

Tech News

Nation's mark stamped on CDs

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

THE research and knowledge of Siddique Mahmudur Rahman, chief executive officer, Bangladesh Institute of Philatelic Studies, have helped him publish the first ever database and interactive

Stamps, The History, Credits and finally Exit.

Introduction, when clicked on, takes the user to the Preface of the publication, written by the author. A help write-up in this section was necessary so as to accustom a user to the software. The Stamps option would take the user to a section, which

souvenir stamps, service stamps and other items available, which act as valuable ornaments for the software.

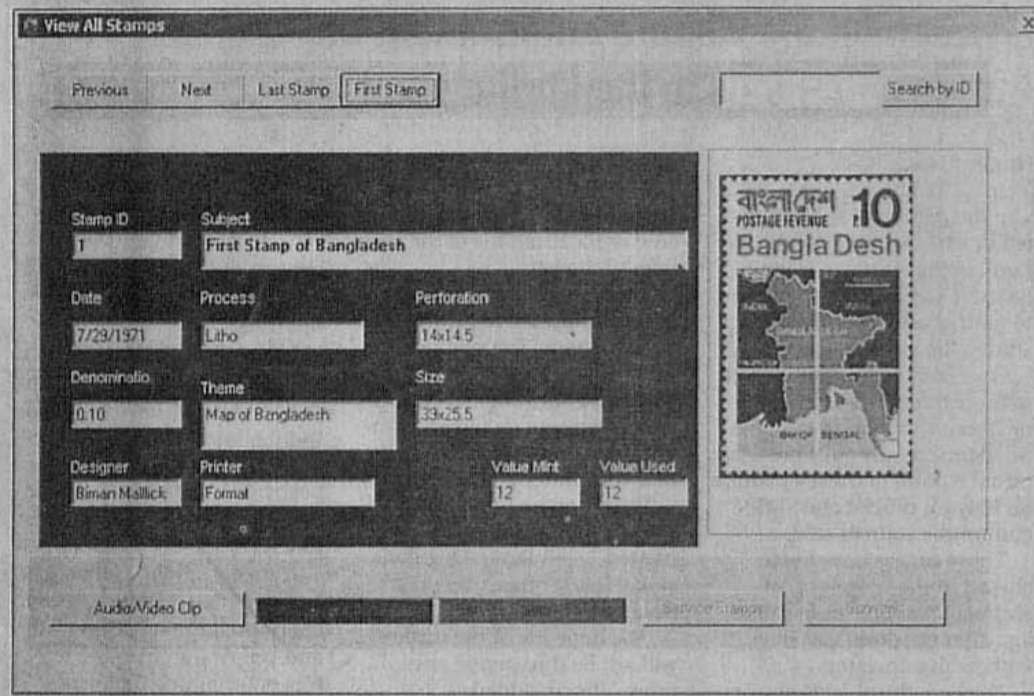
The video clips contain historical speeches of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Ziaur Rahman and other national leaders. The audio clips contain patriotic

songs like the national anthem and the popular Ekushey song.

One of the drawbacks of the software is that there are very few clips available. A greater number of such clips would have made it a lot more attractive.

Another glitch is the difference in the closure of each section. For example, the user would need to click on the *close* option to go back to the *Main Menu* from the *Stamps* option. On the other hand, the *Introduction* and *The History* sections do not even have any *close* options through which the user can go back to the *Main Menu*. The *Credits* section has particulars about the publisher and programmer of the software. The section fortunately has an *ok* option that leads to the *Main Menu*.

Apart from such minor problems, the software is a great addition to numerous publications already in existence, showcasing the glorious history of the nation. Hopefully, updates and improvements on the different sections of the software would make it a good source of learning for the upcoming generation.



Listing of all the stamps that can be searched by ID

multimedia software bases CD-ROM on Bangladesh postage stamps titled 'Postage Stamps of Bangladesh'.

The programme needs to be installed into a system before it can be browsed through and for installation the software requires around 24 megabyte hard drive space.

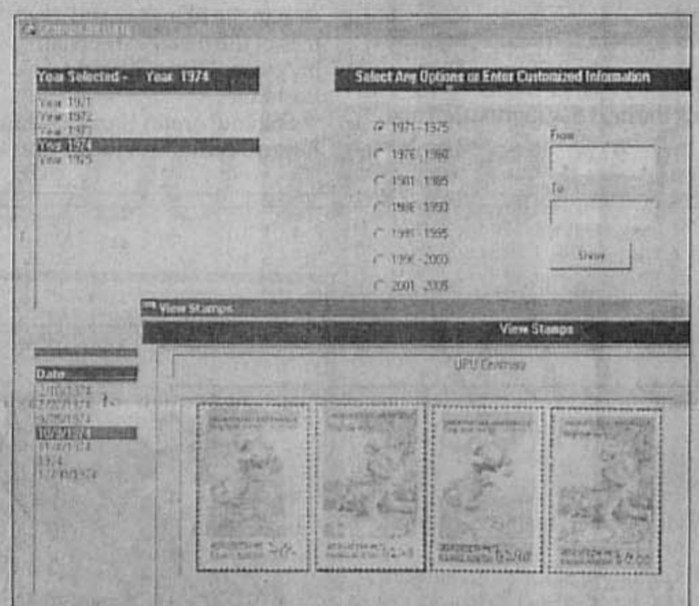
The software begins with a superb video showing off the natural and heart-warming sights and sounds of Bangladesh. As the user clicks and is taken to the main menu of the software, another apt song for the software, tuned to the poetry 'Runner' by Shukanto Bhattacharjee, is heard.

The *Main Menu* contain options like *Introduction*, *The*

is actually the database itself. Here the user is given choices to explore the stamps of Bangladesh, according to *Subjects*, *Theme* and *Year*. In case the user does not have any preferences, they can click on the last choice of exploring *All Stamps*.

The *All Stamps* option would take users to a screen filled with information on more than 800 stamps from the beginning of Bangladesh's history till 2002. The information are based on categories like *Stamp ID*, *Subject*, *Date of Issuance*, *Process*, *Perforation*, *Denomination*, *Theme* of Stamp, *Size*, *Designer*, *Printer*, *Mint* and *used Value*.

Along with each stamp there are additional audio/video clips,



Exploring the stamps by years

Tech Focus

Auto workshop site sets its sight on eco-ethics

STAR TECH DESK

THE need for a high-tech car workshop able to provide complete care for a vehicle -- that too costing the environment nothing, has long been there. But there was a yawning gap between the necessity and reality; at least until recently.

ACE Automobile Workshop and Service Centre at Gulshan-1 came into being nine years ago when two innovative and futuristic minds put their heads together with a single goal -- to utilise and invest their resources into a business that will sustain itself and make sure that it does not take toll on environment. The first condition they set for the business was that it had to be environmentally friendly. Last month, on the ninth anniversary of the company, they launched a customer service website (URL: www.acebd.net) that not only provides customers with access to the company facilities but also relays environmental information to those who care to know.

It appears that the workshop is not all about taking care of one's needs in terms of getting their cars in perfect shape, but about maintaining a level of commitment towards Green conservation which is evident in the fact that an entire section of the website has been devoted to dwell on different types of pollution that dog Dhaka City. ACE has a policy which they prefer to call 'Green Policy', which outlines how they are going to contribute to make the city a better place to live in.

Not only the use of biodegradable products and discounts on pollution control fuel additives and other air management items, ACE also makes efforts to educate drivers on the transportation laws and the civic responsibilities concerning public safety. Environmental approaches already on board at ACE are reforestation projects (where free distribution of plants occurs), subsidised sale of CFC-free products as air fresheners and cleaning agents, educating people



on the impact of air and sound pollution by automobile and so on.

Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission Chairman Syed Marghub Murshed attended the ceremony marking the launch of the website. ACE authorities also inaugurated CNG conversion facilities on the same day. Ziauddin Khan, managing director of the company, said, "This company was initiated due to our personal fascination towards re-creating an environmentally sound and pollution-free city. We believed in sustaining our own development while not harming the environment."

ACE, along with other active NGOs, has proposed to Dhaka Urban Transport Coordination Board, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry to import pollution control devices. "A tax cut on such items will certainly diversify any import attempt of such items," Ziauddin told The StarTech.

He also spoke about how ACE has initialised thoughts on import of alternate fuel vehicles (AFVs) in the future automobile market of Bangladesh. He hoped the future of such industry would surely hold adequate facilities and the infrastructure to support such hybrid automobile units. He suggested a cost cut on electricity, like the one where vehicles would be required to be recharged every 24 hours. "Maybe we will import on our own. Maybe we will have private partners."

Another environmentally friendly step already in force is collection of rainwater. ACE uses rainwater in washing the gears and the bottoms of a vehicle and its tyres. However, no major frontal wash or cleaning of the body is done with this water due to possible presence of acidity in it. ACE also plans to build a private water recycling plant to make better use of the water already used in washing. It also envisages a solar panel to generate electricity in times of

power outage. There is a newsletter that focuses on growing awareness among people of the different Green issues, the second issue of which is due in the next month.

A "used car sector" has been linked to help buy and sell cars online. Provision for online appointment and evaluation forms through which customers may choose their own suitable time to avail ACE services are also available. ACE also offers automobile maintenance, safety driving tips, list of services and a 'AAA car and limousine service' on its website. It also provides a list of existing customers, which mainly compose of units of foreign private banks and insurance agencies.

ACE site welcomes any comments or advices on their activities towards a pollution-free Bangladesh. The unconventional views of the company have reasons to stir enthusiastic response from other businesses with similar approach to follow suit.

Easy riding with Enacle



Japan's electronics giant Sanyo unveils the new electric power assisted bicycle "Enacle", equipped with a newly developed electric motor which generate electric power with a speed of 12km/h at the company's headquarters in Tokyo on July 5. Sanyo will put it on the market with a price of 70,000 yen (650 USD).

PHOTO: AFP

Tech News

Seminar on ICT job market trends and its future

STAR TECH DESK

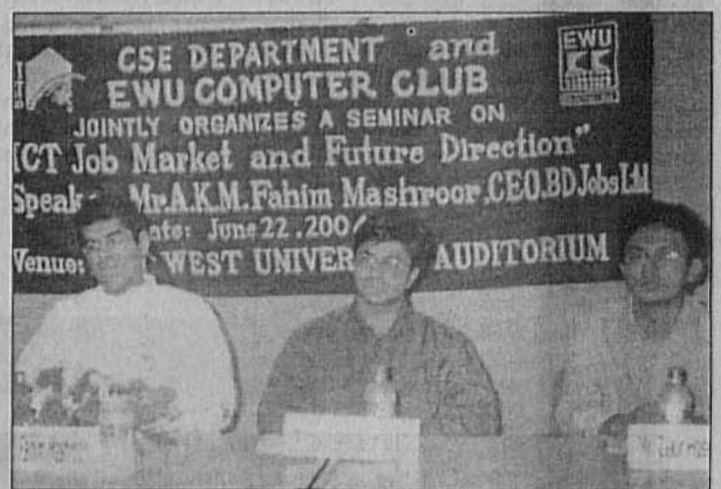
RECENTLY the Department of Computer Science & Engineering and Computer Club of East West University (EWU) jointly organised a seminar on 'ICT Job Market Trends and Future Direction', says a press release. AKM Fahim Mashroor, CEO, BDJobs.com Ltd was present as chief guest and also presented the keynote paper. While speaking on the occasion, Syed Akhter Hossain, chairperson, Department of CSE encouraged the students and participants to keep constant

perseverance and enhance skill sets for the changing ICT field.

In his presentation the chief guest focused on the present ICT job sector of Bangladesh. He highlighted on the major segments of the ICT job market and presented percentage distribution of the ICT jobs along with skill sets till June 20, 2004. Statistics of the job vacancies were also presented. He said that the potential employers are unable to find the right people to employ. Universities, colleges are producing graduates but these students lack market driven skills. He

also pointed out that the project management skills are not in place and most of the IT service sectors are looking for good QA managers, Business Analysts and Software Testers. He concluded with some tips on accomplishing successful IT careers.

After the presentation, the students and the participants discussed different issues on employment and career path. Among others the faculty members of various departments, students and the members of the EWU Computer Club were also present.



From left: AKM Fahim Mashroor, Syed Akhter Hossain and Mohammad Zakir Hossain Sarker at the seminar

Tech News

HP declares 2004 as 'Year of Colour'

STAR TECH DESK

HP has announced a broad initiative to drive colour maintenance across all customer markets in Asia. With 20 years of imaging and printing innovation, HP is helping customers break through the barriers that have previously held them back from bringing colour into all aspects of their business, making it easier than ever.

In the latest event, HP revealed most of these facts. The event titled 'HP colour-Empower, Transform, Perform' was held in Singapore on the 2nd week of June, says a press release. Many small events, such as -- technology showcases, seminars, demonstrations and face-to-face interviews with key HP personnel took place. Sixty journalists

from various countries and top HP officials from the Asia Pacific region attended the ceremony. Micheal Hoffman,



senior vice president, Business and Enterprise, Vincent Vanderpoel, vice president,

Supplies Business and Todd Biezer, office colour programme manager all of HP imaging and printing group,

Research group and Micheal Halley of MIT were also present. The event mainly focused on:

- HP's business strategy for colour
- HP investments to accelerate colour adoption in Asia Pacific
- New technologies and solutions including supplies
- References of customers across the different business sectors across the region.

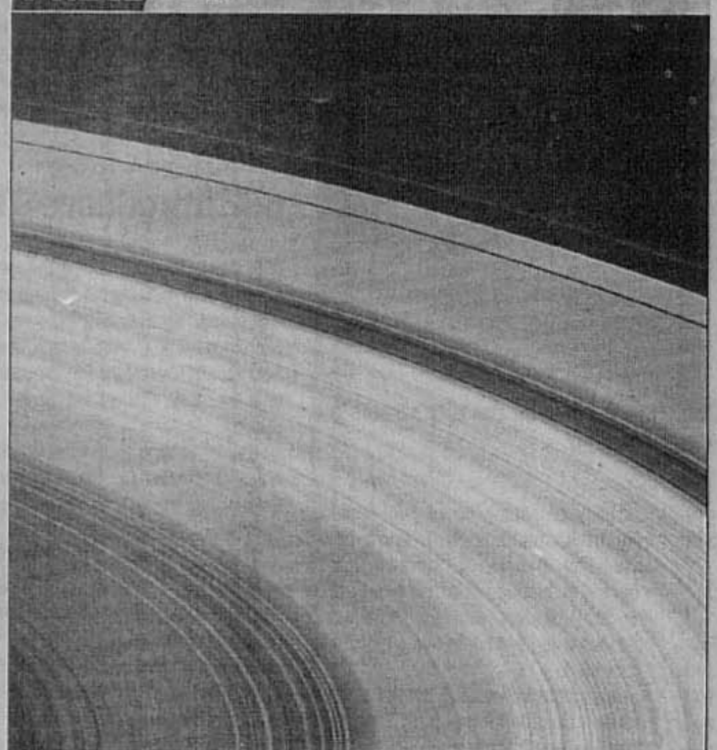
 HP announced that, in order to reach customers in various stages of digital colour adoption, HP is planning to work with industry leaders like Apple, Microsoft, Adobe and Quark Express to deliver the best colour experience with robust, affordable colour printing solutions and will continue to elevate and improve print quality.

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Photo Tech



This Nasa Cassini spacecraft image released on July 1, was taken on June 20 showing Saturn's rings at a distance of approximately 6,276,220 kilometers (3,899,862 miles). The Cassini spacecraft entered orbit around the planet on June 30.

Tech News

Asocio officers meet 2004

The three-day officers' meeting of the Asian-Oceanian Computing Industry Organisation (Asocio) is being held from July 5 to 7 at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel, says a press release. Asocio member Bangladesh Computer Society (BCS) is hosting the Meeting.

Minister for Science and Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Abdul Moyeen Khan is expected to chair the formal inauguration of the Asocio Members' Meeting 2004 on July 7.

Established in 1984, the Asocio has full members of the Asian & Oceanian region's ICT associations of 19 countries and 5 guest members of same kind of countries in North America and Europe at present. Such as this is the only intra-country ICT federation of this region.

Representing Bangladesh in the Asocio as associate member from 1996 to 2000 and as full member since 2001, BCS is

playing a major role here. As a result of which Asocio started the Multilateral Trade Visit Program (MLTVP) through BCS in Bangladesh first in 2001. Upon the success of Bangladesh show, the MLTVP has become one of the most international flourished events of Asocio.

Asocio has been playing a vital role for the development of ICT sector regionally as well as globally.

To participate at the Asocio Officers' Meeting 2004, 40 world-renowned ICT personalities are already here from countries like Australia, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand.

It is expected that the agendas of the meeting will include few issues on the ICT sector of Bangladesh, and focus on how to develop this promising section in the country.