

No fanfare as cellphone turns 40

WASHINGTON, USA: The mobile phone turned 40 on Wednesday (3 April), with no fanfare to mark the occasion in a market which seemed focused on new smartphones like the iPhone and a possible Facebook-themed device.



The first mobile call was placed 3 April, 1973, by Motorola engineer Martin Cooper, head of a team working on mobile communication technologies.

Motorola records that Cooper made the call on Sixth Avenue in New York, before going into a press conference using a Motorola DynaTAC - a device that weighed a kilogram and had a battery life of 20 minutes.

Cooper told the technology website *The Verge* last year that he placed the first call to a rival, Joel Engler of Bell Labs.

"To this day, he resents what Motorola did in those days," Cooper said.

"They thought that we were a gnat, an obstacle. We believed in competition and lots of it. And we also believed in portable phones because people are mobile. And here they were trying to make a car telephone and hold a monopoly over it as well. That battle was the reason we built the phone."

Cooper and his team were honoured earlier this year with the Draper Prize by the National Academy of Engineering for their work.

In 40 years, the industry has come a long way. Research firm IDC predicts 900m smartphones will be sold in 2013 - along with roughly the same number of more basic feature phones.

And the phone has become a key advertising platform. eMarketer said US mobile advertising spending grew 178% last year to US\$4.11bn and spending is expected to rise a further 77.3% to US\$7.29bn this year.

Source: *AFP* via I-Net Bridge



DynaTAC 8000