Tech Review

Bangaliana -- all about going Bangla savvy

NAFID IMRAN AHMED

WILL technology put paper dictionaries out of business? It would take software with a large word database to make paper dictionaries obsolete. But in the meantime, a very inexpensive CD-ROM could benefit any computer user who wants an immediate translation of Bangla words to English.
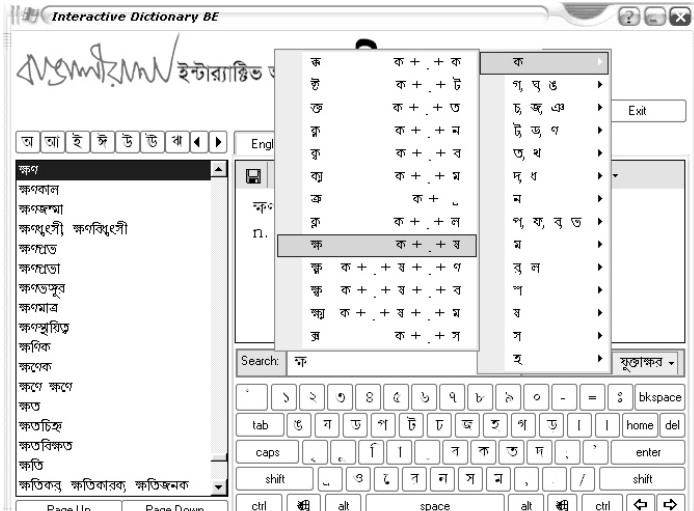
Interactive dictionary 'Bangaliana' is a digital Bangla-to-English dictionary designed to give one more aptitude and reliance than a paper dictionary. Moreover, it also has the ability to find out any of the 30,000 words it has in a second. And it costs only Tk 180.

The demo of 'Bangaliana' was first displayed at BCS Computer Show 2003 and the first version was released at Computer Mela 2003, Comilla The present version 'Bangaliana Interactive Dictionary BE 1.50' was released in August 14, 2003 and comes with many new features.

The concept, design and programming of the dictionary has been done by Omaar Osman, managing director of Bangaliana along with his four friends Amanullah Siddique, S.M. Aneyet Kobir Faisal, Joshimuddin and Mohammad Kawsar.

"In 2002, I did a survey of our local software and realised that they are poor in quality which makes most of the user lose interest in Bangla software. So I decide to form a company, which will be dedicated to Bangla computing and give the users some international standard software. Thus Bangaliana was born," said Omaar.

After finishing his diploma in multimedia from Hi-tech

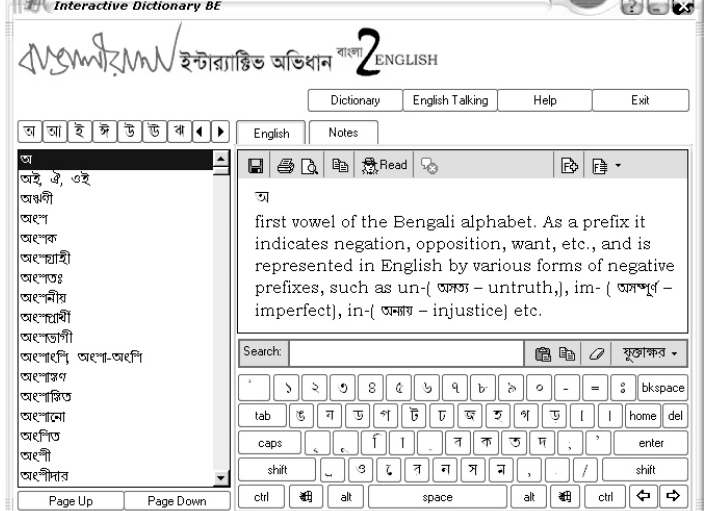An explained Bangla conjunct menu makes it easier to understand

Professionals in 2000 Omaar completed Web Master course from World Wide Web Institute in 2002.

Visual Basic 6 was used to create 'Bangaliana'. Omaar also used some high quality utilities to make the software powerful, which cost him almost $2000.

All words have been arranged alphabetically for easy searching. There is also a search engine for the alphabetical list. 'Banglaiana' has built-in Bangla interface to write Bangla. No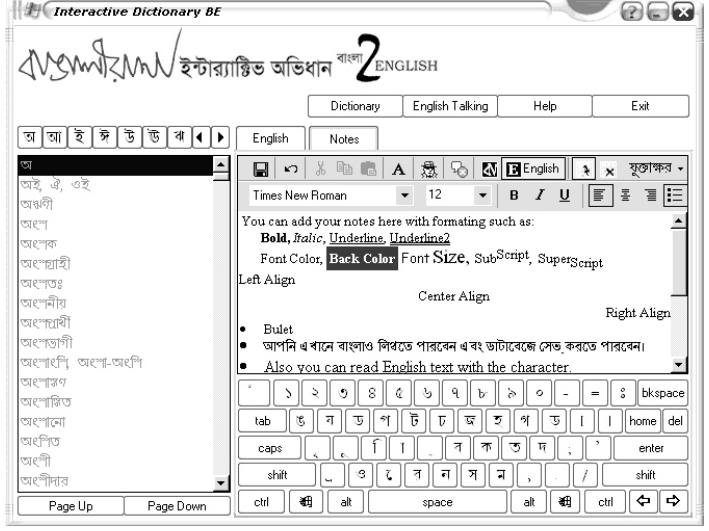 third party Bangla software is needed to write Bangla in interactive dictionary. Writing tools such as a virtual Bangla keyboard and an explained Bangla conjunct menu are also included. An advanced Note Pad is also included to keep personal notes with each Bangla word.

Bangla words with its English meaning and corresponding

The basic interface of the interactive dictionary

The advanced Note Pad is very useful for keeping personal notes

notes can be saved as PDF. To find out accurate pronunciation of English words or sentences there are six animated characters powered by Microsoft Agent Control. These characters read documents or English word(s)/sentence(s).

The dictionary has a standard User Interface (UI) for all version of Windows. Recently it has been noticed that the dictionary sometimes cannot produce sounds while reading texts but after some attempts it reads texts normally. This problem occurs on some computers running Windows 98/ME, but the problem does not occur in Windows 2000 or Windows XP platform. Omaar said that is not a programming flaw and hopes to fix the problem soon.

Bangaliana's website, www.bangaliana.com invites its users to share their experience and ideas. Bangaliana also wishes to make their website a recourse for Bangla computing. They hope to publish Bangla software for both personal and commercial uses.

System requirements for Bangaliana:
Processor: Pentium II or Later
RAM: 64 MB
Disk space: 50 MB
CD-ROM Drive
Sound Card
OS: Windows98/Me/NT4/2000/XP
Database Components: Microsoft Data Access Components 2.6 and Jet 4.0 sp3 database engine (comes with the software)
Speech: Microsoft Agent Control 2.0, Lernout & Hauspie TruVoice American English TTS Engine (comes with the software).

Photo Tech

PHOTO: AFP
Indian workers assemble computer CPU's in the assembly line at Hewlett Packard (HP) India's manufacturing facility in the India Configuration Centre in Bangalore on October 8. On the occasion of rolling out the 500,000 computer from its facility in the technology hub of Bangalore, HP India Pvt. Ltd, the Indian subsidiary of computing and technology group Hewlett-Packard said its future revenues would be driven by a surge in the sale of notebook computers in the country.

Tech Toon

"COOL — WE HACKED INTO SOMEBODY'S BRAIN!"

Star Tech Quiz 61

Check the box beside the correct answer

1. Which is the best choice for a specification for a video card?
- [ ] ATAPI
- [ ] PCI
- [ ] ISA
- [ ] AGP

2. Which frequency is a SDRAM clock speed?
- [ ] 200Mhz
- [ ] 133Mhz
- [ ] 250Mhz
- [ ] 166Mhz

Name: _____ Occupation: _____
Address: _____
Contact Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Last week's answers
1. A compact disk   2. Compiler
Winners: Salahuddin Ahmed
H-22, Road-1, Block-B, Rampura, Banasree, Dhaka 1219
Please fill this up and send your answers to Star Tech Quiz, The Daily Star, 19 Karwan Bazaar, Dhaka 1215 by October 20, 2003.

Space Tech

Nasa runs laser-powered model plane
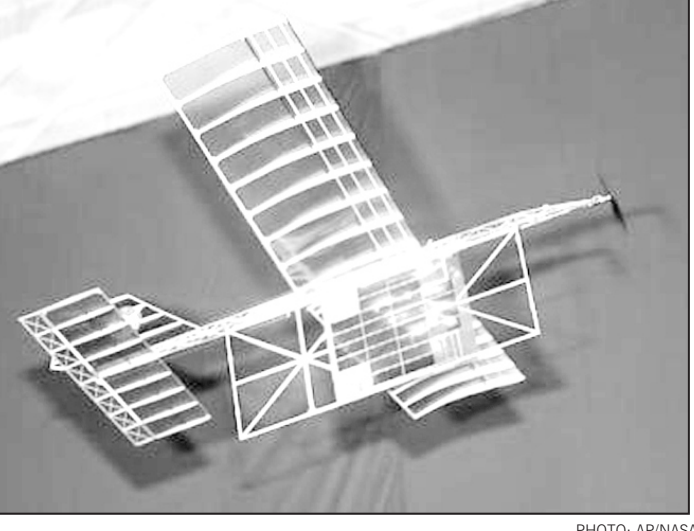
AP, California

NASA has built and flown a remote-controlled plane powered from the ground by the beam of an invisible laser.

In indoor flights conducted last month at a Nasa center in Alabama, the plane flew lap after lap, gliding to a landing once the laser beam was turned off, the agency said Thursday.

While in flight, the laser tracked the 11-ounce, five-foot-wingspan plane, striking the photovoltaic cells that powered the tiny motor that turned its lone propeller.

"The craft could keep flying as long as the energy source, in this case the laser beam, is uninterrupted," said Robert Burdine, laser project manager for the tests, conducted at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala.

In earlier flights completed last year, engineers manually traced the path flown by the

PHOTO: AP/NASA
With a laser beam centered on its panel of photovoltaic cells, a lighweight model plane flies lap after lap powered by a laser beam inside a building at Nasa's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville. The remote-controlled planes don't have to carry their own fuel or batteries, providing more room for scientific instruments or communications equipment.

plane with a theatrical spotlight that provided the power needed to turn its propeller.

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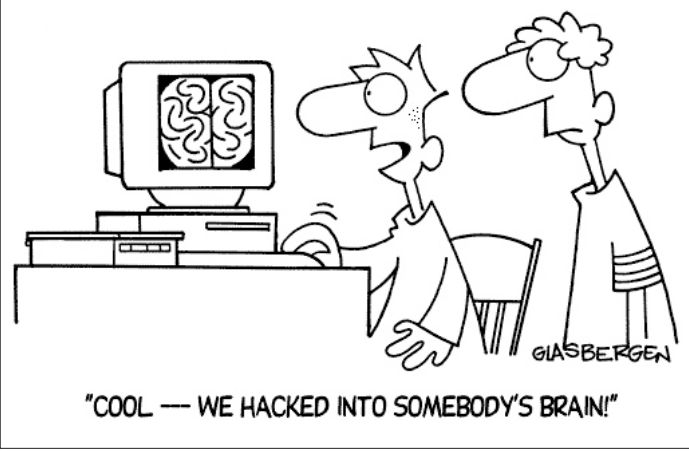
Scientists envision flying the planes on long-duration flights to monitor the environment, including erupting volcanos. The planes also could be used for surveillance or to provide communications links.

"The aircraft could be used for everything from relaying cell phone calls to cable television or Internet connections," said David Bushman, project manager for beamed power at Dryden Flight Research Center at Edwards, where the plane was designed and built.

The plane is not the first to capitalize on laser power. A team of Japanese researchers announced last year they successfully flew a paper airplane on bursts of laser light.

That team's approach differed, however: the blasts of laser heated drops of water on the plane's one-inch wings, turning then to puffs of vapor that pushed the aircraft forward.

Developer Tech

Oracle unleashes entry-level database for SMEs

STAR TECH DESK

ORACLE Corp., world's largest enterprise software company announced the availability of Oracle Standard Edition One to meet the unique needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and departments of large enterprises on October 8, says a press release. Oracle Standard Edition One is single processor version of the Oracle Standard Edition Database offered at $5,995. Standard Edition One is also available with Named User Plus licensing at $195 per user with a minimum of five users. With this announcement, customers can get now get the world's most popular database software for under $1,000 in license fees.

Oracle Standard Edition One offers all the traditional performance, reliability, and security of Oracle Database in a cost-effective single processor system. Standard Edition One is also part of the complete Oracle Database family offering full compatibility and scalability to tackle the biggest problems. Customers can start small and grow as their needs grow. Oracle Standard Edition One has many features designed for SMEs such as easy, rapid installation and simplified management.

"Lower total cost of ownership, not just initial license price, is what users are really concerned about," said Chuck Rozwat, Oracle executive vice president of Server Technologies.

For all technology products, Oracle offers both per Processor and per Named User Plus licensing models. Like with other database releases and upgrades, Oracle customers who are current on support are entitled to the next version of the database at no additional cost. Therefore, no new licensing fees are required for

Oracle 10g. Customers only need to buy more licenses if they add users or CPUs, which is the same licensing process in use today.

"Oracle understands that all customers, regardless of size, want a secure and reliable IT infrastructure on which to build and maintain their businesses," said Jacqueline Woods, Oracle vice president of Global Practices, Global Pricing and Licensing Strategy. "Oracle Standard Edition One provides smaller organizations and our partner community with a world-class database at an attractive price."

Tech Snaps

Farewell to old, welcome to new

The graduation ceremony of the 2nd batch and orientation of the 4th batch of DIT (Diploma in Information Technology) of IT Bangla Ltd., an educational partner of Assumption University, Thailand (ABAC) was held on September 22 at BIAM Auditorium, says a press release.

The DIT is a special one year course designed by ABAC especially for Bangladeshi students. This low cost course gives an opportunity to the middle class and lower middle class students to pursue IT education using a well arranged infrastructure.

Registrar Kamol Kitsawad and Richard G Johnson, director, office of international affairs of ABAC were present at the ceremony as special guests. The programme was presided over by Ziaul Quddus, managing director, IT Bangla Ltd.

SARS Tech

PHOTO: AFP
A thermal imaging temperature scanner developed by Taiwan's official Industrial Technology Research Institute is displayed at the four-day electronics equipment and parts exhibition in Taipei on October 12. The portable thermal scanner was widely used in Taiwan when the island was ravaged by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). Fever was a major sympton shown by SARS patients.

Best 10 Websites

Category: Search Engines & Directory Services I

Google
Top quality search service with rankings based on site significance. Google's relevancy paradigms have significantly improved the precision & reliability of searching the net.
URL: http://www.google.com/

Yahoo!
Best quality hand crafted search index with high relevancy.
URL: http://www.yahoo.com/

Teoma
Sharp new search engine with unique relevancy categories (includes rankings based on site popularity).
URL: http://www.teoma.com/

Wayback Machine
Internet archive of 10 billion web pages dating from 1996 to present.
URL: http://web.archive.org/collections/web.html

AltaVista
One of the oldest search engines on the web.
URL: http://www.altavista.com/

AOL
High quality search index & US portal.
URL: http://www.aol.com/

Query Server
Excellent meta search engine.
URL: http://www.queryserver.com/web.htm

ZWorks
Top quality meta engine.
URL: http://www.zworks.com/

Vivisimo
Cool meta search engine.
URL: http://www.vivisimo.com/

SearchIQ
Lists & reviews all the major search engines, indexes & tools.
URL: http://www.searchiq.com/