

NATION**EDUCATION**

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Ravindranath/Gulf News

Shaikh Nahyan greets Negroponte at the Higher Colleges of Technology, Abu Dhabi Men's College yesterday.

College gets look at \$100 children's laptop computer

By Mohammad Shamseddine, Staff Reporter

Abu Dhabi: The Abu Dhabi Men's College yesterday caught a glimpse of a \$100 (Dh368) laptop computer.

Dr Nicholas Negroponte, founder and director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Media Laboratory, gave a lecture on the \$100 laptop at the Abu Dhabi Men's College. Shaikh Nahyan Bin Mub-arak Al Nahyan, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, was present.

The cheap children's laptop, christened 2B1, is to be provided to every poor child living in remote environments.

According to Dr Negroponte, the laptop is a "unique harmony of form and function; a flexible, ultra low-cost, power-efficient, responsive and durable machine with which emerging nations can leapfrog decades of development, immediately transforming the content and quality of their children's learning."

The \$100 laptop is being developed by One Laptop Per Child (OLPC); a Delaware-based, non-profit organisation

created by faculty members from the MIT Media Lab.

Dr Negroponte said the cost of the laptop was lowered dramatically by lowering the cost of the display, in addition to marketing them in very large numbers directly to ministries of education, which can distribute them like textbooks.

The laptop also does not need electricity; it uses a crank which can be wound up manually.

"Normal laptops use average of 25-45 watts, our laptop uses two Watts and it's built in a way that for a minute of cranking you get 10 minutes of laptop," he said.

Dr Negroponte added that preliminary schedule is to have units ready for shipment by the end of 2006 or early 2007.

"Manufacturing will begin when 5 to 10 million machines have been ordered and paid for in advance," he said.

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