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## Bangalore firm launches low-cost PCs

DH News Service New Delhi:

***The PCs have built-in local language support and everyday applications.***

On the eve of the Technology Day, a Bangalore-based company with the active government support has come out with three low-cost computers, which the firm hopes to put up for sale at prices ranging between Rs 10,000 and Rs 15,000.

"The target price for Mobilis and SofComp products will range between Rs 10,000-15,000 depending on the volume of production. We can achieve such price only when we produce one million units," said Vinay Deshpande, CEO of Encore Software.

Incidentally, Encore is the same company that created the path-breaking Simputer a few years ago. Developed with funding support from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research's (CSIR) New Millennium Indian Technology Leadership Initiative, the three computers were formally launched here on Tuesday by Science Minister Kapil Sibal in the presence of CSIR Director-General Dr R A Mashelkar. Designed for small towns and villages where electricity is at a premium, the computers run on battery for six hours continuously and don't have a hard disk, thereby reducing cost and maintenance complications.

The data can be stored only on flash memory. While Mobilis – a mobile desktop in a specially designed casing with a wrap-up plastic keyboard – has the looks and feel of a tablet PC, Encore's second product Mobilis TFT has a brighter LCD screen. This is a wireless version of Mobilis with built-in GPS receiver and GPRS wireless modem options. The third product, Sofcomp, is a compact central processing unit.

The company plans to offer SofComp along with a normal monitor, keyboard and mouse at a price close to Rs 10,000. "With these products we have proved that team India can solve problems which are essential to India," Mr Sibal said.

All products have built in local language support and a choice of everyday applications such as word processing, spreadsheet, personal information manager, e-mail and web browser. Moreover, they support text-to-speech applications and Mobilis also has an e-book reader. "Since the products are based on open source, there is no software cost," Mr Deshpande said. Encore has received industry support. ITC has promised to use the computers in its 5500 e-chaupal kiosks.

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