

Tech View

Second-hand and antiquarian books on the Internet

ASRAR CHOWDHURY

ALTHOUGH Dhaka is a city of Bazaars, if you are a collector of antiquarian books you may have to brew your tea somewhere else. If tea (*Chai*) is not the local drink, then only heaven knows where the coffee (*Kahwa*) beans will come from. Buying foreign antiquarian books in Dhaka can prove to be a daunting affair. Especially if you are searching for books out of print. The *Kitaab Bazaars* of Dhaka probably do not satisfy the thirst of collectors. Although it is possible to find an array of books, even then chances are extremely high you would end up with popular and contemporary titles. If you happen to be a connoisseur, a person who demands only the best, but is not willing to wait months on end for a publisher to order a title, then

the advice is simple; "you can't have your cake and eat it too". If from your *Kitaab Bazaars* fail to quench your thirst, then why not discover the second hand *Kitaab Bazaars*?

Sorry, we are not talking about the second hand book markets of Dhaka. This is the science and technology page. If you are really desperate for that odd book, then take a deep breath and see how far the world of virtual reality can stretch your imagination. However, as the saying goes; "you can't have your cake and eat it too", there may be some prices to pay.

From the luxury of your armchair, it is now possible to search for rare books through the Internet. One good website is www.abebooks.co.uk. The site is run by second hand and antiquarian bookshops located in the UK. They pay an annual

fee to the web administrators and are responsible for the sale and shipment of books.

Once in the page, you will be asked for author and title. Please make sure you indicate you are searching the UK or else you may be directed to the USA site. If you are sure of what you are looking for then simply fill in the author and title indices, e.g., *Gibran* (Surname preferred) for author and *The Prophet* for title. Before you make the search you may want to limit your search to the various available options. These include cheapest or most expensive first; latter or previous editions first etc. You can also limit the number of titles displayed, e.g., ten/twenty per page. If you are not sure of what you want, you may be in store for a **h a y s t a c k !**

The search engine will generate all available titles for *Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet*. Prices will vary. Once you have set your mind on the price, click for details. This page provides details of the book. These include year of publication; dimensions of the book; nature of binding (hardback or paperback); condition of the book (if the book is in mint, good or bad condition). The booksellers of the UK tend to charge less if the condition of the book is not mint or there are faults, e.g., the spine may be broken or some pages torn or faded etc. Usually this information is displayed in detail.

Now comes the trickiest part of the deal. "What you see is not always what you get", is the name of the game. There will be a levy on postage and packing

(P&P) for international shipments. These rates are fixed by the seller and are therefore arbitrary. Make sure you check and compare these rates first. Most booksellers also offer cheaper rates for multiple copies of the same or different title(s).

VISA or MASTERCARD payments are accepted or International Money Orders made in Sterling although the method of payment is at the discretion of the seller. It is better to correspond via Email (contact details are provided in the history page of the seller). For security, it is strongly advisable not to send your credit card details via Email but through Fax.

As mentioned, "what you see is not always what you get". This website for second hand and antiquarian books has its pros and cons. Details of a seller are not always regularly updated. It is therefore advisable to first

Why we buy books online

- Lower cost 55%
- Couldn't find elsewhere 51%
- Convenience 49%

cross check if the seller has the title in stock. However, like any second hand book market, the good side is, it is possible to bargain. Sellers at Hay on Wythe the book town of the UK are very cordial and pay a lot of respect to overseas buyers, especially from developing

countries. You will be surprised to see what lengths these booksellers will stretch to, to cater your needs. You will also be surprised to see the stock of titles these sellers in the UK can offer.

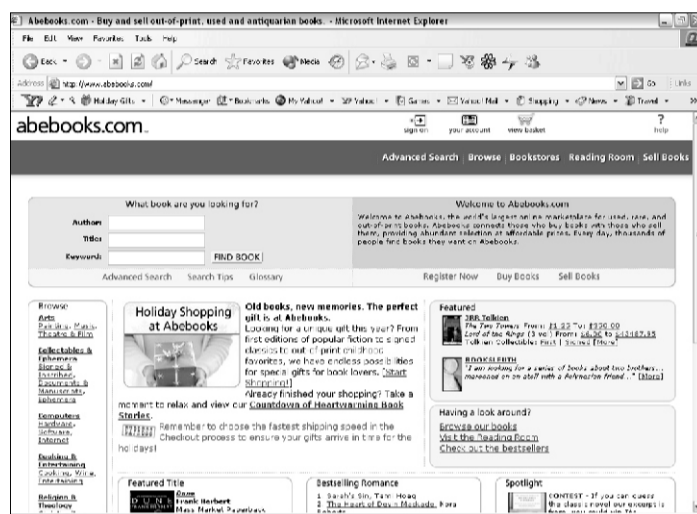
Those who do not have access to Credit Cards need not be disheartened. If you have friends/relatives living in the UK they could buy on your behalf while shipment can be made via Federal Express (FEDEX). Federal Express is a very reliable and quick way of shipping books. The service is a door-to-door and charges are extremely competitive.

The world is now at your fingertips. If you don't find your desired title in Dhaka, then why not try the second hand and antiquarian *Kitaab Bazaars* in the words of Syed Mujtaba Ali "you won't bankrupt yourself from buying books". Good Luck!

The author is a faculty in the Department of Economics at Jahangirnagar University.



The Internet, a great source for books



abebooks.com is one of the best places to buy and sell used, out-of-print and antiquarian books

Tech Snaps

JOBS, SDNP provide IT training to Law Commission officials

JOBS, a USAID-funded project, and SDNP, a UN-initiated programme, have jointly completed an information technology (IT) training on Basic Computer Applications for some high officials of Law Commission, Bangladesh recently.

The programme was designed to develop the IT capacity of the Commission and prepare it for successful implementation of e-governance in Bangladesh, said a press release Tuesday. Training for the 2nd batch of five high officials from Law Commission started early November and continued till the first week of December, 2002.

The training included computer hardware installation, Office 2000, database management, trouble shooting, and LAN/WAN installation and maintenance. The IT training is expected to assist the Law Commission to obtain maximum benefit from the use of IT, the release said.

JOBS and SDNP are also working to develop the official web site for the Commission to ensure access of the masses to the important information generated by it on legal reform issues. The website is nearly complete and expected to be launched in the second week of January 2003.

Photo Tech

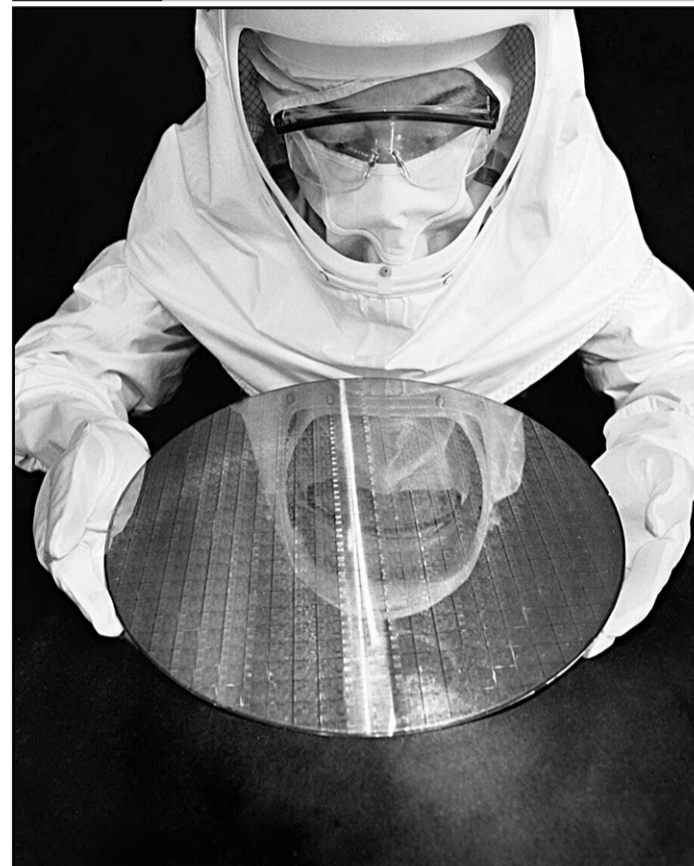


PHOTO: AFP

An Intel technician holds a 12-inch wafer that contains hundreds of 3 GHz Pentium 4 processors in this undated file photo. The processors are the first to operate at the speed of three billion cycles per second. They also include a performance-enhancing innovation called Hyper-Threading Technology, which allows a processor to handle multiple "threads," or streams of work simultaneously. Intel estimates that HT Technology can improve a personal computer's performance by 25 percent. Intel began shipping the 3 GHz Pentium 4 processors on November 14, 2002.

Dr. Tech

Dear Dr. Tech,

I hate it when I accidentally hit the Caps Lock key. Sometimes I have a whole sentence typed in before I realize my mistake! Can I setup my computer so it alerts me when I hit the Caps Lock key? Please let me know.
Rumana

Dear Rumana,
I know how annoying it is. Well here is a tip that 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's 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 the "Use Toggle Keys" checkbox.

That's it for the beeping part. Next, we need to get your screen to flash you, err, flash at you. Here's how:

1. From the Accessibility Options screen, click the **Sound** tab and check the "Use SoundSentry" checkbox. 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. dailystartech@yahoo.com

Tech Toon



"I'm using Hotmail, but my hands are still cold."

Star Tech Quiz 21

Check the box beside the correct answer

- USB ports can be used to connect
 - mice
 - keyboards
 - modems
 - All of the above
 - The operating speed of a computer is determined by the
 - processor
 - amount of memory
 - number of programs running
 - All of the above
 - Which of the following refers to a protocol used to retrieve e-mail from a server?
 - Firewall
 - ICQ
 - IRC
 - POP 3
- Name: _____ Occupation: _____
- Address: _____
- Contact Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Last week's answers
1. PSI 2. Motorised 3. Erasing magnetic media.
Winner: Tapas Dali
338, Shahjalal Hall, BAU, Maymensing
The winner is requested to contact Star Tech and collect his/her prize. Please fill this up and send your answers to Star Tech Quiz, The Daily Star, 19 Karwan Bazaar, Dhaka 1215 by December 25, 2002.

Space Tech

Black hole hunter's first image

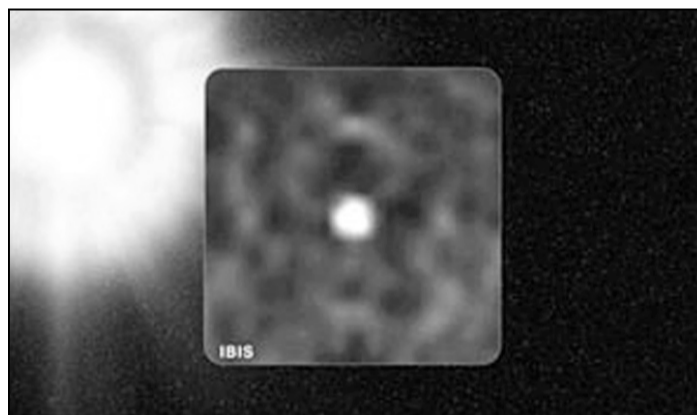
BBC ONLINE

THE Integral gamma-ray observatory - described as Europe's "black hole hunter" - has produced its first images of the Universe.

The spacecraft is still being tested prior to its full deployment, but early data have nonetheless delighted astronomers.

One of the first pictures, released at a press conference in Paris on Tuesday, shows a so-called gamma-ray burst (GRB).

The stream of high-energy radiation, which lasted just 20



The GRB was seen on 25 November

Ready soon

Astronomers speculate such events could result from the explosions of giant stars, or perhaps the collisions of extremely dense neutron stars to form black holes.

Either way, it was for just such an event that Integral was launched and the scientists reported in Paris that all the spacecraft's instruments worked perfectly when asked to track and record the GRB.

Integral (short for INternational Gamma Ray Astrophysics Laboratory) can capture gamma rays, X-rays and visible light simultaneously.

It was built by the European Space Agency and launched on the Russian Proton rocket from Baikonur in October.

There is huge demand for its services and Esa says astronomers should start to get observing time within the next few weeks.

Ripped apart

"We have been optimising the instruments' performance to produce the best overall science. We expect to be ready for

astronomers around the world to use Integral by the end of the year," says Arvind Parmar, acting Integral Project Scientist at Esa.

"These [first] images and spectra prove that Integral can certainly do the job it was designed to do, and more", which is to unlock some of the secrets of the high-energy Universe.

Integral has been called Europe's "black hole hunter" because it will scan along the galactic plane each week looking for new sources of gamma rays, which could well be new black holes.

It will also study those already known in far more detail than previously possible.

Integral will allow insights into the behaviour of black holes and register the gamma radiation emitted by fast-moving particles accelerated in the region around the holes by their huge gravitational pull.

Supermassive holes

As a first test, Integral observed the Cygnus region of the sky, looking particularly at an object known as

Cygnus X-1.

This object has long been known to be a constant generator of high-energy radiation.

Most scientists believe that Cygnus X-1 is the site of a black hole, containing around five times the mass of our Sun and devouring a nearby star.

Observing objects like Cygnus X-1, which is relatively close by in our own galaxy - only 10,000 light-years away - will help scientists better understand so-called stellar-sized black holes.

The observatory should also provide fresh insight into



The spacecraft can capture light in a wide range of energies

supermassive black holes, such as the one thought to exist at the centre of the Milky Way.

This black hole is calculated to have almost three million times the mass of our Sun. Integral sits in an orbit between 9,000 and 153,000 kilometres above the Earth.

Spider Robot



PHOTO: AFP

This undated photo released by NASA shows a first prototype, hand-size, spider-bot. NASA announced December 18, the development of the small robot resembling a spider which could one day be used to explore other planets, comets, asteroids, the Moon, carry out repairs on the International Space Station or replace man on high risk missions.

Tech Jobs

New Horizons CLC of Dhaka
Position: Deputy Sales Manager (Chittagong Branch)
Last Date: Friday, December 27, 2002

Prime University
Position: System Manager
Last Date: Monday, December 30, 2002

Asia Infosys Ltd
Position: Web Designer
Last Date: December 22, 2002

Sam Yang Engineering Co., Ltd.
Position: IT executive
Last Date: Friday, January 17, 2003

CYBERTECH
Position: Faculty
Last Date: Friday, December 20, 2002

Directorate of Health
Position: Assistant Computer Programmer, Computer Programmer, System Analyst
Last Date: Saturday, January 04, 2003

M2SYS Technology
Position: Senior .NET Engineer, Senior JAVA/J2EE Engineer
Last Date: December 23, 2002

source: www.bdjobs.com

Best 10 Websites Category: Electronics

The Sharper Image
Hot & New Products!
URL: <http://www.sharperimage.com>

Brookstone
The gift of innovation.
URL: <http://www.brookstone.com>

CRUTCHFIELD
The Internet's leading electronics store.
URL: <http://www.crutchfield.com>

buy.com electronics store
Lorex offers a break-through in innovation and value with their new Observation Systems, Security Cameras, Wireless Systems, Digital Monitoring, and Time-Lapse VCRs.
URL: <http://www.us.buy.com>

GoodGuys
Goodguys.com will deliver your package via UPS Ground or Motor Freight at no additional charge on all items.
URL: <http://www.goodguys.com>

amazon.com
Amazon.com is the place to find and discover anything you want to buy online.
URL: <http://www.amazon.com>

800.com
From our Top Brand names to Live Customer Support, we're making buying Electronics easy for you.
URL: <http://www.800.com>

TurboPrice.com
Our mission is to offer the lowest prices on the web, the best customer service, and a pleasant shopping experience for our customers. TURBOPRICE offers a huge selection of electronics and accessories to choose from.
URL: <http://www.turboprice.com>

Hifi.com
Huge selection of electronics.
URL: <http://www.hifi.com>

tek discount warehouse
Online Shopping.
URL: <http://www.discountwarehouse.com>