

A Glimpse of BANGLADESH CHANNEL

By Antara Ahmed Chowdhury

"Sorry mom I will have my dinner later. Now, I am busy with the computer."

After 3 hours: "Sheena go to bed its 1 am"

"Yes mom I am going... only 10 minutes more. I still have to do a little work on my computer."

"What are you still doing in the computer?"

"Yes mom aaahhhhhh actually I am chatting you know."

Now days this has become common conversation between a mother and their teenage children with computers at home. Chatting is today's teen's latest hobby. It gives them immense pleasure to chat with another person whom he or she has never met, some one who lives just next door or maybe at the other corner of the world. MIRC is one of the hottest chatting programs, which offers different channels where one can easily join and this help pass ones free time. It also offers one channel called "Bangladesh". People living in both Bangladesh and abroad join this channel to connect with Bangladeshis around the world. I myself was a regular user of MIRC. It helped me to make friends all around the world. The day when I first heard about the "Bangladesh" channel I was really excited and decided to have a look at it. My first day experience in the "Bangladeshi" channel was really some thing to remember. It was a mixture of different characters of people. Let me give you guys a glimpse of them in short.

1- The tanki baaj-These classes of people, who are usually guys, join Bangladesh channel with an intention to get girl friends. Poor one's efforts go in vain to try to get a girl friend through the internet, whenever they see a girls name on the screen; just after saying "hi" they start asking for phone numbers. If the girl refuses they start making flattering comments like: "believe me I wont disturb you, I just want to be your friend, just want to hear your sweet voice etc". Then at last they apply their last trick. They give the girl their own numbers. But the clever ones only give their mobile numbers, so that when the girl calls,

her number will automatically come on the telephone screen. So girls do be careful, never ever give them your real phone numbers. Believe me if you even happen to do so you are dead meat. These groups of guys often succeed in their efforts and tricky plans but most of the time they are failures.

2- The clever ones-this group usually joins IRC to get involved with a girl but in a decent way. They get influenced by "You have got mail" and moves like "Dil Hi Dil Mein" and dream of meeting their sweet hearts through the Internet. Seeing a girl online they usually approach them in a sophisticated manner. Usually after 20-25 minutes they ask for phone numbers. These sorts of guys are generally harmless and sweet to chat with.

3-The cool ones-This class of guys are the most decent to chat with. They join IRC only to have a good time with the chat partner. This group of people chat with both boys and girls.

If the partner is a girl they never ask for numbers until they become good friends. With these guys you can chat about anything-music, hobbies, studies just anything but unfortunately they are very rare.

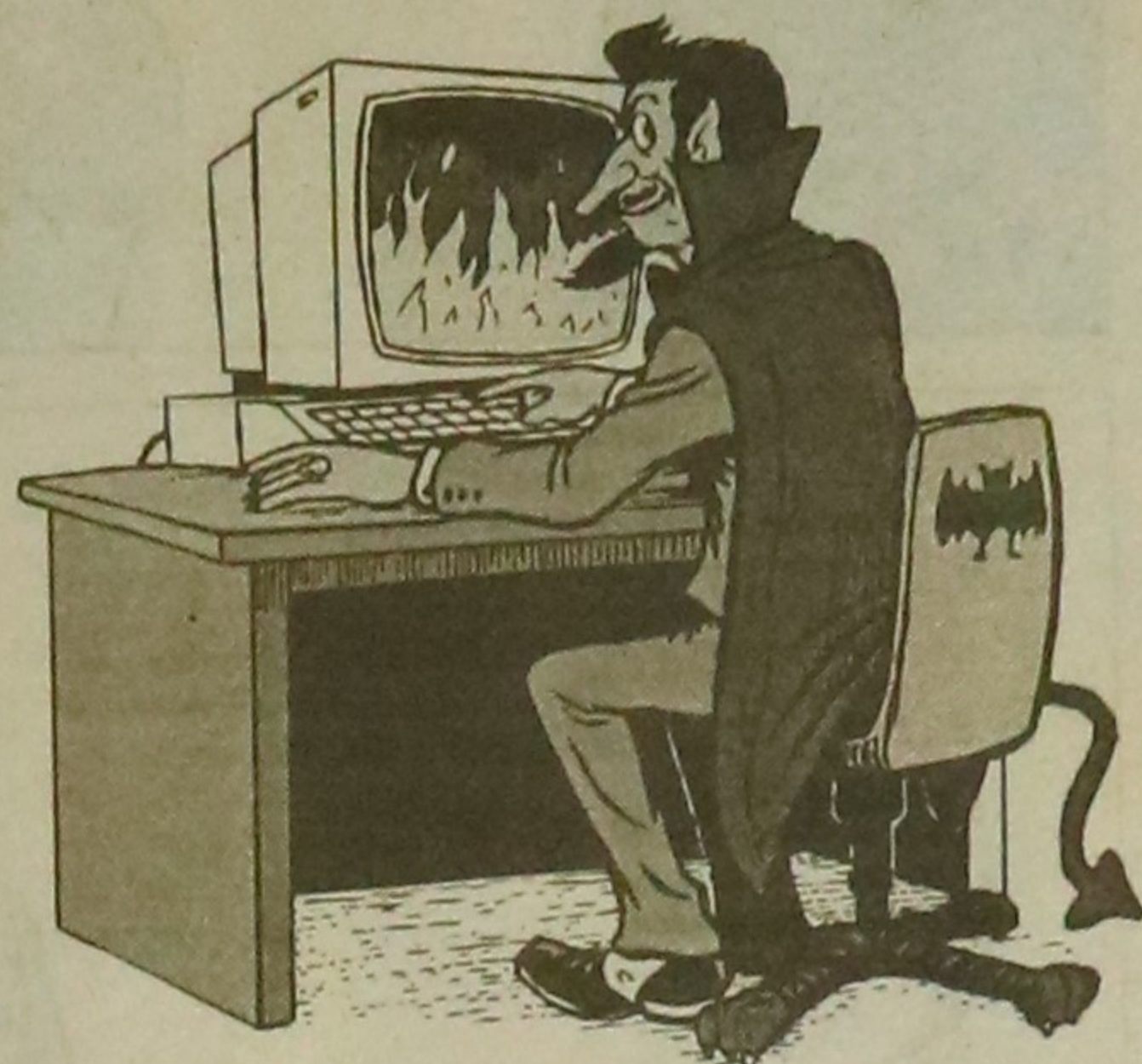
4-The love birds-This class which includes both girls and guys usually remain very silent on the screen. They join IRC only to spend some time with their sweet hearts. Guys who have problems in meeting or dating often chose this way to contact their partners. They never chat with any other person except their partners and if any one tries to contact them they never reply. They just don't want to be disturbed.

5 The Liars-They are the most dangerous people in IRC. They lie at every sentence. This group continuously goes on changing their names age and sometimes-even gender. Boys pretend to be girls and girls pretend to be boys.

This group usually consists of guys. They usually use weird nicknames like *bodna*, *ami tumi*, *hulo biraal* etc.

I am sure after reading this article some of my fellow friends will get furious at me. Sorry guys, nothing to do. I just couldn't stop myself from writing some-thing about our own Bangladesh

channel. Believe me guys, Bangladesh channel is really a cool place to have some good time. But girls especially have to be very careful about those *tanki baajs* there. So guys join it and have fun. Besides you never know, you may find your dream prince or princess there, who is waiting for you.



Hotter Pursuit

By Ehsanur Raza

Two of the coolest new driving games are out. Both is role-playing type games and have excellent graphics. I don't know the minimum requirements but a 3D card definitely helps. I run them with a PII processor and 8MB AGP card. Only Driver suffers from a little frame skipping, not very noticeable.

Driver

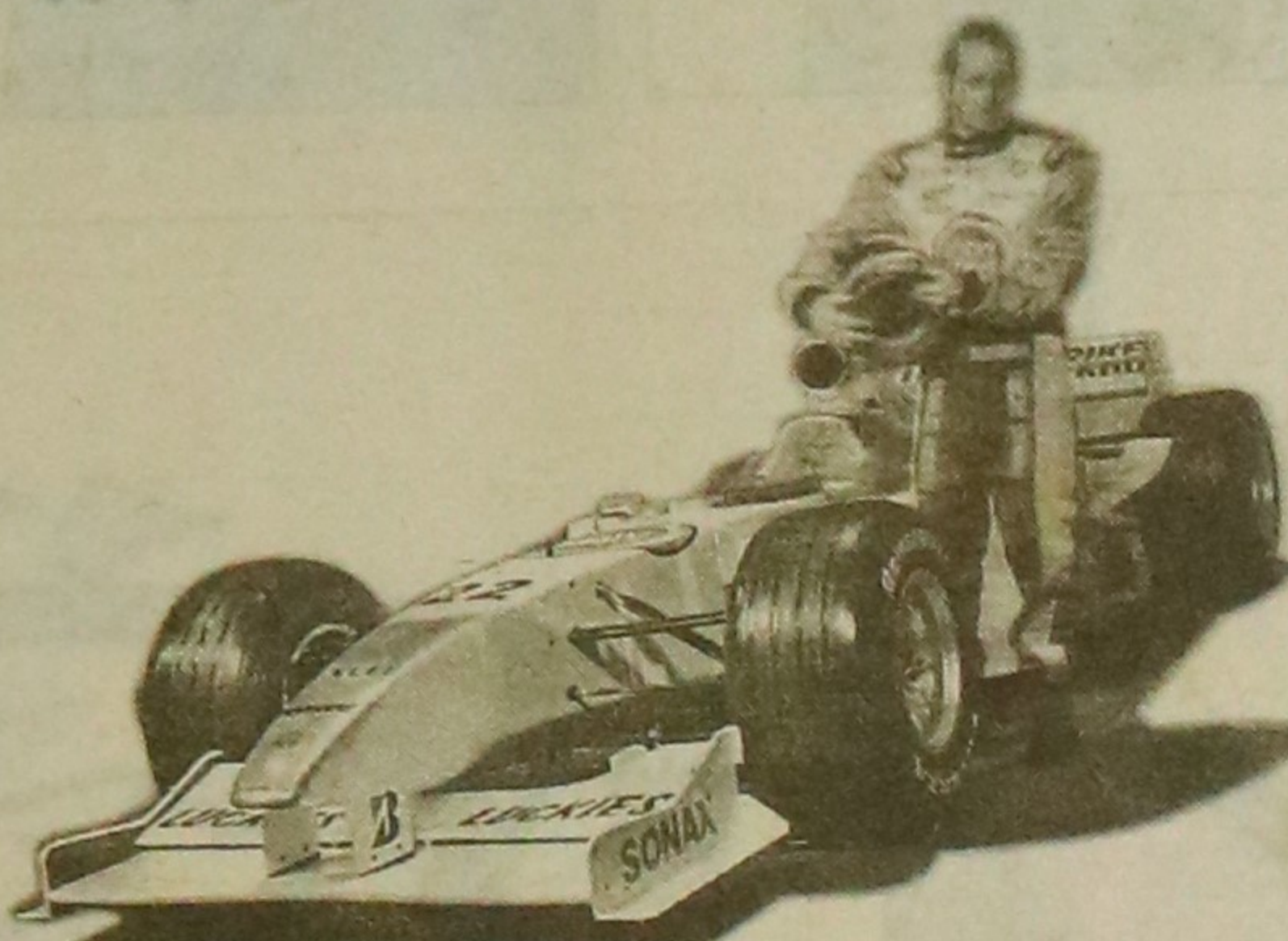
All the cars are American and belong to the late 70's through mid 80's. Example: 70's Dodge Charger and Chevrolet Camaro, 80's Buick and Cadillac Brougham. The police are more cunning than the ones in Need For Speed 4. There are pedestrians walking along the footpath but you can never run them down. They always jump out of the way. To help you find directions there is a map that shows your position, the place where you are supposed to go to and any police car within a certain radius of your vehicle. A special key allows a smoking 360° turn. And of course there is detailed body damage.

The game is separated into three modes.

1) **DRIVING GAMES.** Consists of a number of scenarios in which you rack up points or race against the clock.

2) **TAKE A RIDE.** In this instance you choose a city, a car and just drive and enjoy the scenery. No points, no time limit. But you do have to watch your driving or else the cops will come after you.

3) **UNDERCOVER.** This is the best and the most engrossing part of the game. You play an undercover cop who tries to infiltrate a gang of hoodlums. Your job is to follow instructions beginning with driving the getaway car for a group of bank robbers. The game culminates with the capture of the ring-leader. Each major mission begins with a cool intro video that hints at what is to come. But first you have to prove to the police chief that you can handle this job. Showing off at an underground parking lot gets you the job. Perform 180° handbrake turns, 360° spins, slalom through pillars and scare the ghost out of your passenger.



Unlike Need For Speed or Formula 1 '99 you don't have to pay a lot of attention to driving finesse. Most of the time you will be sliding the car through corners. The driving is easy but reaching your destination is not so. Watch out for are the police cause they are mean. They perform the most unpredictable maneuvers and are always trying to wreck your car to prevent escape.

Verdict: What can I say? It's too good. But watch out because some of the CDs do not have the intro videos.

Try and beat this time in Survival mode: Miami - 2 minutes 78.58 seconds

Interstate '82

This is a sequel to the now legendary Interstate '71, which never came to Bangladesh. Thus the reason why you may not have heard of it. It is similar to Driver in the sense that there are good guys and bad guys. Cars are based on those popular in the

80's, e.g. 1973 Ford Mustang, '81 Corvette, '80 BMW and '82 Ferrari 308. But unlike Driver the cars can be fitted with a wild assortment of weapons and equipment.

The game contains two modes.

1) The first one is an editable bit where you select an area, opponents and armament and blow up each other. It wears off after a while as there is not much to do other than, well, blowing up your opponents and keep from being blown up. I guess it's because there is no scoring system that records you name and time and whatever. I like to see my name alongside high scores. Call me narcissistic.

2) The second part almost makes up for the deficiencies in the first. Like Driver it is a long set of missions with a storyline. Very much like a movie. The stage is Las Vegas. You play as a man called Taurus dressed in a snappy green velvet suit (it's the '80's after all). You assist a girl in search of her brother who happens to be your partner from Interstate '71. All through the game you fight bad dudes with rotten attitudes and big-gunned cars.

But this is not all about brawn. The brain needs to be used as well. For example, at one stage you have to figure out how to take out a bridge to stop the opponents from coming through. This you do by driving into the water (yes, the cars float) and shoot one of the pillars till the bridge topples. And all this has to be done while fending off the assaults of a couple of hoodlums.

At times you need to get out of your car to open gates or to commandeer other vehicles. If there are opponents around they will shoot you or run you down or both.

Hint: Try out the abandoned cars found on the roadside and inside buildings. They might have more appropriate weapons to fight your foe.

Verdict: Interesting smooth flowing plot and good graphics. More realistic world than the one in a similar game called Redline. But once you finish the game there isn't much more to do.

Homeroom Blues!

By Narmin Tartila Banu

Thump, thump thump, my loving pair of Kony keds creates music upon impact with the staircase every morning while I climb up to the second floor. No matter how high I place my feet on the white stairs, a comparatively louder sound oozes out anyway. This is because of that fact that this early in the morning hardly any kids have arrived at school to create enough noise to muffle the sound of my footsteps.

One by one, I stamp on each of the 43 stairs and finally take a left turn towards my homeroom. On the way I take a quick glance at my reflection on the glass door of the library. Then I finally stand facing the cream colored steel door on my left, which has a banner taped on it, proudly declaring GRADE XI. The door is closed. For anybody else the door is definitely closed. However having had this very room as my homeroom for the last two years (X & XI), I know just the trick to get it open. No magic is involved. All you have to do is poke your finger through a crevice on the wall (thanks to the crude job of the locksmith), and gently coax aside the bolt on the inside and Bingo-Opened Sesame! The door creaks open and I shoulder myself inside and dump my bag on one of the chairs.

The room at this hour usually has the smell of paint, which

upon condensing overnight makes the air rather heavy. The source of this smell is our cupboard which refuses to let go of its scent, and the odor lingers even when I throw open the glass windows. Now this is one thing I truly love doing. The fresh breeze coming from God-knows-where, (east, west, south, and north- somewhere!) feels heavenly after my long hike from downstairs.

The other buses have not arrived yet. And those students who live near by are probably still in bed. A few Ronaldos in the making are kicking around a soccer ball down in the field. I can see them, through the netting leaves of my beloved krishnochoora tree. The darling even has carelessly thrown a branch towards our window, which teases the glass pane with gentle seeps as the breeze blows over it. I can easily caress the leaves if I stretch out my arm. In fact when in full bloom, we can only see the fiery red blaze atop this tree.

I sit there on top of a trapezium table, (which is what we have to sit behind), my feet on a chair, and find myself contemplating as I stare out through the grilled window. It is so damn quiet. Once or twice a couple of juniors walk past the half-closed door chattering gleefully. However, in here I am still all-alone. In a few more minutes I will see a bus pull in, followed by another.

Through the curtain of the krishnochoora leaves I will see the students in our green and cream uniforms pouring out of the bus in a single file. Then they will walk in through the main gate in small clusters, each busily burping out the accumulated tales from their respective tummies, totally unaware of the silent observer sitting up here! Soon, in would barge one of my classmates, with the air of owning the world. Another would follow then another and another and so on. Before long all two dozen students will be here and the place will be noisier than the local fish market. But right now it is eerie.

Why am I writing this? The only fact is, each and everyday (give or take few) of the last 12 months have been the same. Being the first comer in class I have had the opportunity to see my homeroom in a ghostly awkward position-devoid of students! I've had the chance to open the windows, turn on the fans, pull the chairs here, push the tables there and enjoy myself in a manner none of my classmates have. So, I've come to love my homeroom in a weird sort of way.

Now we are in grade XII and probably will be shipped off to a different den in the year 2000. Being in this burrow for this long a time will make it difficult for me to adjust to a new environment. But what the heck! Ciao!