

# New iPads aim to boost Apple in premium tablet market

AFP, San Francisco

With the global tablet computer market showing signs of cooling, Apple's expected unveiling of its new iPads Thursday looks to shore up its position at the high end.

The iPad event in a small auditorium on Apple's campus in the Silicon Valley city of Cupertino comes with Google reportedly set to introduce a new Nexus tablet powered by Android software and manufactured by Taiwan's HTC.

Google-backed Android software has the biggest share of the global tablet market due to the ubiquity of low-priced devices they power, according to Gartner principal analyst Mikako Kitagawa.

Apple tablets driven by the company's iOS software have the second largest market share, with a small portion going to devices running on Microsoft's mobile Windows operating system.

"Apple has a limited addressable market, because Apple products, in general, are not for everybody," Kitagawa said of the company sticking with its formula of premium products at top-end prices.

"I think Apple is going to keep on with the premium segment; I don't believe they are going to have a cheap iPad."

The overall tablet market is moving toward low-cost devices, meaning that hardware makers

unwilling to let go of premium pricing will tend to lose share, according to International Data Corporation (IDC) analyst Jitesh Ubrani.

Apple's current line of iPads starts at around \$400 for the "mini" tablet and \$500 for the larger iPad Air in the US market, nearly twice the cost of many Android devices.

Analysts predicted the Apple event on Thursday to be low-key, showcasing iPads enhanced with features such as fingerprint reading and the Apple Pay mobile wallet which are also built into top-of-the-line iPhones.

Freshening the iPad line is not expected to dramatically boost sales in a tablet market that has been cooling.

"A substantial redesign of the iPad is required to help give much needed momentum to iPad sales and the tablet market as a whole," Ubrani said.

Many tablet makers mistakenly assumed that people would replace the devices as often as they bought new smartphones, according to Gartner analyst Van Baker.

It turns out people are holding onto tablets much longer, because they typically supplement other screens and telecom companies don't subsidize prices the way they do with smartphones.

"As long as my iPad 3 does what I want it to do, there is little incentive to get a new one," said Baker.

While the tablet boom appears to have quieted in developed economies where there is more cash to spend on premium products, opportunity is seen in the business world where the devices can make some jobs more efficient.

"One way for Apple to secure their market is by getting more business users," Kitagawa said.

"It is not the most productive device for many types of work, but some jobs that involve moving around are perfect like health care or sales or insurance inspectors."

In contrast, jobs that require sitting in an office tending to data, documents or spreadsheets are better suited for now to computers with keyboards, large monitors, and mouse controllers.

System administrators at major businesses long reliant on Microsoft software understandably lean toward Windows tablets, but are often pressured to accommodate personal mobile devices such as iPads that workers want to use on the job.

Microsoft Surface tablets have been geared for business needs and aimed squarely at workplaces.

Tablets won't eclipse personal computers as fast as previously thought, according to market watchers.

"The tablet market is going through a bit of a lag as buyers figure out what it is good for; what they want, and how much they want to spend," said Forrester analyst Frank Gillett.

"Some people figure they can't replace a laptop with a tablet, so are essentially deciding whether to commit to a third gadget in their lives."

IDC earlier this year cut its forecast for shipments of tablets and "two-in-one" devices combining tablet and laptop features to 233.1 million, saying growth would be about half of what was originally predicted.

While shipments in mature markets such as North America and Western Europe were forecast to remain flat, those in emerging regions were expected to climb overall by 12 percent.

Meanwhile, the outlook for personal computer (PC) shipments was less dreary than originally envisioned, due in part to businesses replacing machines powered by outdated Windows XP software.

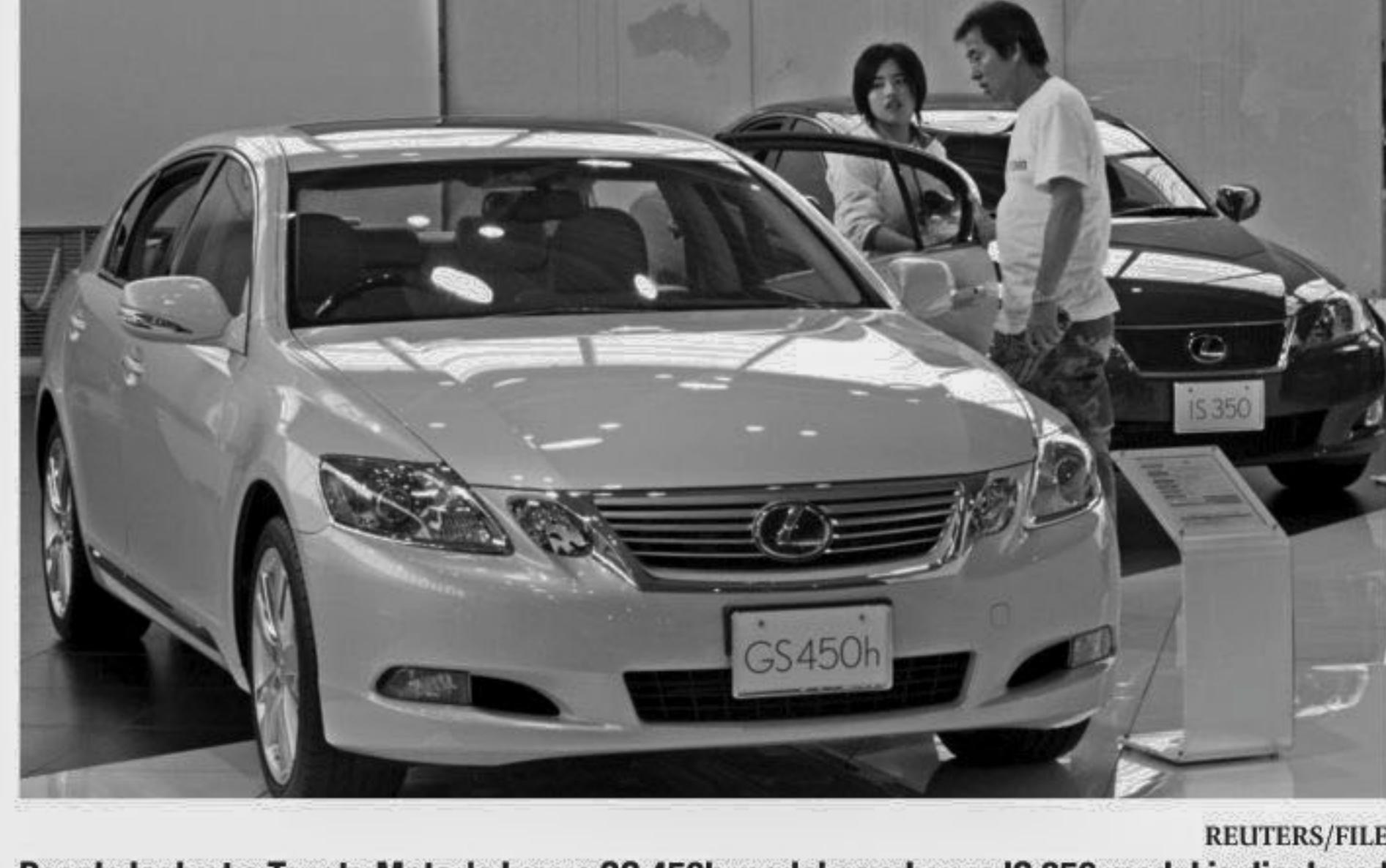
"The PC (personal computer) is not dead," Kitagawa said.

"Tablets and PCs are going to live together."



REUTERS/FILE

Boxes of iPad Air tablets are seen at the Apple store in San Francisco, California.



REUTERS/FILE

People look at a Toyota Motor's Lexus GS 450h model as a Lexus IS 350 model is displayed beside it at a showroom in Tokyo. Toyota yesterday said it would recall 1.67 million vehicles globally over brake problems and other glitches that pose a fire risk, the latest in a string of problems for the world's biggest automaker. The Japanese giant pointed to three problems in several models, including its luxury Lexus brand and upmarket Crown Majesta.

## IndiGo: lone profit-maker among India's big airlines

AFP, New Delhi

IndiGo, India's biggest carrier, which announced Wednesday a draft deal to buy 250 Airbus aircraft, has consistently wracked up profits as rivals become mired in red ink from cut-throat fare wars.

No-frills IndiGo has posted half-a-dozen years of straight profits -- even with high aviation fuel taxes, ramshackle airport infrastructure and vicious fare fights -- thanks to the airline's zealous cost-consciousness, analysts say.

Billionaire airline co-founder Rahul Bhatia is legendarily tight-fisted, telling Forbes magazine in 2010 that his credo is "thinking before spending a single dollar" and asking himself, "Do I need to spend it? Can I get away without it?"

The New Delhi-based carrier, co-founded by Bhatia, who is group managing director, and former US Airways chief executive Rakesh Gangwal in 2006, is unlisted.

But analysts say IndiGo, which depends a lot on word-of-mouth recommendations rather than advertising, could stage a debut share offer in mid-2015.

IndiGo's air-hostesses, who wear smart uniforms and perky blue hats, give the airline a premium feel while its nearly 100 percent on-time performance has wooed customers, analysts say, giving it a 33 percent market share.

The purchase of the 250 medium-range, single-aisle Airbus A320neo aircraft -- the biggest single airplane purchase in a deal worth \$25 billion -- is aimed at serving one of the world's fastest-expanding aviation markets.

For decades, Indians depended on the bone-jolting railway. But tens of millions now travel by plane thanks to cheap fares, sometimes as low as rail tickets, and an expanding middle-class's paycheques.

India's airline sector has massive potential, analysts say, with air travel penetration just 0.04 air trips per capita a year, far behind developed countries like the US with over two air trips per capita a year, according to government figures.

Wednesday's memorandum-of-agreement is also part of Indigo's drive to keep its fleet young to minimise maintenance and fuel costs.

## China crab industry feels pinch from graft crackdown

AFP, Shanghai

China's gourmet crab industry has become the latest victim of Communist authorities' two-year corruption crackdown after high-end spirits and luxury cars, as government officials shun the pricey crustacean.

The arrival of freshwater "hairy crab" -- a delicacy named for the bristles on its claws -- on the market every autumn has long been eagerly awaited.

But now its golden roe has lost some lustre as anti-graft and austerity campaigns launched by China's leader Xi Jinping after he came to power in late 2012 show little sign of abating.

China is celebrated as the world's largest luxury market, but its corruption hunt is having unintended consequences across multiple industries, slowing consumption.

Management consultancy Bain & Company predicted Tuesday that luxury spending in China will shrink two percent this year due to "greater controls" and "changing consumption patterns".

Banquet fare such as crabs and expensive liquor are off the menu while the gifting of luxury goods -- typically used for bribes or to launder illicit funds -- has plunged.

"Consumption (of crabs) by government officials has dropped to almost zero," said Yang Weilong, vice chairman of a China Fisheries Association branch.

In some parts of China, hairy crab retail prices have plunged as much as 40 percent, Yang said, and average prices are now around 120 yuan (\$20) for a 500-gram (18-ounce) crustacean.

Demand from officials had fuelled a decade of price rises, but these days sellers can only rely on private customers.

The small green crabs are raised across eastern China, although purists say the best come from the murky waters of a shallow lake near Shanghai called Yangcheng.

"It is important for major crab sellers to adjust their prices to fit general consumers, otherwise they will suffer a great collapse just like the spirit maker Moutai," Yang said.

Kweichow Moutai Co., which dominates the top-end liquor market in China, said in August: "Supply exceeds demand in the spirit sector. The whole industry continues to undergo a deep adjustment in a complex environment."

Its first-half net profit fell slightly to 7.2 billion yuan this year, after posting growth of 13.74 percent for all of 2013.

Luxury makers are trying to adapt, targeting private-sector wealthy individuals.

France's Hermes -- known for its handbags and scarves -- recently opened a flagship "maison" store in China's commercial capital Shanghai, only its fifth such establishment in the world.

The four-storey shop offers a limited edition crocodile handbag for \$80,000 and clerks hint that even the elusive Birkin bag might be available to VIP customers.

But the firm's global watch sales fell seven percent year-on-year in the first half, largely due to China, its top timepiece market.

It says other sectors are holding up.

"Maybe there is less gifting for others, but there are a lot of people buying for themselves," said CEO Axel Dumas.

Nonetheless executives say a lack of clarity on when the corruption campaign will be reined in is casting uncertainty over the market.

Authorities have snared hundreds of officials in the anti-corruption drive, including high-level "tigers" such as former internal security chief Zhou Yongkang and Liu Tienan, once deputy director of the government's top economic planning agency.

Many companies hope the fallout from the campaigns is only temporary, but in any case China is too big and important to ignore.

More than 114,000 official cars that were of higher specifications than regulations stipulate have been confiscated, the People's Daily, the official mouthpiece of the Communist Party, reported last week.

The country is already the world's largest auto market and its luxury car segment will overtake the United States as the biggest as early as 2016, management consultancy McKinsey has forecast.

## Money now a tweet away in France

AFP, Paris

Money is now only a tweet away for French people, after a bank in the country on Tuesday launched a novel way to transfer money on the social networking platform.

Twitter users can link their accounts to the BPCE banking group's money-sharing application S-Money and fire off a tweet tagging the person they want to receive the money with the amount and hashtag #envoyer (send).

They are then directed to the application, available on Apple and Android systems, where they finalise the payment.

"We told ourselves that new features were bound to develop in the ecosystem of social networks, so we thought about using Twitter to make payments," said Nicolas Chatillon, the director of S-Money.

The innovation currently allows Twitter users to make payments either to a specific person, or to the Action Against Hunger charity.

Several other organisations are lined up to join the service.

## বঙ্গবন্ধু দারিদ্র্য বিমোচন ও পল্লী উন্নয়ন একাডেমী (বাপার্ড)

"বঙ্গবন্ধু দারিদ্র্য বিমোচন প্রশিক্ষণ কর্মসূচি" (বৰ্তমানে বাপার্ড), কোটালিপাড়া, গোপালগঞ্জ

এর সম্প্রসারণ, সম্পর্ক ও আনুশুলিয়ান (সংশোধিত) প্রকল্প

"পল্লী ভূমি"

৫, কাওরান বাজার বা/এ, ঢাকা-১২১৫

## নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বঙ্গবন্ধু দারিদ্র্য বিমোচন ও পল্লী উন্নয়ন একাডেমী (বাপার্ড) কর্তৃক বাস্তুবানানী "বঙ্গবন্ধু দারিদ্র্য বিমোচন প্রশিক্ষণ কর্মসূচি" (বৰ্তমানে বাপার্ড), কোটালিপাড়া, গোপালগঞ্জ স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং পর্যবেক্ষণ কর্মসূচি মিলিপেজের জন্য পার্শ্ব পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন করা যাচ্ছে। অঞ্চলীয় প্রার্থীদের নিয়োগ শৰ্তব্য প্রযোজন করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন কর্মসূচি মিলিপেজের জন্য পার্শ্ব পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন কর্মসূচি মিলিপেজের জন্য পার্শ্ব পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন কর্মসূচি মিলিপেজের জন্য পার্শ্ব পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন কর্মসূচি মিলিপেজের জন্য পার্শ্ব পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন কর্মসূচি মিলিপেজের জন্য পার্শ্ব পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন কর্মসূচি মিলিপেজের জন্য পার্শ্ব পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন কর্মসূচি মিলিপেজের জন্য পার্শ্ব পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন কর্মসূচি মিলিপেজের জন্য পার্শ্ব পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন কর্মসূচি মিলিপেজের জন্য পার্শ্ব পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন কর্মসূচি মিলিপেজের জন্য পার্শ্ব পরিষেবা সহ প্রযোজন করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে।

স্বতন্ত্র প্রযোজন এবং প