

Original books losing value

Bookstores in the city are losing business due to sales of pirated books by roadside hawkers

ITIKA SHARMA

Sale of pirated books by hawkers at various places in the city is eating into the sales of registered bookstores. Mr. Mayi Gowda, Manager, Blossom Book house (Church Street) said, "We have lost over 30% of our business due these hawkers selling pirated books." There are various hawkers all around the city. Any book, from NY Times Bestsellers to books by regional language authors can be found at these stalls. One can pick any book for a minimal price of Rs 50 - Rs 100.

Mr. Gowda added that there have been incidents when customers question him for selling books at higher prices as they refuse to understand the difference between a pirated version and an original copy.

He cited an example of the season's bestseller, A thousand Splendid Suns, by Khaled Hosseini and said that while this book costs Rs. 420 at his store, the hawkers sell it for Rs 50. "Thus, customers prefer purchasing the book from the hawker as they can purchase eight books for the price of one", he remarked. While Blossom Book House has sold about 20 copies of the book in the past one

week, Ashok, a hawker on M G Road informed that he had sold over 80 copies of the same book in the same period.

Sikandar, a road side bookseller, at Brigade Road said that he sells

books are bestseller or more in demand, they just have fixed prices for all the books. He claimed that he could get any book that the customer wants within three days of placing the order with him.

about 50% loss due to the hawkers sitting right outside his shop. He said, "I don't think anything can be done against it, I have tried various ways to move these hawkers but nothing works. They are hand in glove with police also. It all works like a big mafia."

Mr. Sait remarked that only people who are fond of collecting books or maintain personal libraries purchase original editions, "but such people are few. People mostly buy books for time pass and throw them after reading."

Parul, a college student who regularly purchases books from roadside hawkers said, "I cannot afford the prices of first hand and original books. I am very fond of reading and buy about five books every month. I cannot afford to buy books costing Rs 500 or Rs 1000, the prices at which original copies are sold." She added, "Anyways I don't collect all these books. If I really like one, I go ahead and buy the original copy of it."

It is indeed not easy for shops like these to survive if strict action is not taken to kill book piracy. As Sait remarked, "the day these hawkers start selling magazines also, my business will be shut."



Hawkers selling pirated books on foot paths near MG Road are costing bookstores big bucks; consumers prefer these because the low prices are easy on their wallets.

by author

over 20 books in a day at the price of Rs. 70 - Rs. 100 each. He said that he has no clue about which

Mr. Yahya Sait, Owner of Magazines, a bookstore at Church Street said that his shop has faced

Business @ a glance

Oil prices firmer ahead of OPEC meet

Oil prices were firmer in Asia trade on Tuesday ahead of this week's OPEC meeting with no clear signals as to whether the cartel will raise output, dealers said.

In early morning trade, New York's main contract light sweet crude for January delivery gained 34 cents to USD 89.65 a barrel from USD 89.31 in late US trades on Monday.

Microsoft looks to curb piracy in Vista update

Microsoft Corp said on Monday it would disable the two primary methods used by software pirates to illegally copy Windows Vista software in the next major update of the operating system.

The world's largest software maker loses billions of dollars to software piracy every year. Microsoft said new features built into Vista are reducing piracy levels by half compared with its previous operating system, Windows XP.

Parsvnath plans Rs 1400 cr jewellery SEZ in Rajasthan

Real estate firm Parsvnath Developers Ltd said on Tuesday it had signed an agreement with the government of Rajasthan to develop a gems and jewellery special economic zone (SEZ) in that state. The SEZ, located near Jaipur, will involve an investment of Rs 1400 crore and development will be completed within 3 years, Parsvnath said in a statement.

Wooring M&S: Lodha in front

Audit firm Lodha & Co has emerged as a surprise contender to partner specialty retail giant Marks & Spencer (M&S) in India. Sources said the UK based M&S has shortlisted at least three potential suitors to be its minority partner, with Lodhas being one among them.

The \$16-billion M&S has been holding talks with players like Tatas-led Trent Ltd and Mahindras amongst others. M&S, working on a new India business strategy, wants to enter India directly through an equity joint venture in which it holds the maximum permissible 51% stake. UK's iconic retailer could unveil a decision on its India partner within a month, sources added.

Nokia says taking "good 50%" of India phone sales

Nokia is still responsible for selling more than half of all phones in India, the chairman of the world's largest cellphone maker said on Monday.

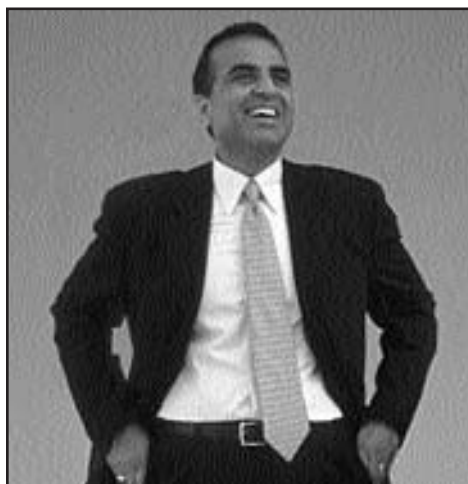
When asked how many phones it was selling in India, Nokia Chairman Jorma Ollila said during a panel discussion: "A good 50 percent of the 6 million per month."

Mittal proves his mettle

ITIKA SHARMA

The Forbes magazine has listed Sunil Mittal amongst the 20 self-made Asian Billionaires list. Mittal is an Indian Businessman, chairman and managing director of Bharti Group. The magazine has valued him at a net worth of \$12.5 billion.

Sunil Mittal has made various significant contributions to the Indian business market. Along with his two siblings, Mittal has built the Bharti Group, which has become the country's largest mobile phone operating company in just 10 years.



Sunil Mittal by Google Images

It is interesting to know how Mittal established his business. Mittal started his business in 1975 with a meager investment of Rs 20,000. His first business was to make crankshafts for local bicycle manufacturers. Mittal moved to Mumbai later and became an exclusive dealer for Suzuki Motor's portable electric-power generators. There has been no looking back for the man since then.

Mittal has innumerable achievements under his

belt. He established the first company that manufactured push button phones in India.

Sunil Mittal had a breakthrough deal with US - retail giant Wal-Mart to open a chain of retail outlets across India. This raised great agitation from the petty shop owners in India and went on to become serious political issue. Though the issue of Wal-Mart entering Indian markets seems to be a giant threat for the Indian retailers, it definitely is a step forward for the country in terms of globalization. About the question of petty shops losing their business to such multinational retail outlets, Mittal in an interview said, "On the contrary, jobs would go up not down"

Mittal is a Padma Bhushan awardee and has won various national and international acclamations. At the age of 50, Sunil Mittal has achieved great success and the Indian markets have great hope from him.

India gets into duty free business

RICHY D ALEXANDER

Exuberant duty-free shops market in India. India is ready for contesting the uncharted business arena of duty-free shopping. That is why the world's best duty-free shops Nuvans from United Kingdom and Alpha from Switzerland have opened their outlets in Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Cochin. It is very common for non-residential Indians (NRIs) to speak about the duty-free shops rather than the countries' infrastructure.

The advantages from a duty-free shops are numerous. For example, only products from reputed companies are sold, often under the same roof. The most important factor is obviously the lack of duty. The duty-free business is mainly aimed at people coming from foreign countries and people returning to foreign countries to buy items from duty-free shops.

The favourite item of sale from duty-frees is liquor. A majority of foreigners buy alcohol from duty-free shops because the price of foreign liquor is very low. The second item in demand is confectionary, followed closely by stationary items, and food items like nuts, grains, pista and soft drinks. Then comes cigarettes and after that toys.

It is true that duty-free business is a booming venture in India. The Future group's Kishore Biyani (Big Bazaar) is also interested in the duty-free business. He has a plan to do business with one of the world famous duty-free shops Alpha from the United Kingdom. Alpha has already opened outlets in the Bangalore International Airport.

Indian business tycoons have an eye on duty-free business, but have not quite revealed their interests. The business has run into a bit of rough weather in India recently because of a lack of infrastructure in the international airports. The newly constructed international airport (Bangalore International Airport) in Bangalore is an ideal destination for big duty-free businesses. In comparison, the airport in Chennai does not attract as much business.

India has a large number of foreigners who prefer to buy items from duty-free shops rather than to buy them abroad. Apart from that most Indians give much attention to branded and quality items.

Naturally this leads to tough competition between the shopping malls, outlets and duty-free shops. It will be interesting to see how the scenario plays out in the coming times and whether the duty free trend really takes off.