

TECH/NEWS

# New 7 Wonders of Nature: Time for us to stand out

SAMIUL ISLAM RIKTH

**T**HE time to create yet another unique mark for Bangladesh in the world has finally arrived. So let's wake up guys to vote for the two most hot spots of Bangladesh to become one of the "New 7 Wonders of Nature".

The "New 7 Wonders of Nature" is an online search set up by a Switzerland based non-profit organisation. Their goal is to bring forward the hidden treasures of our planet to global attention. They highlight the breathtaking and incredible beauty of natural places that include waterfalls to seascapes, rainforests to mountain peaks, and freshwater lakes to salt flats that people are still yet to discover.

A total of 261 locations from 222 countries have participated in this grand campaign. And competing for the title of being recognised as one of 7 Wonders of Nature is three of Bangladesh's very own renowned places Cox's Bazar Beach, Sundarban Forest and Ganges River.

The very famous Cox's Bazar Beach located in southeastern part of Bangladesh is claimed to be the world's longest natural sandy sea beach. This 120 km sandy beach is made of a series of sandy hills that run parallel to the waters of the Bay of Bengal. The beach's towering cliffs, colourful ancient pagodas and Hindu temples, waterfalls, a game park, tribal villages and a coral island in nearby Saint Martin are its biggest attractions. In the category of seascapes, this calm and serene beach is currently at the top, ranking first in the voting process.

At present, ranking the third position in the category of forests, national parks and national reserves is none other than the famous Sundarban Forest. This forest located in the southwestern part of the country is the largest mangrove forest in the world, spreading across parts of Bangladesh and West Bengal, India. This area is well known for the endangered Royal Bengal Tiger along with the numerous fauna and its different species of birds, spotted deer, crocodiles and snakes.

Also in the third place is the 2,510 km long Ganges River amid with other rivers in the category of lakes, rivers and waterfalls. This major river, flowing through India and Bangladesh, is considered as a holy river amongst the Hindus and also holds a great deal of historical significance.

I know what you must be thinking right now. How did Cox's Bazar reach the number one spot? The answer is quite straightforward.

Cox's Bazar is being supported by telecom operator BanglaLink, which is its Official Supporting Committee and their contribution has made it possible for this 120 km sandy beach to reach the position it is currently in. For a period six months, BanglaLink ran a successful campaign that ended on New Year's Eve that is on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008.

During this period, BanglaLink promoted Cox's Bazar via a television advertisement. Along with televised promotions, BanglaLink encouraged people to vote for Cox's Bazar as well as Sundarban Forest and Ganges River through radio commercials as well in the major leading newspapers of Bangladesh.

BanglaLink also urged their subscribers to vote for the nominees nominated for the "New 7 Wonders of Nature"



PHOTOS: SYED ZAMIR HOSSAIN

especially Cox's Bazar by sending them regular SMSs. In August 2008, they organised a rally in major parts of the city including Shahbagh and Press Club. People from media and tourism and Dhaka University all participated in the rally.

For five whole months, BanglaLink also organised two caravans that consisted of internet accessible laptops and supervisors who went to around 200 educational institutions and other places all over the country so that they could get people could vote for Cox's Bazar Beach and the other nominees free of cost. They took this to another level by having two mobile booths going to around 72 educational institutions to collect votes from the youth of Bangladesh which lasted for two months approximately.

BanglaLink to promote Cox's Bazar for the "New 7 Wonders of Nature" also associated itself with the Bangladesh Cyber Café Association. Basically via this promotional activity, BanglaLink provided the opportunity for people to vote for Cox's Bazar by occupying two desktops in around 250 cyber cafes all over Bangladesh for a duration of three months.

Sharfuddin Ahmed, PR and Communication Manager of BanglaLink said BanglaLink has been associated with Cox's Bazar ever since 2005 with their Beach Cleaning Project, which is still being carried on and showing wonders. With this new campaign, they hope to see both Cox's Bazar and Bangladesh touch the sky in terms of global recognition and success.

"We are very happy that our campaign has been so successful. We hope our campaign will promote public awareness and contribute to the protection of our natural heritages by making us victorious," said Sharfuddin Ahmed.

Another company promoting the "New 7 Wonders of Nature" is Golden Bangladesh. Jahangir Alam said they have been encouraging people to vote for Cox's Bazar, Sundarban and Ganges

River by advertising in their website goldenbangladesh.com. Advertisements on the website take people directly to the voting page in the "New 7 Wonders of Nature" website. Apart from that, a rally has been organised and a stall "Golden Bangladesh" for free voting has been set up at the Bangla Academy which will be there till April 24.

Now you must be wondering, how the "New 7 Wonders of Nature" will be selected. Well entire process of selection is extremely simple.

The first phase of national qualification for the "New 7 Wonders of Nature" ended on January 7 2009. A list of 261 nominees were finalised from around 430 nominations from 224 countries. From that day onwards, voting for the top 77 nominees in 11 different categories from that list also started. People can vote once from one e-mail address.

Voting for the top 77 nominees will continue until July 7 2009. This is the second stage and these nominees will be the ones that will be considered to be qualified for the status of "New 7 Wonders of Nature" by the New 7 Wonders of Nature Panels of Experts. The panel will be governed under the guidance and leadership of Prof. Federico Mayor, former Director-General of UNESCO. This panel will review the top 77 and select 21 finalists, according to a published standard. The selection will be announced on 21 July, 2009, and the 21 finalists will enter the third and final phase to vote and choose the official New 7 Wonders of Nature.

We are currently in the second phase and one of the main purposes of this article is to encourage all Bangladeshis to vote for Cox's Bazar so it can maintain its current position and also support Sundarban Forest and Ganges River to reach the same height as the sandy beach.

Voting process is extremely easy. Simply go to [www.new7wonders.com](http://www.new7wonders.com) and go to the N7W tab where you will find the option, "Vote for Nominees." The way

to vote for your preferred nominee is posted on the poll's website. To make it easier for you, let me provide with the exact link that will take you directly to the online-voting page, [http://www.new7wonders.com/nature/en/vote\\_on\\_nominees/](http://www.new7wonders.com/nature/en/vote_on_nominees/). So read the rules and vote away.

Another new way you can vote for your favourite natural beauty is over the telephone, which facility is available worldwide. Basically, you dial their 24-hour international telephone line number, 0041773124041. At the end of the message, after the tone, you need to tab in the 3-digit code for your chosen nominee. To know 3-digit code, just visit [http://www.new7wonders.com/nature/en/vote\\_on\\_nominees/telephone/voting/](http://www.new7wonders.com/nature/en/vote_on_nominees/telephone/voting/). After you have heard a thank you message, you are assured your vote has been approved. Your one call represents your one vote.

Voting will continue throughout 2010 and will continue in 2011. During this time, the New 7 Wonders World Tour will visit each of the finalists to allow them to present themselves to the voters across the globe. If you want to find out more information, just visit [www.new7wonders.com](http://www.new7wonders.com). And to view the list of nominees and also find out the live ranking of your favourite destination, just go to <http://www.new7wonders.com/nature/en/livetracking/>.

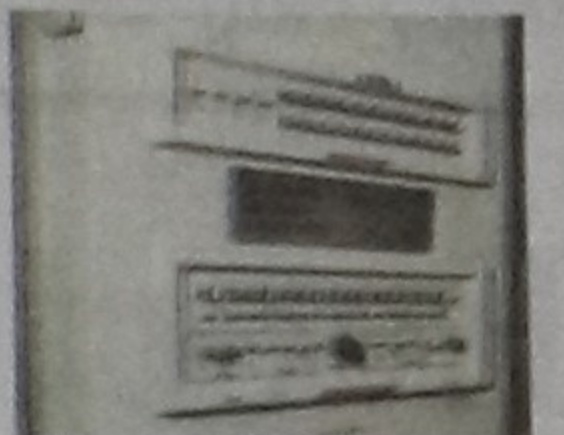
The top 7 nominees will be officially declared the "New 7 Wonders of Nature" by the year 2011.

So guys, let's not waste any more time and start voting. It's time that the entire world recognises Bangladesh as a country of natural beauty and amazing scenery rather than identifying Bangladesh as country with food shortages, floods, political turmoil or other natural disasters.

So all you Bengalis out there, let's make Bangladesh the proud owner of one of the "New 7 Wonders of Nature."

Interface Message Processor

The Interface Message Processor (IMP) was the packet-switching node used to connect computers to the original ARPANET in the late 1960s and 1970s. It was the first generation of what is known as a router today. An initial protocol was suggested in RFC 1. To connect to the ARPANET, host computers communicated with IMPs using a special high-speed bit-serial interface. The IMP itself was a ruggedized Honeywell DDP-516 minicomputer with special-purpose interfaces and software. In later years the IMPs were made from the non-ruggedized Honeywell 316.



TECH/NEWS

# Sixth Sense ready to become a reality!

MIT wearable gadget gives you Sixth Sense

MAHDIN MAHBOOB

**T**he sixth sense, often quoted in novels, books and articles, is about a rare and mystical sense of things happening around you or things which could happen. Now it is set to become a common man's thing, thanks to MIT Media Lab researchers, who have cooked up *Sixth Sense*, a wearable computing device that turns any surface into a Web interface, augmenting the five senses we've been given naturally.

The researchers at MIT's Media Lab (Fluid Interfaces Group) have developed a gesture-controlled wearable computing device that feeds you relevant information and turns any surface into an interactive display. Called the Sixth Sense, the gadget relies on certain gestures and on object recognition to call up virtual gadgets and Web-based information, in a way that conjures up the Hollywood movie *Minority Report*.

The team built the Sixth Sense \$350 (approx. BDT 24,500) prototype using off-the-shelf components a simple web cam and portable battery-powered projector with a small mirror that are fashioned into a pendant-style necklace that communicates with a cell phone.

When might Sixth Sense hit retail shelves? There's no release date, and MIT Associate Professor and Founder of the school's Fluid Interfaces Group Pattie Maes calls it "very much a work in progress."



(Perfecting the image recognition, for example, is an ongoing challenge.) Still, the MIT team says it has the potential to be made available today in a limited form.

Developed by Maes and MIT grad student Pranav Mistry (who Maes describes as the genius behind the gadget), along with the help of other MIT students, Sixth Sense aims to more seamlessly integrate online information and tech into everyday life. By making available information needed for decision-making beyond what we have access to with our five senses, it effectively gives users a sixth sense, says Maes.

Things you could do using the Sixth Sense include making a call, calling up a map, taking pictures, create multimedia reading experiences, calling up e-mail, getting flight updates and of course, checking the time!

Information Source: cio.com

TECH/NEWS

# Court jails Pirate Bay founders



BBC ONLINE

**A** court in Sweden has jailed four men behind The Pirate Bay (TPB), the world's most high-profile file-sharing website, in a landmark case.

Frederik Neij, Gottfrid Svartholm Warg, Carl Lundstrom and Peter Sunde were found guilty of breaking copyright law and were sentenced to a year in jail.

They were also ordered to pay \$4.5m (£3m) in damages.

Record companies welcomed the verdict but the men are to appeal and Sunde said they would refuse to pay the fine.

Speaking at an online press conference, he described the verdict as "bizarre".

"It's serious to actually be found guilty and get jail time. It's really serious. And that's a bit weird," Sunde said.

"It's so bizarre that we were convicted at all and it's even more bizarre that we were [convicted] as a team. The court said

we were organised. I can't get Gottfrid out of bed in the morning. If you're going to convict us, convict us of disorganised crime.

"We can't pay and we wouldn't pay. Even if I had the money I would rather burn everything I owned, and I wouldn't even give them the ashes."

The damages were awarded to a number of entertainment companies, including Warner Bros, Sony Music Entertainment, EMI, and Columbia Pictures.

However, the total awarded fell short of the \$17.5m in damages and interest the firms were seeking.

Speaking to the BBC, the chairman of industry body the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) John Kennedy said the verdict sent out a clear message.

"These guys weren't making a principled stand, they were out to line their own pockets. There was nothing meritorious about their behaviour, it was reprehensible."

"The Pirate Bay did immense harm and the damages awarded doesn't even get close to compensation, but we never claimed it did."

"There has been a perception that piracy is OK and that the music industry should just have to accept it. This verdict will change that," he said.

The four men denied the charges throughout the trial, saying that because they did not actually host any files, they were not doing anything wrong.

A lawyer for Carl Lundstrom, Per Samuelson, told journalists he was shocked by the guilty verdict and the severity of the sentence.

PHOTO



EYE SEE CAM

A fair host presents the so-called EyeSeeCam, which helps to guide the eyes and the vision of a robot on April 21 at the Hannover Messe fair for industrial technology at the fair grounds in Hanover, central Germany. From April 20 to 24, about 6150 exhibitors from 61 countries will present their latest industrial know-how. Korea is the partner country of the Hannover Messe 2009.

TECH/NEWS

# Play game, become millionaire

STARTECH DESK

**A**CI group and aamra infotainment have jointly organised an online-based quiz competition "ACI Pure Salt Desh Ke Jano (know your country)".

At a press briefing officials of ACI group and aamra said the competition will start from April 27 and continue until May 25. Top ten winners will be awarded with Tk 10 lakh each.

The officials also said the competition will take place in three phases. First and second phases will be held online and the final phase will take place live on May 30.

Bangladeshi citizen above 14 years of age can join the competition from anywhere in the world by logging on to 2funmail.com. Contestants will have to register to take part in the competition.

To get promoted from first to second phase, a contestant needs to answer 12 questions correctly out of 15 questions within 15 minutes. A contestant can play the first phase multiple times until he or she gets qualified for the second phase.



Syed Alamgir speaks at the event.

The top hundred scorers from the second phase will be invited to play in the third phase. All the questions will be selected randomly from the question bank. The final competition will be held at Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre (BCFCC) on May 30.

Managing Director of aamra group Sayed Farhan Ahmed, COO of aamra infotainment limited Russel T Ahmed and Director of ACI Pure Salt Syed Alamgir were present at the press conference.