

Web tech

Our very own literary website

Gronthamela.com

MIR NADIA NIVIN

ALTHOUGH the Internet abounds in scores of sites dedicated to various books published in various parts of the globe, not one exists that enlists this country's extensive and albeit excellent literary publications.

Now, there is good news for our book lovers given to local writers, publishers and all others associated one way or another with the country's publishing world. And this comes in the form of a website catering to just that Bangladesh's literary domain.

This innovative website named Gronthamela.com has been launched by Data Head Pvt. Ltd. on occasion of the Ekushey Book Fair 2003 and as a tribute to the great language movement of 1951.

From the country's perspective the website is the first of its kind as far as the size and the language of the database is concerned, for the mammoth database maintained is entirely in Bangla.

One can search by one or all such parameters as author's name, topic, publication house and date of publication. In fact, it is quite impressive. For to surf about in a world given to all those that are almost everyday household names is quite exciting.

At the risk of sounding rather



The home page of Gronthamela.com

rustic, one must agree that it gives a feeling of 'ownness' to browse among all that is familiar and exclusive to one's own country.

In addition to searching, the website also contains lists of most of the publication houses of Bangladesh together with all the relevant information about each of them.

It also provides access to the statistics as regards to daily publications and the statistics of books based on authors, topics and publishers.

The basic website design is pleasing rather than awesome and there certainly is place for further improvement in that area. As for the Server Side scripting language, 'php' has been used. More efficient searching algorithms for database retrievals are recommended, as the time taken to provide search results is comparatively higher. This is to be expected, as the size of the database involved is rather large and increasing. So unless efficient algorithms are targeted

the overhead will be prohibitive.

With the motto "Bridging the gap between the readers and authors", Data Head has indeed taken a great step towards accumulating all that contributes to the literary excellence of this country and making it possible for the world to appreciate it.

The only thing that remains to be said is Gronthamela.com is a must-visit website for all. The URL is: www.gronthamela.com

Tech News

First earth station in private sector

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

DNS SatComm Limited has plans to construct the country's first satellite earth station to facilitate overseas data and multimedia communications.

"We have obtained a license from the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) to construct the satellite earth station," Atiqul Hsan, chief operating officer of the company told The Daily Star.

"Corporate houses, banks, Internet service providers (ISPs) and satellite television channels would be our prospective clients."

DNS, a concern of the DNS group, would be able to provide wide bandwidth after the earth station is installed, he said.

Banks would be able to connect their branches along with automated teller machines in remote places at a lower cost.

The project would reduce cost of licenses for current VSAT users as per the government rules. There would be huge savings on foreign currencies.

VSAT users usually pay in foreign currencies for bandwidth. Moreover, the project will generate scope to earn foreign currencies as the earth station would cater services throughout the Asia Pacific rim and the Middle East, Hsan said.

He said DNS was in final talks with Hughes Network

System, a US satellite communication company, which would probably "provide us the technology and equipment".

"Besides, Hong Kong-based Corporate Access, a company formerly known as Hutchinson, and Singapore-based SingTel would also provide us technical assistance."

"We are the local agent of Corporate Access," he added.

"The station would be established with the ability to transmit to every corner of the globe."

He said DNS would provide service through undersea fibre optic cables after the country is connected with the information superhighway.

The state-owned Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) has signed deals with an international consortium to connect the country with the global information highway through an under-sea fibre optic cable network.

He said the station would be built on ten acres in Gazipur, about 60 kilometres north of the capital.

Foreign investors would substantially invest in the project, he said. However, he did not specify the project cost.

The project will be completed within six months after the construction begins, Hsan said.

The BTTB and Bangladesh Television have satellite earth stations.

Tech Snaps

DIIT to provide training to World Health Organization (WHO)

Daffodil Institute of IT (DIIT) is going to give a 2-month-long computer training on "Computer Application" to TB Programme funded by World Health Organization (WHO), says a press release. DIIT organised an orientation programme of this training at its Banani Campus on February 25.

HP ScanJet makes splash in PC Magazine

HP ScanJet 5500C, named Best of Comdex and earned Editor's Choice in the January 2003 edition of PC Magazine says a press release.

The HP ScanJet 5500C photo scanner with automatic feeder was named the Best of Comdex winner in the Digital Imaging category. This was reported in the November issue of PC Magazine.

Photo Tech



An extremely rare female Lord Howe Island phasmid (*Dryococcus australis*) is displayed at the Australian Museum in Sydney after it was recovered from Ball's Pyramid - the animal's only known natural habitat some 770 kms northeast of Sydney. Presumed extinct for 80 years until they were rediscovered two years ago, the phasmid is the rarest and most endangered invertebrate in the world.

Dr. Tech

Dear Dr. Tech, I would like to make my computer notify me whenever I press the Caps Lock key. I saw how to adjust computer settings so that it can notify us whenever the key is pushed in a past issue of The Daily Star's Star Tech, but I lost that issue. Could you kindly republish the instructions on how to adjust my computer's settings? (My operating system is Windows 2000 Professional, and I use the PC speaker since the computer is in an office)

Isthier Choudhury

the "Use Toggle Keys" checkbox. That's for the beeping part. Next, we need to get your screen to flash you, err, flash at you. Here is how:

1. From the Accessibility Options screen, click the **Sound** tab and check the "Use SoundSentry" checkbox.
2. Next click the Settings button and select "Flash active window" from the "Warning for windowed programs" drop down box.

That's it. Hit OK until you're clear of property and settings screens. Open your favorite word processor and hit your Caps Lock key.

Cool huh?

P.S. If you don't have an Accessibility Options icon in your Control Panel, you may not have it installed.

To install, hit your **Start** button, **Settings**, **Control Panel**. Open the **Add / Remove** programs icon and click the Windows Setup tab. You'll be able to add components from there. Keep in mind you'll need your Windows CD!

dailystartech@yahoo.com

Dear Isthier Choudhury, Well here is the tip once again for you. This will show you how to make your computer beep & flash the next time it happens.

The first thing you will need to do is get the computer to beep when you hit the Caps Lock key. Here is how:

1. Click the **Start** button, **Settings**, **Control Panel** (XP Users, hit the **Start** button, **Control Panel**). Open the **Accessibility Options** icon.
2. On the **Keyboard** tab, click

Space Tech

NASA starts countdown to 'Mars Mission'

REUTERS, Australia

ASTRONOMERS have started a countdown to the launch of two robotic buggies on a mission to find out if there is, or ever was, life on Mars.

Dr. Charles Elachi, director of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Jet Propulsion Lab, said final preparations were underway with one 'exploration rover' arriving at Cape Canaveral this week and the second due in three weeks. He said the rovers, which are the size of an office desk, were set to be launched on May 30 and June 25, piggy-backing on two rockets then parachuting down to Mars in January in an air-bag cushioned landing.

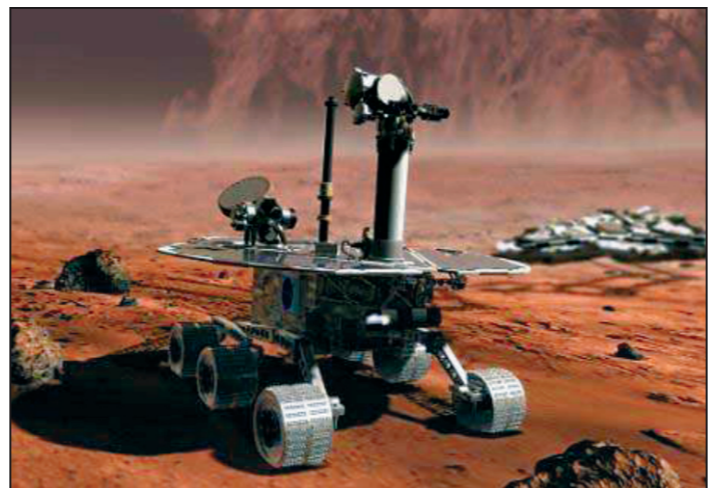
Elachi said there was strong interest in the latest launches after recent indications there could be water ice on the Red Planet.

Interest was also keen after the loss in 1999 of two robotic Mars missions -- a lander and an orbiting spacecraft -- at a cost of \$290 million. Missions to Mars can only occur every two years when the planets are in the correct alignment.

Liquid water is seen as key for Earth-type life on a planet and

underground water ice could help show how Mars developed.

"Interest in Mars has really hotted up since indications of water raised the question again about whether life has evolved there," Elachi told Reuters in an interview while in Australia to



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visit one of three tracking stations involved in the mission.

He said NASA's robotic explorations, based at the Jet Propulsion Lab in Pasadena, had not been affected by this

month's shuttle Columbia disaster.

Elachi said three years of work had gone into the latest Mars mission at a cost of \$800 million and scientists hoped to repeat the success of 1997's Mars Pathfinder mission, the

worldwide -- in California in the United States, at Tidbinbilla near the Australian capital Canberra, and Madrid in Spain.

Each rover is equipped with a mast-mounted camera providing 360 degree, stereoscopic, views of the cold, rocky terrain and has a robotic arm that can put instruments against rock and soil.

Elachi said the latest solar-powered robotic landers would be able to transmit information about Mars for between 90-120 days once they arrived, depending on amounts of sunlight.

Once winter hit Mars, with temperatures plummeting to minus 150 degrees Centigrade, the rovers would run out of energy.

Elachi said NASA would decide in April which of four landing sites to use on Mars, using images and data from two other NASA spacecraft currently orbiting Mars -- Mars Global Surveyor and Mars Odyssey.

Mars is one of the most studied objects in our solar system. As Earth's next-door planetary neighbor, it has the advantage of location and is thought to be similar in composition to our planet.

Tech Jobs

Giant Group
Post: Asst. Graphic Designer
Last Date: March 04, 2003

Seventh Sense Software
Post: Trainee Programmers
Visual C++
Last Date: March 26, 2003

Alphasoft Systems
Post: Graphic Designer / Web Developer, Programmer / System Analyst
Last Date: March 05, 2003

Computer Ease Limited
Post: Programmer Analyst (Entry Level)
Last Date: March 24, 2003

Al-Heal Specialized Hospital Ltd.
Post: IT Professional
Last Date: March 02, 2003
Global Water Partnership

(GWP-SAS-RWP)
Post: Network Office
Last Date: March 10, 2003

BOC Bangladesh Limited
Post: System Support Officer
Last Date: March 05, 2003

CreateMatix Limited
Post: Jr. Programmer, Analyst, Sr. Programmer
Last Date: March 05, 2003

Bridgehouse Limited
Post: Graphic Designer/Artist
Last Date: March 15, 2003

Birdem
Post: Programmer
Last Date: March 05, 2003

source: www.bdjobs.com

Tech Toon



Star Tech Quiz 28

Check the box beside the correct answer

1. Which of the following is part of a hard disk drive
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Platter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laser | <input type="checkbox"/> Riser Board |

2. Which of the following is not a Internet browsers
- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet Explorer | <input type="checkbox"/> AOL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opera | <input type="checkbox"/> Netscape |

3. A transmission technique in which data is sent in both directions simultaneously is called full duplex
- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|

Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Last week's answers

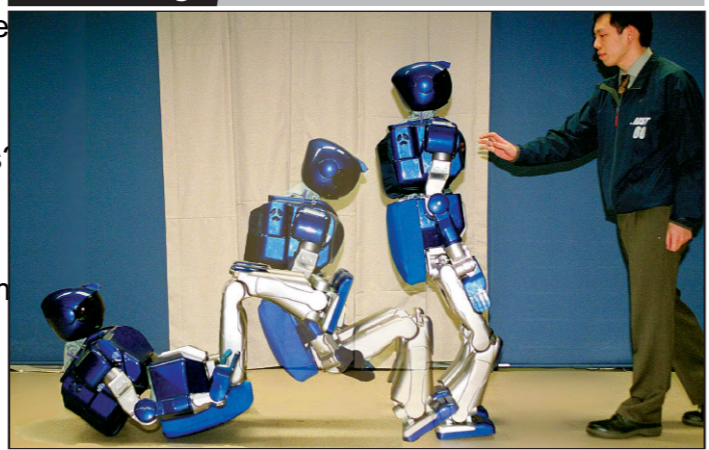
1. OSD 2. Bluetooth 3. True

Winners: Faisal Khan

419, M-Bhashani Hall, J.U Savar, Dhaka

Please fill this up and send your answers to Star Tech Quiz, The Daily Star, 19 Karwan Bazaar, Dhaka 1215 by March 5, 2003.

Becoming more human



A prototype humanoid robot HRP-2 falls safely then stands up by itself during a demonstration on February 26 at the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST) in Tsukuba, Ibaraki Prefecture. Researchers at the AIST, in collaboration with other researchers, have succeeded for the first time in the world in developing a robot that can stand up by itself. The robot, which is 154 cm tall and weighs 58 kg, knows how to fall safely, as its built-in sensors programmed to have the robot prepare for a fall when body leans past a certain angle.