



Participants listen to a discussion on 'Net neutrality and Free Basics' at SDMIMD on Monday

## Tech experts discuss net neutrality

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Mysuru:** Internet is not something which can be owned by someone. As such, the facility should be free, with no discrimination whatsoever, according to panelists who discussed on 'Net neutrality vs Free Basics' on Monday.

Mysore University Information and Library Science Alumni Network (MILAN) and Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheswara Institute for Management Development (SDMIMD) had organized the discussion at SDMIMD auditorium.

Informatics managing chairman N V Sathyanarayana, International School of Information Management (ISiM) executive director Shalini R Urs, NIE Center for

Training in Advanced Technologies director Sudhir Sosale and Starsoft India Founder Kalpesh Mehta, who were the panelists, felt that access to internet should be free. "But there should be high order social and ethical statutory regulatory body. It should be selectively free, and not absolutely free," they felt.

They argued that people — whether associated with IT business or not — are the users of internet. "Hence, topics like net neutrality and Free Basics are being discussed. A survey reveals that India is still a land where internet has low penetration in comparison with other countries. India offers a very huge market for internet service providers," they added.

A controversy over Airtel Zero rating

platform is gaining attention over net neutrality among the public. Net neutrality activists protest over differential pricing regime for accessing websites.

Now, Free Basics from Facebook has come in a new avatar: Trai, which has now entered the battlefield, says Free basics has dangerous ramifications for policy-making in India. Under the current circumstances, internet users are a confused species about all this, they opined.

They said that the telecom regulator should protect the rights of netizens in using internet and realize the true agenda behind Free Basics. "Internet is a public service, but Facebook is trying to be a controlling authority. In the act, it is misleading the public," they added.