Game Tech

Chittagong Racing

Another racing game on the track

MIR NADIA NIVIN

AT the source of every creative act lies inspiration a lot of inspiration. And for two young men this inspiration comes from the massive success of the first 3D racing game in Bangladesh, Dhaka Racing.

Thus Chittagong racing was born. Chittagong racing, as the name suggests, is a 3D racing game set in the scenic port city of Chittagong.

Ahmed Shamsul Arefin and Samiran Mahmud, two 4th year students of BIT, Chittagong, are the proud developers. They both belong to the Department of Computer Science and Engineering.

Version 1.0 of the game, depicting the BIT campus track, is complete. Three other tracks, Kaptai Lake, Tiger Pass-Batali Hill and a special track on Old Dhaka are 'under construction'.

Apart from these, they are currently working on enhancing gravitation and collision simulation in their terrains.

With 3D State as the game engine, Direct X, Visual C++ and 3D Studio Max have been used.

However, these Chittagong racing boys have a distinct advantage, which, if implemented properly, is sure to give them a good boost. And this comes in the way of designing racing tracksone of the key ingredients in any racing game. Because Chittagong abounds in a variety of scenic, hilly and dangerous tracks, these people can have their pick of any number of these against which to model their own.

As one of the developers said, "Besides Dhaka racing, the next great inspiration was the extraordinary landscape of Chittagong".

This is a drawback in case of the Dhaka racing people, who often say that finding interesting tracks and terrains is a problem. Because of obvious reasons, the choices within Dhaka city are limited.

The 3D modeling of the game, as perceived in the demo version, is good but it could definitely do with some improvement.

So it is to be hoped that the developers continue improving, polishing up and above all keeping up their good work.

Web Tech

Making money online

www.takakamao.com

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

THE mushrooming of technology oriented organisations are attracting foreign virtual advertising companies to Bangladesh. One such endeavour is that of Ace Resources who has gained their popularity with their website www.takakamao.com.

Ace resources are the local business promoters in Bangladesh for Novatech, India. Novatech in turn, is a branch of the acclaimed US company, Four Pillars Inc. Four Pillars is connected to 250 companies all over the world, who use their services and skills in virtual marketing, to introduce their products and items to internet users around the globe.

Some companies in the US came up with 'the virtual marketing' idea during the early 90's, with the campaign 'Earn while you surf'. Now these companies are turning towards other countries, with growing IT trends. Besides the US, India, Malaysia and Mauritius are 'cashing-on' these ideas. This idea has reached Bangladesh in the form of www.takakamao.com, and it is the first ever home-based 'earn while you surf' web site. This is based on, "You click on a banner in our web site and you get paid while you have signed up with us. Its just that simple!" according to Kamrul Islam, project director of Ace Resources.

Annually an individual would have to pay Tk. 6,000 during sign up; renewal would cost Tk. 2500.

The first few banners that the user clicks, would be US 40 cents or 50 cents and Ace Resources is authorised to pay this amount.

"The rest of the money that the individual would be earning through banners, survey forms, paid search engines, paid mails, money games etc., would be coming directly from Four Pillars Inc. This money would be transferred directly to the individual's International Credit card account or the amount would be mailed to him in the form of an international check." said Islam.

An individual can also find out about his earnings till date through his account in the takakamao.com website. Already www.takakamao.com has around 250 members and they are happy with the way people are showing interest at this new virtual marketing sector.

Some others ways, through which people can earn money while sitting at home are through expansion of business plans, joining e-commerce plans, and transcription work on the internet.

"This is not a commercial job and we have to remind most of our members that they would actually have to work diligently to earn all this money, when they sign up." said Islam. "It is another way to supplement your average daily income and this would actually be a lot more profitable, if more people would sign up with us and help us out with our venture." he concluded.

Dr. Tech

Dear Dr. Tech,
Recently I took a broadband connection in my home. After that I heard about some new terms like 'Bandwidth' and 'Firewall'. Can you please tell me about them?
Mushfiq

Dear Mushfiq,
Bandwidth refers to the speed that data is transferred between computers on a network. The "higher" the bandwidth, the faster the transfer speed. Regular modems would be a low bandwidth device whereas a cable modem would be considered a higher bandwidth device.

In the most basic sense, a Firewall protects a computer from unauthorised internet access.

If you have a constant connection to the internet (i.e. non-dialup), you can be "hacked" into if you don't have some kind of firewall protection. It's mostly larger companies with networks connected to the internet who need firewalls.

However, with the proliferation of cable and DSL connections, lots of residential customers are finding they need some form of firewall protection as well. In fact, I recently read that hack attacks on these residential connections is on the rise and may gain the unfortunate prize of being the most common hacking target in the very near future.

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Tech Toon

"I know this is the Digital Age, but do we really want to paper train our dog on an electronic newspaper?"

Star Tech Quiz   49

Check the box beside the correct answer
1. What does EB stand for?
☐ end bill   ☐ exabyte
☐ exbit   ☐ enable backup
2. Which of them is not an operating system?
☐ Unix   ☐ Solaris
☐ McIntosh   ☐ Liteon

Name:
Occupation:
Address:
Contact Number: E-mail:
Last week's answers
1. 2GB   2. Increased system performance
Winner: Rezwanul Karim
15 Purba Nasirabad, Chittagong.
Please fill this up and send your answers to Star Tech Quiz, The Daily Star, 19 Karwan Bazaar, Dhaka 1215 by July 29, 2003.

Tech News

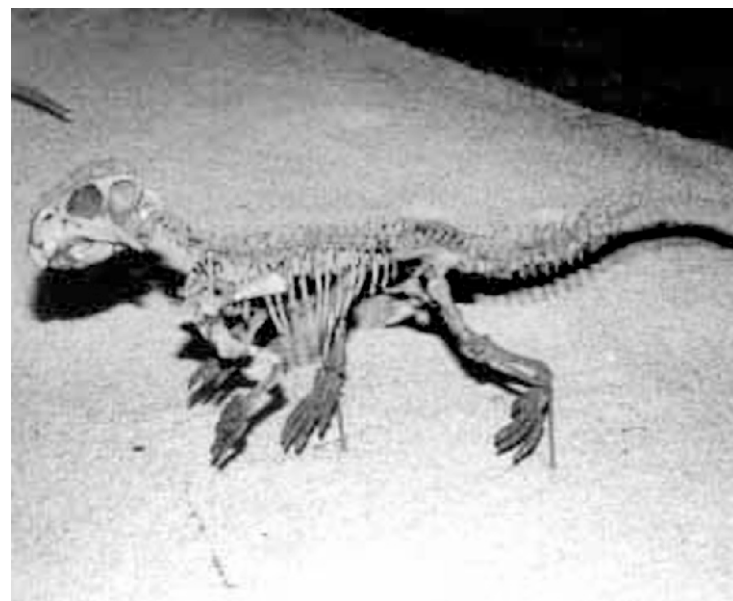# Dinosaur stolen from museum

REUTERS, Sydney

THIEVES broke into a museum near Sydney and snatched the fossil of a 110-million-year-old midget dinosaur on loan from China, officials said Monday.

The skeleton of the parrot-beaked dinosaur, one of only six worldwide, was an evolutionary link between modern-day birds and the "typical Tyrannosaurus-type of huge dinosaur," said Gavin Fry, director of the Newcastle Regional Museum, north of Sydney.

"It's the size of a dog but the skeleton is more like that of a turkey," he told Reuters.

The specimen of Psittacosaurus mongoliensis, about 24 inches high and 35 inches long, was on loan from the Beijing Natural History Museum as part of an exhibition tracing the evolution of present-day birds from dinosaurs.
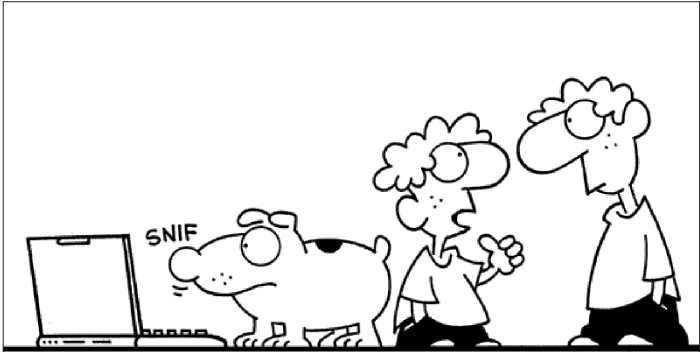
Thieves eluded police and guards Sunday and carried off the skeleton within five minutes of breaking through an armored window, having first scaled a spiked, eight-feet fence.

Psittacosaurus was the size of a dog
(Image: Natural History Museum, London)

The theft was probably motivated by impulse. "Apparently there is a market, but in this instance I'd suspect it was more opportunism and bravado than a professional job," Fry said.

"There were other things in the exhibition which were more valuable and would excite more scientific interest."

The museum has offered a $3,250 reward for information leading to the return of the dinosaur, but declined to say how much it was worth.

Meow Tech

PHOTO: **AFP**

A cat sits beside a cat-language electronic interpreter "Meowlingual" of Japan's toymaker Takara Co. during a press preview in Tokyo on July 17. The company will launch the portable device that translates cats' meows into human speech in November at a price of 8,800 yen (75 dollars) after the smash-hit dog-language interpreter Bowlingual.

Star Tech

Astronomers count the stars

Astronomers in Australia say there are 10 times more stars in the visible universe than all the grains of sand on the world's beaches and deserts.

From the darkest parts of Earth, the naked human eye can see about 5,000 stars. From a brightly-lit city street, only about 100.

But modern telescopes tell a different story.

The Australian astronomers used some of the world's most powerful instruments to measure the brightness of all the galaxies in one sector of the universe - and calculate how many stars they must contain.

From that measurement they proceeded to work out a figure for the whole of the visible universe, which they believe is much more accurate than previous estimates.

That figure - presented to the International Astronomical Union conference in Sydney - is the kind that really can be called astronomical: 70 sextillion, or seven followed by 22 zeroes.

That is more than the total number of grains of sand in all the Earth's beaches and deserts. But that is only the stars in the visible universe, within range of our telescopes.

Dr Simon Driver of the Australian National University says the actual total could be much, much bigger still - in fact, it could be infinite. He believes that many of the stars out there have planets, and some of those probably have life.

But they are so far away from Earth, he says, that we many never be able to contact anyone living on them.

-BBC Online

Tech Snaps

Japanese delegation interested to invest in IT Sector

Recently a Japanese team headed by Kazuo Kanayama, founder chairman of Labros, Inc. also the chairman of BJIT Limited a joint venture IT company with Japan met Dr. Abdul Moyeen Khan, Minister for Science and Information & Communication Technology at his Gulshan residence, says a press release.

At the meeting the minister appraised their intention and visit and showed the opportunities possibilities and positive environment of Bangladesh. He also mentioned the different incentives offered by Bangladesh Government in this sector. He told that all benefits and facilities will be provided for the overseas investors. He asked the visitors to employ more Bangladeshi in IT Sector in Japan.

In reply Kanayama said "Bangladeshi programmers are excellent. Bangladeshi programmers are working in our company with utmost satisfaction of their supervisors in home and abroad. I am requesting my friends and employers to employ Bangladeshi programmers as much as possible. I have arranged to invite 7 (seven) Bangladeshi programmers to Japan and at present they are working in different companies with good reputation."

ICCIT 2003

Organized by Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh in co-operation with the Bangladesh Association of Information Technologists (BAIT) International Conference On Computer and Information Technology (ICCIT'2003) is scheduled to be held on December 19-21, 2003, says a press release.

This will provide a unique opportunity for the computer and information technology students, engineers, technologists, professionals, scientists, researches from all over the world to exchange scientific ideas and views with fellow researchers and participants. This conference will address some of the relevant and state-of-the-art issues and topics involving computer science and engineering, information and communication technology. Registration Deadline for ICCIT 2003 is December 15, 2003.

Photo Tech

PHOTO: AFP

A Japanese girl touches timidly the guard dog robot "Banryu" (guard dragon), during a demonstration at the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation in Tokyo on July 19. The museum started showing various kind of robots for demonstration to attract summer vacationers.

Best 10 Websites   Category: Space

NASA
Simply breathtaking accomplishments from this group - they can (& do) take your browser where "no browser has gone before". The real time active tracking & video links with current spaceflights should not be missed.
URL: http://www.nasa.gov/

Chandra X-Ray Observatory
Gateway to the hot universe of black holes, exploding stars & Galaxy clusters - untangling some of the deepest mysteries in the universe.
URL: http://chandra.harvard.edu/

Imagine the Universe
Get the lowdown about our universe in a clear & concise format.
URL: http://imagine.gsfc.nasa.gov/

Space.com
Reflect on heavenly news, play games, watch videos, track missions & launches, join a community search for extraterrestrial lifeforms.
URL: http://www.space.com/

Solar System Simulator
View the universe from any point of view with this spyglass on the cosmos.
URL: http://space.jpl.nasa.gov/

Windows to the Universe
Fun & different site about earth & space presented at three levels catering for beginning space cadet, intermediate solar system captain & advanced deep space commander types.
URL: http://www.windows.ucar.edu/

Ask Dr Universe
The world's most curious cat answers kid's questions about the universe. Dr. Universe answers some of life's most confounding questions.
URL: http://www.wsu.edu/druniverse/

Bad Astronomy
Correcting science myths & solving some puzzling science questions.
URL: http://www.badastronomy.com/

The Nine Planets
Multimedia tour of the solar system.
URL: http://www.seds.org/billa/tnp/

Solar System Live
View the universe from any time point or position with this interactive tool - also an earth & moon viewer.
URL: http://www.fourmilab.ch/solar/solar.htm