

Tech Feature

Dishari: A step in the right direction

Basic IT education centre in a rural area

NAFID IMRAN AHMED
back from Chechua, Kushtia

GOING to Kushtia to visit an IT education centre was quite interesting. Before I reached there many images flashed across my mind. I wondered how a basic IT education centre in a rural area would look like. To be frank, I had a conservative expectation. But when I walked into the world of Dishari, housed in a small building at Chechua in Kushtia, my misgivings made way for unalloyed admiration. The rural basic IT education centre was indeed the first of its kind.



Few days ago it was only a dream, now a reality

Over the years, British American Tobacco Bangladesh has done a lot of things as part of their social commitments. Promoting the music industry, forestation, non-smoking campaign for the underage, etc stand as a mark of their devotion as a social corporate identity. But recently British American Tobacco Bangladesh has taken the initiative, which was much needed in our country. They have started to provide basic IT education to the rural areas of the country and their journey starts in Chechua, Kushtia with 'Dishari'.

Dishari is located inside the British American Tobacco Bangladesh's Kushtia Leaf Plant. Officially Dishari's voyage started in July this year, when the first batch started their class. The objective of 'Dishari' is to develop and train up the people in remote areas with basic IT education of better quality

for free. It offers two months intensive course teaching basic computer operation and application software such as Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point, Access and using the Internet. At present it has 10 seats. The 10 students of the first batch were selected out of 42 through an merit basis. All the

students of 'Dishari' come from poor families; some of them travel more than 20 kilometres everyday to attend the class. At present Dishari's second batch has started their course.

Dishari is equipped with client/server environment and skilled faculties. It provides updated and high quality course materials to its students. A counselling session for each student is held every week. It also provides library facilities, practical sessions training on spoken English. No homework is given to the students and each course ends with a real life project work.

While talking about 'Dishari', Project Manager, Saood Bin Masood said, "Education has come as a priority expectation from our stakeholders from stakeholder research. Information technology education is also one of the priority agenda of the government of Bangladesh. So responding to the stakeholder engagement plan of commitment in the education sector and to support Government's priority agenda of supporting

information technology we have set up 'Dishari'. He plans to establish five rural centres by the year 2005. Currently they have planned to provide free education. But after two years they might have plans to make each centre self-sufficient.

British American Tobacco Bangladesh aims to build opportunities in the IT sector for the rural

communities - to those who could only dream of it. To translate that into a reality, British American Tobacco Bangladesh invites other multinational companies to join them. 'Dishari' is the first but an ideal example. Those who can should take such initiatives and try to enrich our youth power, which can make a change and lead our country to the paths of glory.



Fully equipped classroom with a peaceful environment



The weekly counseling session is very effective for the students

Tech News Snaps

IBM ACE education service re-launched in Bangladesh

Thakral Information Systems (TIS), IBM's strategic Alliance Partner for Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan re-launch IBM's Advance Career Education (ACE) program in Bangladesh, says a press release.

The program will be re-launched through the existing IBM ACE partners Interglobal, Projuktinet and Future Tech. TIS, however, plans to spread the coverage of the program in the country by appointing new ACE partners.

The new program will focus on helping the country develop a pool of international standard software professionals. The focus of the new program shall be the Application Developer curriculum, which is a 522 teaching hours program with major concentration on Java, RDBMS concepts, Networking essentials, OOP using C++, and basic business and technical English. Other curriculum to be offered are Techno Management which is of 182 teaching hours, Linux spanning to 200 teaching hours, and Systems and Network Administration which will be of 160 teaching hours. In addition to the ACE program, TIS is also planning to introduce IBM's Continuing Education programs designed for corporate customers.

"The ACE Program is very different from those being currently offered in the country, and should be an excellent value for money. It is focussed on developing a new generation of software professionals rather than computer-literate end users", said Mr. Jyoti Das, General Manager of TIS.

Training on Microsoft Office for upazila education officer and assistant upazila officer

BASE Limited has started providing training on Microsoft Office for Upazila Education Officers & Assistant Upazila Education Officers of Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) under Primary and Mass Education Division. The Effective Schools Through Enhanced Education Management (ESTEEM) Project has sponsored the training program, says a press release.

Upon successful completion of the training for the first batch, a certificate awarding ceremony was organized at BASE Limited on September 30, 2002.

Prof. Abdus Sobhan, former director general, Directorate of Primary Education and Senior Training Consultant of the ESTEEM Project and Mustafa Kamal, deputy project manager of the ESTEEM Project distributed the certificates among the participants. The ceremony was chaired by B. N. Adhikary, director of BASE Limited.

Tech News OCP test discount

SHAHED MUSTAFA

Now days many people are interested in database programming in the country. Most of them prefer ORACLE because of its globally recognised certificate.

Oracle, there are several Prometric centres who offer tests for OCP or DBA certification.

To be an OCP or DBA one has to pay 150 U.S. dollar per exam. But most of the examinees do not know that a 20% discount is available by becoming the member of Oracle Technology Network (OTN). This is a free membership. If one examinee becomes a member of OTN, he has to pay only 125 U.S. dollar instead of 150. (In Bangladesh the Prometric centres does not allow discount of 25 dollars. They first exclude their charge of 25 dollars from 150 and deduct 20% from this 125 dollars. Then they will charge you by adding their 25 dollars with the discounted 100 dollars. So finally one has to pay 125 dollar.)

Now let's take a look how to become a member of the OTN. Go to www.oracle.com and follow the following steps:

1. Go to OTN Training site at: <http://otn.oracle.com/training/content.html>
2. Select the "Oracle Certification Program" link in the left navigation bar.
3. Click the "Register Now" link



within the Free eKit box (right side).
4. Press "Continue" button
5. Answer the brief profile information questions.
6. You will find the 'promotional code' required to obtain the 20% exam discount within "Step 4: Certify".

Provide this promotional code to the Prometric centres. This discount is not known to all Prometric centres. It is better to consult with BASE Ltd., which is the only oracle recognised testing centre in Dhaka.

New Tech

Top 5 PDAs

e310 Color 32MB Pocket PC

Manufacturer: Toshiba
Model: PA3169U1P05
Operating System: Microsoft Pocket PC 2002
Price: \$259.99

PEG-T665C CLIE Color 16MB PDA

Manufacturer: Sony
Model: PEGT665CU
Installed Memory: 16
Operating System: Palm OS
Backlit Display: Yes
Price: \$345

iPAQ 3835 Color 64MB Pocket PC

Manufacturer: Compaq
Model: 230397002
Installed Memory: 64
Operating System: Microsoft Pocket PC 2002
Backlit Display: Yes
Price: \$345

Palm Vx 8MB

Manufacturer: Palm Computing
Model: 3C80401U
Installed Memory: 8
Operating System: Palm OS
Backlit Display: Yes
Price: \$54.99

CLIE PEG-NR70V Color 16MB PDA w/ Built-in Digital Camera

Manufacturer: Sony
Model: PEGNR70V
Installed Memory: 16
Operating System: Palm OS
Backlit Display: Yes



Web Tech

Consumers see deals in Internet calling

REUTERS, New York

TELEPHONE calling via the Internet has come a long way from the days five years ago of crackling walkie-talkie conversations, and U.S. consumers now have a range of choices that trade higher quality for cost.

A variety of battle-hardened start-ups have staked out lucrative niches in U.S. domestic and overseas calling markets, ranging from calling cards offered by Net2Phone to full-featured phone replacements from firms such as Vonage.

Such services run the gamut in terms of the technical sophistication required. They range from simple dialing-code calling cards to software programs that must be installed on computers to modem-computer hardware combinations that make up in cost and unique features for the pitfalls of installation.

Net2Phone, based in Newark, New Jersey, counts some 1 million U.S. consumers and another 1 million to 2 million overseas customers for its primary Internet-based calling card business, spokeswoman Sarah Hofstetter said.

The company, which was founded in 1995, offers its original computer-to-phone Internet calling software that allows ultra low-cost calling -- at rates of two cents a minute -- but at the mercy of dial-up Internet connections that can create a classic walkie-talkie-like sound quality.

DeltaThree, another PC-to-phone software maker, boasts calls as low as 1.2 cents a minute.

The bulk -- some 60 percent -- of its customers live overseas and rely on Net2Phone to make discount calls internationally, either to the United States or elsewhere. Calls within the United States and Canada are 3.9 cents per minute. U.S. callers pay 8 cents a minute to Australia, 10 cents to Poland and 13 cents to Colombia.

High-speed Internet calling, the next battleground

Thousands of technically sophisticated users have signed up for a next-generation phone service offered by Vonage at <http://www.vonage.com>. Vonage, of Edison, N.J., introduced in April a service that allows consumers with high-speed Internet connections

placed at substantial discounts also.

Later this week, a spokesman said Vonage plans to introduce a new twist on its service that allows customers to switch from traditional local phone service providers such as Verizon or SBC while keeping their existing phone number.

This eliminates another big hurdle that has prevented

marketing costs to switch over new or existing customers.

Net2Phone, with backing from cable and programming giant Liberty Media, has begun testing with several hundred Liberty cable customers in Puerto Rico of a rival broadband phone calling service. DeltaThree's Web site promises similar services.

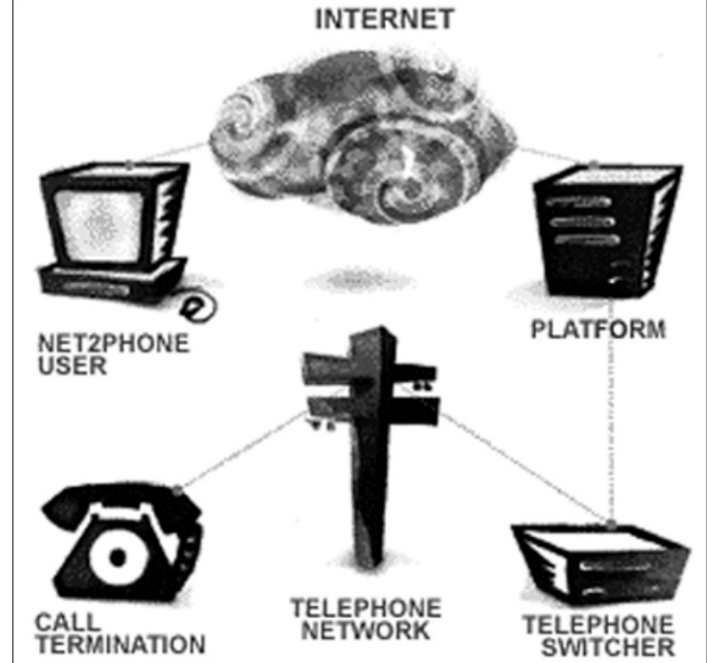
It also offers an innovative version of Microsoft's popular instant messaging software that allows online users to speak with each other.

"Our long-term goal is not to have the consumer be our customer, but to have the cable company be our customers," Hofstetter said. Net2Phone is positioning itself as the ally of cable television operators in their battle to wrest phone customers from established local phone companies.

Meanwhile, AT&T and Comcast Corp., two of the top three U.S. cable television operators, have pushed forward with stop-gap services that combine cable connections with traditional circuit-switched phone connections. Such services do not benefit from the lower costs of running purely Internet-based networks, but allow these operators to generate phone revenues from existing cable customers.

Perhaps the biggest challenge to Internet-based phone calling services is emergence of wireless phones as a potential replacement for both local and long-distance fixed-line plans.

"How many people that have a broadband connection also have a wireless phone?" industry analyst Bogen asks rhetorically. "Many people have switched to wireless for their all their communications needs. Vonage can't get those customers."



The Net2Phone calling system

running over television cables or phone lines to make local and long-distance calls at flat-rate prices.

The company, which was founded by Wall Street entrepreneur Jeff Citron, offers monthly service plans ranging in price from \$20 for 500 minutes of calling a month to \$40 for unlimited local and long-distance calls within the United States. International calls can

consumers from switching to competitive phone services such as Vonage and thereby losing touch with friends and family.

But competitors say there is little keeping them from entering the market. Analysts say that major cable and telephone companies can offer these services themselves but are waiting for the market to mature before expending the sales and

Tech Toon



"Today at work, I received 650 E-mails from feedme@homecat.com! Was that you?"

Star Tech Quiz

11

Check the box beside the correct answer

1. Which of the following will not help your computer?

<input type="checkbox"/> Firewall	<input type="checkbox"/> VLAN
<input type="checkbox"/> Good Password	<input type="checkbox"/> Updated software
 2. Unlicensed software sold illegally is sometimes...

<input type="checkbox"/> Pirated software	<input type="checkbox"/> Borrowed software
<input type="checkbox"/> Shareware	<input type="checkbox"/> Freeware
 3. The law protecting personal data against unauthorised access and alteration is the...

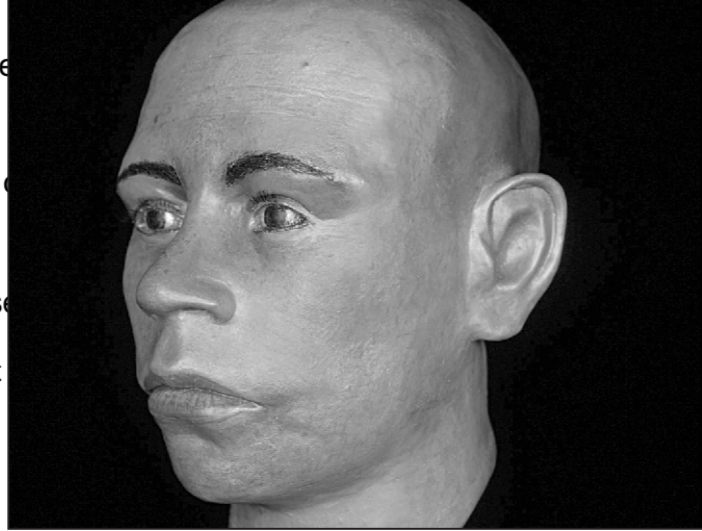
<input type="checkbox"/> Data Protection Act	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer Misuse Act
<input type="checkbox"/> Software copyright	<input type="checkbox"/> Privacy Law
- Name: _____ Occupation: _____
Address: _____
Contact Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Last week's answers

1. 111 1011 2. Magnetic 3. Erasing magnetic media
Winner: Md. Nazmul Alam

76-1-1-3 (2nd Floor), Bibirbagcha, North Jatra Bari, Dhaka
Please fill this up and send your answers to Star Tech Quiz, The Daily Star, 19 Karwan Bazaar, Dhaka 1215 by October 9, 2002.

Face behind the death mask



The face of Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamun, which was revealed for the first time in a new television documentary. British experts have reconstructed the face behind the famous golden death mask in a painstaking process based on x-rays of his skull. The Channel 5 documentary "Who Killed Tutankhamun?... Revealed", also uncovers startling new facts about the boy Pharaoh who died over 3,000 years ago.

Dr. Tech

Dear Dr. Tech, I have a spare monitor and want to use both of my monitors together. Is this possible? Then how?
- Sameer

Dear Sameer, If one monitor is good, two is better, right? It's great having all that desktop real estate to play with. Your mouse moves from screen to screen and you can move open windows from one screen to the other just as if you were using a single large monitor.

So how do you set it up? Basically, all you need to have is two video adapters (cards). Your computer already has one, but you'll need to either install another one yourself or take your computer to someone who can.

Keep in mind that depending on your configuration, you may not have any space (or interrupts) left for adding another video card. Due to the millions of possible configurations, I don't really have any guidelines to give you in

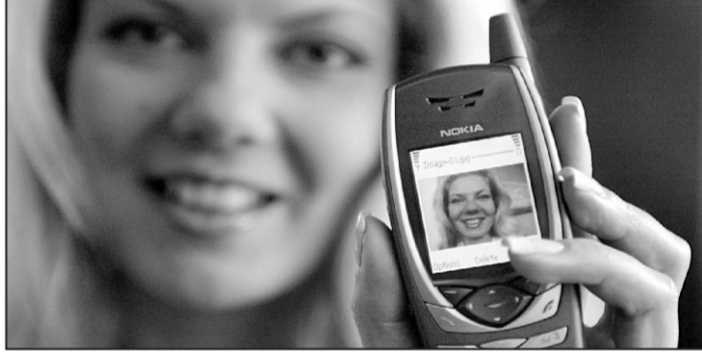
regard to this. If you are not sure, take your machine into a computer shop and have them look at it.

If you're using a laptop, you may already have multiple video adapters. One for your LCD display and one for a standard monitor in and go. It's that easy. Of course, you'll want to confirm this before you go out and buy a new monitor, buy most newer laptops will support this configuration.

Once you get the hardware taken care of, the rest is easy. Right-click your desktop and select "Properties" from the resulting menu. Hit the "Settings" tab.

You'll see both monitors displayed. You can set resolution and color depth for each individually as well as drag the monitor icons themselves into their real world positions (makes transitions from one monitor to the next smoother).
dailystartech@yahoo.com

Photo Tech



Finnish telecommunications giant Nokia unveiled the world's first handset for WCDMA and GSM networks in Helsinki September 26, 2002. The Nokia 6650 camera phone is the world's first 3GPP (Third Generation Partnership Project) compliant phone.

Best 10 Websites

Category: Cars - prices & sales

- autobytel.com**
Buy, finance or lease a new or pre-owned car from an Autobytel.com accredited dealer.
URL: <http://www.autobytel.com>
- CarPrices.com**
Free firm price quote. Hassle Free.
URL: <http://www.carprices.com>
- CarSmart.com**
Find Research tools, Extensive Reviews, Express Quotes, Car Buying Guide, Classifieds, Loan Center, Insurance Center and other essential resources when shopping for cars online.
URL: <http://www.carsmart.com>
- AutoEasy**
Consumers may order new domestic vehicles and arrange delivery at a dealership near their home. Deposit required.
URL: <http://www.autoeasy.com/>
- CarsDirect.com**
CarsDirect.com offers no-haggle, upfront pricing to consumers, who can research, price, order, purchase, insure and finance a vehicle online.
URL: <http://www.carsdirect.com>
- AutoMall Online**
Real time competitive new car information and price quotes. Research auto specifications, retail and invoice pricing.
URL: <http://www.automallonline.com/>
- Priceline New Cars**
Consumers make an offer and place a deposit on a new vehicle, dealers accept or counter offer.
URL: <http://auto.priceline.com/autos/spec/newcar.s.asp>
- AutoTrader.com**
Search more than 900,000 used car listings, updated daily.
URL: <http://autotrader.com>
- Autoweb.com**
Autoweb.com, the Internet's premier automotive site, puts you in control of the car-buying process.
URL: <http://www.autoweb.com>
- cars.com**
The simple way to buy a new or used car.
URL: <http://www.cars.com>