression keeping in view a certain set of audience

LIPIKA BHUSHAN
Senior Marketing Manager,
HarperCollins

HarperCollins feels the devices will probably have to be remodeled and designed keeping the Indian demographics in mind.

Releasing a book on an e-reader is far more cost-effective than printing copies of the same, it is generally assumed. For a buyer, e-book prices can be 10% to 20% lower than that of a hard-bound volume. But from a publisher's perspective, certain parts of the digital value chain can be expensive and hence the cost reduction may not be as sharp, an ET poll of the top publishing houses and research estimates point out.

For instance, conversion of text into the e-book format, digital warehousing which includes storage and maintenance of data and hiring people with the right technical know-how can be expensive, a senior official from a top publishing houses said. "In fact, even the sales and mar-

keting of e-books is going to be different from the way we market physical books as more focus will be on positioning. E-readers are innovative and user-friendly devices. They are the need of the hour," he added. Basu of ACK Media says digitisation of content has become extremely important and her firm is already innovating in this space.

The innovations in India's non-academic publishing industry, estimated at anywhere between Rs 1,500 crore and Rs 2,000 crore in 2011, have to be seen in the light of successes in the US and Japan. In the US, e-books have been so successful that on December 15, 2011, Amazon announced that it had sold one million units of its Kindle e-book reader in the previous three weeks. Exactly as in a print title's sales success in US and the UK would have some rubble effect here.

With the rising popularity of e-readers in the West, an increasing number of authors have now turned self-publishers, giving them a higher share of the profits. 27-year-old Amanda Hocking, an American writer, has sold more than 150,000 copies of her book Switched on Amazon in less than six months after release. Publishers suggest that self-publishing is slowly catching up locally too.

Sceptics are there too. Jatim Varma, founder of Delhi-based Pop Culture Publishing says the present market is too small and undependable for e-books. "It is an investment for the future and it's going to take some time. But I am not sure how the market would respond." Pop Culture Publishing brings out Random Comic magazine.

An e-book is something Alok Kejriwal, 43-year-old co-founder Games2win, an online gaming platform, swears by. But he doesn't think the digital variant is going to overtake physical books. "I think conceptually we are book reading country. There is a charm around them," he said. "I think for the big publishers, releasing an e-book is about smartening their proposition."

DU, Jamia V-Cs oppose points for promotions

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW
DELHI

The high-power UGC committee formulated to rework the point based system for promotion of teachers is facing opposition. The system has faced stiff resistance from the teaching fraternity. However, in the last UGC meeting, Vice-Chancellors of Delhi University and Jamia Millia Islamia Prof. Dinesh Singh and Prof. Najeeb Jung, respectively, rejected the point based system for promotion and have proposed that the UGC should come up with a different mechanism.

The point system of promotion was introduced by the UGC in June 2010. To assess the competency of the teachers, the point system of promotion proposed assessment of teachers on three categories-teaching, extra and co curricular activities and research and publication. In the system the teachers are to be promoted not just on the basis of their teaching skills, but also on their participation in the extra curricular activities and for their research work. The system faced criticism from the teaching community, who felt that the job of a teacher is to teach in the first place and then do a research and write papers.

A high power committee under the chairmanship of Professor M Anandkishnan, Chairman IIT, Kanpur was constituted in December last year to rework on the promotion system for the teachers. The committee is to submit its report in two months time.

The committee comprises of nine members including Dinesh Singh and Najeeb Jung. In the committee meeting held earlier this month, the two Vice-Chancellors rejected the point based system of assessment of teachers. Sources in the UGC confirmed that both the Vice-Chancellors criticised and rejected the point based sys-

THE COMMITTEE PLANS TO CREATE A UNIFORM GUIDELINE FOR PROMOTION AND SELECTION FOR ALL THE UNIVERSITIES

tem and the committee has made up its mind to do away with the system.

The committee has now decided to come up with a new system for promotion of the teachers. In the month of November last year, the two vice chancellors had met the UGC Chairman and the HRD minister requesting to do away with the point system after which this committee has been formed.

The Federation of Central Universities' Teachers' Associations (FEDCUTA) has been protesting against the point system since the time it has been announced by the UGC. The Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) has also refused to adopt the system in the university. "We have held several protests against the point system for assessment and promotion of the teachers. Our primary job as teachers is to teach. Besides adequate facilities for research is not available at all places. We have been demanding for the self appraisal system," said former FEDCUTA and former DUTA president Aditya N Misra.

In the next meeting of the committee on Thursday, a new promotion mechanism is likely to be discussed and debated. The committee is also likely to work on a uniform guideline for selection and promotion process of the college and the university teachers. "While in some college it is the college trust that takes decision on appointment, in others it is the governing body of the college," said a member.

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Wiki blacks out 'free knowledge' for a day

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: Users of popular, everyday websites such as Google, Wikipedia, and Craig's List ran into a virtual wall on Wednesday after these influential online titans enforced a 24-hour blackout on their home pages to protest against internet regulations

proposed by the US Congress.

Wikipedia blacked out access to its widely-used, user-generated, free-source content. Inserting a search term took users briefly to the relevant page before it was replaced by a protest page with the headline "Imagine a world without free knowledge."

► 'Free speech curbs', P 20

"For over a decade, we have spent millions of hours building the largest encyclopedia in human history. Right now, the US Congress is considering legislation that could fatally damage the free and open internet. For 24 hours, to raise awareness, we are blacking out Wikipedia," it explained.

(Smart net jocks though figured out escape routes to circumvent the blackout; for instance, hitting the escape key just as a Wikipedia page was loading could get the user to the requested site.)

Google had a black patch across its familiar logo, saying, "Tell Congress: Please Don't Censor the Web".

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Katju backs legal action on social networking sites

Bhopal: Press Council of India (PCI) chairman Justice Markandey Katju has said that social networking sites should be ready to face legal action on failure to remove objectionable content. "I have seen the content on these sites and found them to be highly objectionable which may disrupt social harmony. If they fail to check these contents, then they should be ready to face legal action," Katju said.

Katju said he totally supports the view of telecom minister Kapil Sibal on regulating and putting a check on content of these social sites. Katju also did not agree with the argument that it is not possible to remove objectionable content from being uploaded in huge quantity daily. ■

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US bills will curb free speech: Online biggies

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: Protesting against internet regulations proposed by the US Congress, Google, Wikipedia and Craig's List on Wednesday enforced a 24-hour blackout on their home pages.

Clicking on the redacted logo took one to a petition beneath the slogan, "End piracy, not liberty", in which Google outlined its opposition to the proposed legislation.

"Two bills before Congress, known as the Protect IP Act (PIPA) in the Senate and the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) in the House, would censor the Web and impose harmful regulations on American business," Google explained. "There's no need to make American social networks, blogs and search engines censor the Internet or undermine the existing laws that have enabled the Web to thrive, creating millions of US jobs."

The online behemoths got their message across, although some giants such as Facebook and Twitter did not join the blackout despite their opposition to the proposed legislation. They said they did not want to affect everyday user experience.

Most companies with big online presence say the proposed Congressional legislation aimed at curbing online piracy, which has the support of numerous Hollywood entertainment companies, constitutes regulatory overreach that will kill innovation and censor free speech. Under the proposed law, the justice department and copyright holders would be empowered to demand that search engines delete links to sites deemed to be "dedicated" to copyright infringe-



Imagine a World Where...
WIKIPEDIA
DARK PROTEST
THEY TOO GO BLANK

▶ Sites that also went dark on Wednesday – Reddit, community of news curators; XDA-Developers, forum for smartphone users; Wired and ArsTechnica, prominent tech news sites; Oatmeal, cartoon site; and many small blogs and sites

▶ Bills give US govt powers to act against websites, including foreign ones, hosting content it believes infringes copyright

▶ Action includes blocking the website, asking advertisement providers and payment services to stop doing business with it and preventing search engines from linking to the website. Effectively, US govt will have power to blank out a site anywhere in the world

▶ Bills seen to be backing media corporations – movie houses, record companies – and other IP holders

▶ Pitted against are Internet intermediaries such as Google and Yahoo!, & services that host content

Websites led by Wikipedia go dark in protest against two anti-piracy bills to be discussed in US Congress next week – **Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA)** and **Protect IP Act (PIPA)**

WHAT'S IN STORE

- ▶ Bills give US govt powers to act against websites, including foreign ones, hosting content it believes infringes copyright
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CREATORS VS HOSTS?

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Wikipedia editors question blackout

Can the world live without Wikipedia for a day? The shutdown of one of the internet's most-visited sites is not sitting well with some of its volunteer editors, who say the protest of anti-piracy law could threaten the credibility of their work. AP

ment. Ad networks and payment processors would be prohibited from doing business with the sites.

Protesting companies say the legislation would impose an unreasonable burden on websites to police user-generated content. Lawmakers piloting the bills scoffed at the protests. "This publicity stunt does a disservice to its users by promoting fear instead of facts," said Lamar Smith, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee and a sponsor of SOPA. "Perhaps during the blackout, In-

ternet users can look elsewhere for an accurate definition of online piracy."

Other lawmakers took a more reasoned stance. "Perhaps if these companies would participate constructively, they could point to what in the actual legislation they contend threatens their websites," said Senator Patrick Leahy.

"That is what debate on legislation is intended to do, to fine-tune the bill to confront the problem of stealing while protecting against unintended consequences."

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Time up for leap second? Scientists to decide today

Geneva: Time could soon be up for the leap second — the extra moment added to universal time to keep it in sync with the earth's movement — as experts consider abolishing it later this week.

Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) is based on about 400 atomic clocks at laboratories around the world, occasionally corrected with a leap second to align it with the earth's varying rotation. The world's computer systems need to be adjusted accordingly, leaving them open to error, and many countries including the US and France want to end the 40-year-old practice.

After years of debate, delegates with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) will decide on Thursday whether to abolish it. "It's impossible to predict when we will need the leap second to be inserted," Vincent Meens, chairman of the ITU's study group. "The reason for this is due to the rotation of the earth and events like earthquakes can slow the earth. All computer systems need to be adjusted with this leap second, and it's a problem because it needs to be done manually. AFP

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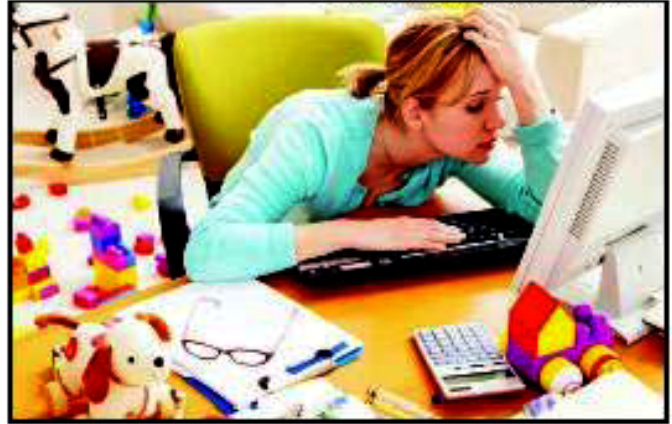
Facebook can make us sad too

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London: In today's world, logging on to social networking websites may be the most popular way to know about each others' lives, but it can also make you sad, say researchers. A new study, led by sociologists Hui-Tzu Grace Chou and Nicholas Edge, at Utah Valley University has found the more hours people spend on social networking sites, like Facebook, the stronger is their belief that others are happier.

The researchers claim that the carefully chosen pictures of cheerful faces which Facebook users tend to upload on their pages actually portray a debilitating message to others. "Looking at happy pictures of others on Facebook gives people an impression that others are 'always' happy and having good lives. While Facebook users will know that their real friends have ups and downs in their lives, all they have to go on with their fake Facebook 'friends' is a smiling picture," 'Daily Mail' quoted Chou as saying.

For their study, the researchers interviewed 425 undergraduate students about their happiness and that of their friends. The subjects were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with statements such as "Life is fair" and "Many of my friends have a better life than me". The students then described their Face-



VIRTUAL DEPRESSION

book activity including their number of "friends". Some 95% used the website and on average they had been there for two-and-a-half years, and spent nearly five hours a week on it. The findings, published in 'Cyberpsychology, Behaviour and Social Networking' journal, revealed that "the more hours people spent on Facebook, the stronger was their agreement that others were happier". **PTI**