

AP village to test green e-slate

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Nov. 10: Students in Mohd Hussainpalli village, located about 112 km southwest of Hyderabad, have been selected to test a new low-cost electronic notepad being built around a new class of green, power-stingy microchips that use a fraction of the electricity of today's computer chips.

Dubbed as "I-Slate", the device has been developed in partnership of Singapore's Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Houston's Rice University and Villages for Development and Learning Foundation (ViDAL), an Indian NGO.

I-Slate is targeted at millions of Indian school children who do not have access to electricity. "President Obama's visit to India this week highlights Indian economic achievements, but India's full economic potential will only be realised with sustainable, low-cost technologies that benefit all segments of the population," said Mr Krishna Palem, a Rice University professor who is leading the effort to create a low-cost, electronic version of the hand-held slates that millions of Indian children use.

Mr Palem's brainchild is in development at the Institute of Sustainable and Applied Infodynamics (ISAID) at NTU. The first prototypes of the I-slate, which were built at NTU this summer by a team that included three Rice undergraduates, are set to undergo their second round of tests in India later this month, the University said in a statement.

The I-slate began to take shape over the summer, and early prototypes were introduced in tests at a school near Hyderabad in early August.

"Children in Indian village schools are just like their peers anywhere in the world: eager to learn, tech savvy and willing to try new pedagogical tools that engage their creative minds," the ViDAL president, Ms Rajeswari Pingali, said.

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