

IT giants focus on bioinformatics boom in India

IBM, Compaq and Sun Microsystems are among the leading IT companies looking for a foothold in the Indian bioinformatics arena. Sun Microsystems, which is involved in bioinformatics research in the West, now wants to collaborate with bioinformatics centres in India. According to the Director of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Sun Microsystems has approached DBT for setting up a centre of excellence in bioinformatics. The company has already submitted its preliminary proposal for the same and is now working on recommendations from DBT.

Sun Microsystems recently announced that it would grant hardware, including servers and a secure storage system, to the United States-based Open Bioinformatics Foundation which distributes, develops and supports standards-based open source tools for life science research and data integration. By promoting open standards tools, the Foundation helps facilitate data interchange within the bioinformatics community while assisting researchers save on time and cost. IBM and Compaq are expected to come up with concrete plans in the near future. In the global scenario, three separate announcements were made recently by IBM, Compaq and Sun about their grid computing programs that would suit life sciences computing systems, particularly genomic research. (The Financial Express, 27 November 2001)