

Tennis for Two

Tennis for Two was a game developed in 1958 on an analog computer, which simulates a game of tennis or ping pong on an oscilloscope. Created by American physicist William Higginbotham, it is important in the history of video games as one of the first electronic games to use a graphical display. Higginbotham created Tennis for Two to cure the boredom of visitors to Brookhaven National Laboratory, where he worked. The game uses an oscilloscope as the graphical display to display the path of a simulated ball on a tennis court.



startech@thedailystar.net

TECH TIPS



First-aid could salvage your hardware

NAHID AKTER

WHenever there is an accident, you always resort to preliminary first-aid before calling on the doctor. This is the rule of thumb. But what do you do when your computer, iPod, cellphone or digital camera suffers an accident? Even in such circumstances, first-aid always goes a long way. Spilt coffee on your laptop? Accidentally dropped your cellphone in water? Reacting quickly could save your hardware and data. Clean a spill on your Desktop PC keyboard

Unplug the keyboard. If you spilled water, turn the keyboard over and let it drain and dry out for at least 24 hours. If you spilled something sticky, try prying the small key caps off of the keyboard with a flathead screwdriver to get better access to the mess. Don't remove the spacebar, the Enter key or other large key caps. (Take a picture of the keyboard layout, or make a quick sketch of it, before you remove any keys so you can put them back where you found them). Gently clean the keyboard with a wet cotton swab. Use either hot water or rubbing alcohol to get rid of the sticky residue. Gently clean the keyboard with a wet cotton swab. Use either hot water or rubbing alcohol to get rid of the sticky residue. Let everything dry for at least 24 hours before plugging the keyboard back in.

Clean a spill on your laptop

When liquids meet electronics, you can't waste time. Conductive liquids, like salt water cause most of the initial damage. Immediately unplug the laptop from its power cord, and pull out the battery. Don't bother closing programs or saving data.

Working quickly, remove all cables and attachments, plus any swappable optical drive or PC card. Tilt the laptop to get most of the liquid out the same way it came in, but be careful as you turn the machine over. Keep liquid away from the LCD. If liquid is on the surface, however, dab the outside with a clean towel.

Depending on your available

tools and disassembly skills, remove more parts. Unscrew the outer case, and remove the plastic shell to expose the internal circuits. You can disassemble parts even further, separating individual components to help them dry. Do as much of this as you are comfortable with.

If advanced disassembly unnerves you, consider taking the laptop to a good local repair shop at this stage. But even without further assistance, your first aid may save your system.

If you do disassemble the PC, consider cleaning the affected parts

Patience is virtue in these cases, so avoid using a hair dryer to speed up the process. Excessive heat can cause more damage. Instead, leave the laptop in a warm room, next to a windowsill or in another dry location. Reassemble the laptop and turn it back on. If the keys are sticky, turn the system off; disassemble the keyboard for fine cleaning with electronics cleaner.

If the laptop won't turn on, your hard drive may still work. Remove the drive, put it in another case or hook it to an adapter, and connect it to a different PC.



with electronics circuit clean. If all you spilled was a little water, this step is likely more trouble than it's worth. Other drinks are more conductive and corrosive. However, if you've spilled a lot of liquid—more than a quarter of a cup—dab the parts with a fresh towel full of circuit cleaner. Work with rubber gloves in a ventilated area.

Swab, and spray compressed air Now wait for your system to dry. Leave the laptop disassembled or open and upside-down for a couple of days. Wait even longer if you can.

Recover a submerged cellphone

During the rainy season, dropping your cellphone or iPod in a puddle of water or getting it wet in the rain is a very common occurrence. In such cases, act immediately. Turn your gadget off and remove the battery or media card if any. Then your goal will be to remove as much visible moisture possible. You can use a paper towel or a dry cloth to wipe or soak out any visible moisture. Heat is often effective in removing any extra moisture. You can try leaving it in your front pocket for the day.

Another option is to submerge it in 99% alcohol. The alcohol will bind to the water and the evaporate. But do be careful. Alcohol could damage some plastics. If you are comfortable with the idea of doing it yourself, you can open up the device with caution. This would be the best way to ensure that there is no hidden moisture. You will definitely need to open it if you've spilt something sticky like a fizzy drink or coffee. You could check your hardware instructions to see how you can dismantle your hardware safely. You can apply 99% isopropyl alcohol using a cotton bud to clean the sides effectively from any visible depositions. Finally let it dry completely overnight to ensure that all the moisture has evaporated. You can submerge the phone in a bowl or plastic bag full of uncooked rice; seal the bowl airtight with plastic wrap. The rice will absorb moisture and help the evaporation process; just keep it out of direct sunlight to avoid condensation. Leave the phone sealed up for a couple of days.

Remove the phone from the bowl or bag and, using a can of compressed air, gently spray off any rice dust. (Push the button in a series of quick blasts, instead of holding it down.) Reassemble the phone, switch it on and see if your efforts were worth the trouble.

But in the end, prevention is always better than cure. It's a better idea to avoid getting yourself into such a soup (pun intended) in the first place. A few obvious modes of caution may be to avoid using your cellphone in the rain, and shelter it from the rain by using a plastic cover. Plastic covers seem to have gone out of fashion now, but for the monsoon weather, it is a much better replacement to the new fashionable cloth mobile holders. Ensure that you don't keep your phones and laptops near any place that is susceptible to spills of any sort. Finally, never put your phone in your breast pocket; bending from the waist will cause the phone to drop, who knows where?

References: pcworld.com, online-tech-tips.com

TECH NEWS

Google hopes readers will 'flip' over new format

AP, San Francisco

GOOGLE Inc. is testing a new format that is supposed to make reading online stories as easy as flipping through a magazine, a shift that eventually could feed more advertising sales to revenue-starved publishers.

The internet search leader unveiled the experiment, called "Fast Flip," Monday at a conference hosted by TechCrunch, a popular blog.

The service is meant to duplicate the look and feel of perusing a printed publication. The stories are displayed on electronic pages that can be quickly scrolled through by clicking on large arrows on the side instead of a standard Web link that requires waiting several seconds for a page to load. Readers can sort through content based on topics, favorite writers and publications.

For now, Fast Flip will only show the first page of a story. Readers who want to continue will have to click through to the publisher's site, where the display reverts to a traditional Web page.

More than three dozen publishers, broadcasters and Web-only outlets have agreed to share their content on Fast Flip. The participants include two major newspapers, The New York Times and the Washington Post, as well as large magazines like Newsweek and BusinessWeek.

The publishers providing the stories to Fast Flip will get most of the revenue from the ads that Google intends to show in the

new format. That's a switch from Google's main search page and its news section, where the Mountain View-based company keeps all the money from ads shown alongside headlines and snippets from stories.

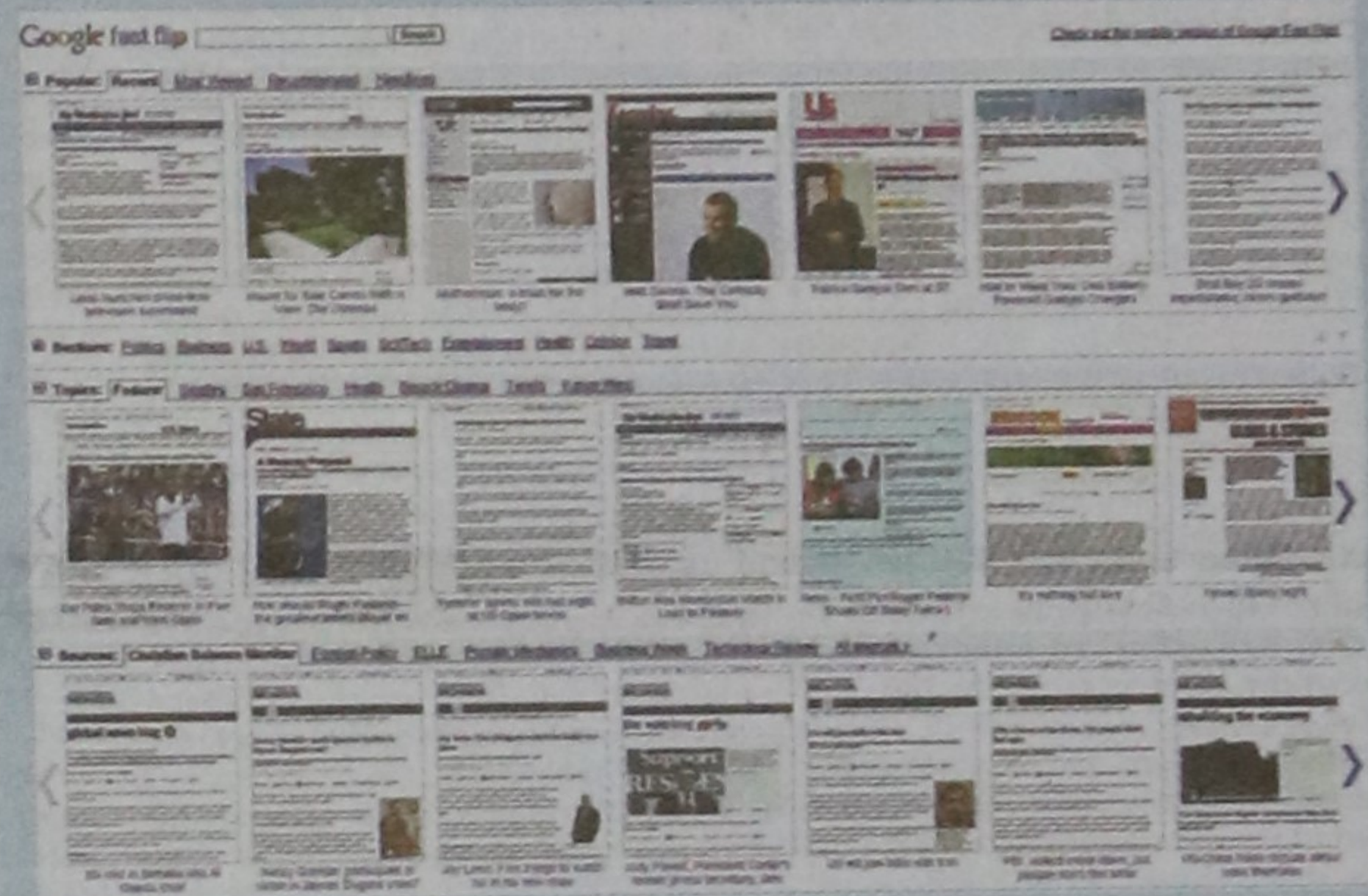
Fast Flip is the latest step that Google has taken to improve its relationship with newspaper and magazine publishers, many of whom have rallied against the company for profiting from their articles without sharing the wealth.

The acrimony has escalated as a three-year decline in the print medium's ad revenue accelerated during the past year. The newspaper industry's ad sales plunged 29 percent during the first half this year while Google's crept up 4 percent.

In another example of cooperation, Google recently offered to help newspaper publishers set up a system to charge readers for access to parts of their Web sites.

While the notion of Google funneling more sales to publishers is appealing, news executives also want to ensure that Fast Flip doesn't become too popular. Publishers still want readers to come to their Web sites, where they can sell ads without giving Google a piece of the action.

Google, though, is hoping Fast Flip will make reading online more enjoyable. If that happens, Google should be able to show more ads to more people, with most of the money going to publishers, said Krishna Bharat, the inventor of the search engine's news section.



TECH NEWS

Facebook passes key milestone

AP, San Francisco

Facebook Inc. said Tuesday it achieved an important financial milestone, bringing in more money than it spent in the last quarter. The social networking site previously had said it didn't expect to achieve that goal until next year even though the company already has been valued in the billions.

In a blog post on Facebook's Web site, founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg wrote that the company became "cash-flow positive" during the second quarter, which ended in June.

"This is important to us because it sets Facebook up to be a strong independent service for the long term," he wrote. This does not mean that Facebook neces-

sarily is profitable by the measurements that most companies use, though. Cash remaining after expenses could be swallowed by other costs like taxes, debt payments or accounting charges.

Zuckerberg did not indicate whether Facebook is now moving closer to filing for an initial public offering.

Facebook has raised more than \$600 million from investors since it was founded five years ago. Its most recent infusion came this spring from Russian Internet investor Digital Sky Technologies, which invested \$200 million in exchange for a 2 percent stake in the company, valuing Facebook at \$10 billion.

Zuckerberg also said that Palo Alto, Calif.-based Facebook now has 300 million users worldwide.



TECH NEWS

Website on disaster friendly water, sanitation technologies

STARTECH DESK

FORMAL launching of publication and website (www.watsanbd.info) on Disaster Friendly Water and Sanitation technologies, was held under joint aegis of Concern Universal-Bangladesh (CUB) and Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) in the city's Dhanmondi auditorium of Dhaka Ahsania Mission on September 12.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) initiatives in



Bangladesh have lot of potential to equip the community and other stakeholders in addressing the strategic disaster related issues.

Recognising the strategic importance, Dhaka Ahsania Mission is implementing a number of projects integrating DRR approach in the community based interventions to reduce vulnerability of the disaster-prone community.

Disaster Risk Reduction (WatSan) and Vulnerability Mapping and WatSan Component (VMWC) projects are two glarier examples in WatSan sub-sector that have introduced many disaster friendly WatSan technologies in the project areas.

The website 'www.watsanbd.info' documenting field experience on the technologies and the project learning aim at developing a comprehensive approach of disaster risk management and having its broader implications at both operational and policy level.

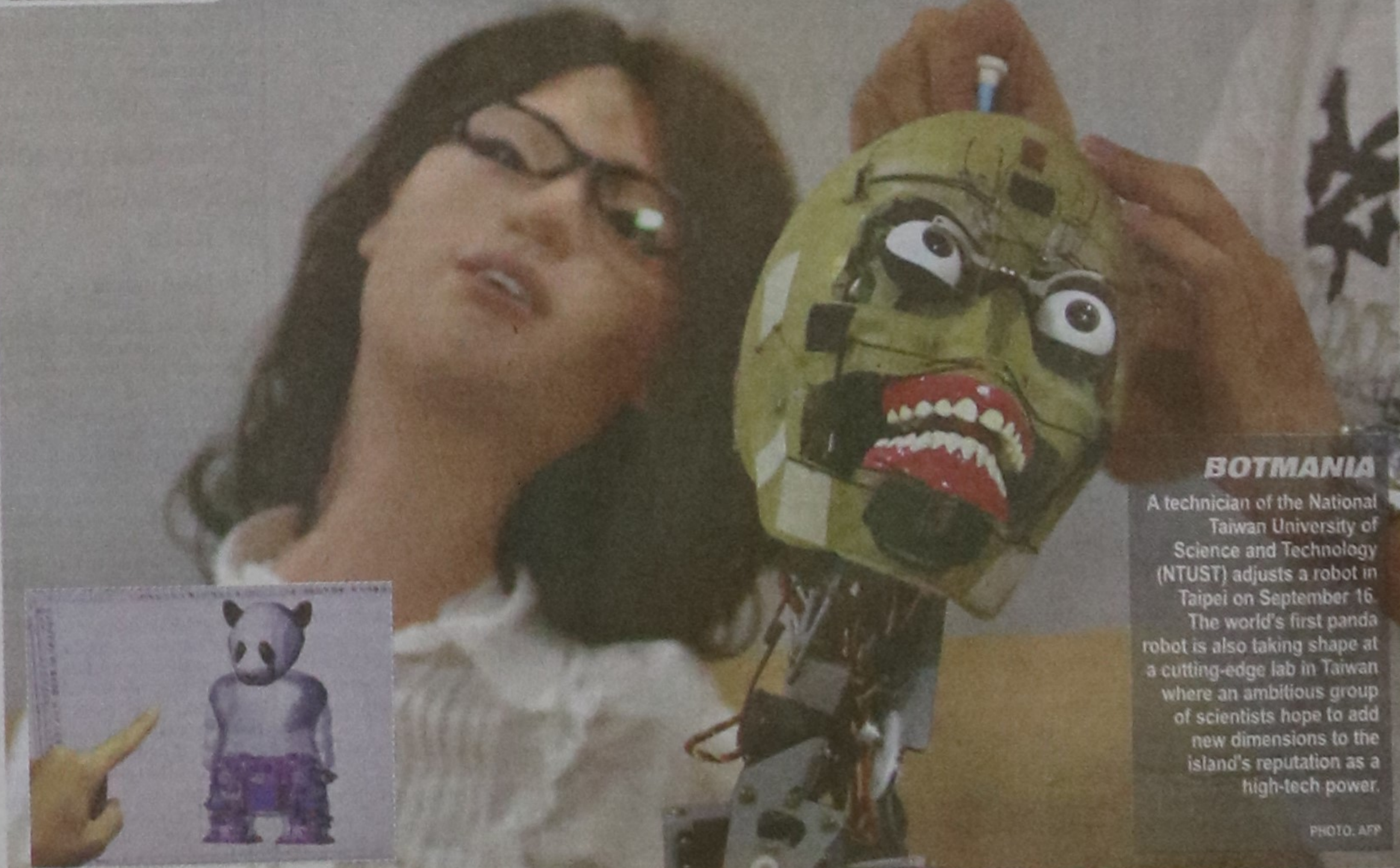
Shahjahan Ali Mollah, Joint Secretary of Local Government Division under Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives, formally inaugurated the website as chief guest with Dhaka Ahsania Mission Executive Director M Ehsanur Rahman in chair.

Usually, most people do not consider safe water and sanitation as an important part of disaster preparedness and hence do not construct water and sanitation infrastructures in consideration of natural disasters.

Having no safe water options, people are forced to drink such contaminated water and use it for domestic works making themselves vulnerable to multiple water borne diseases like cholera, diarrhoea, jaundice, scabies and others skin diseases and many get infected.

To get rid of such misfortunes related to WatSan and natural disasters, 'disaster friendly water and sanitation technologies' can be regarded as a feasible solution.

TECH PHOTO



BOTMANIA

A technician of the National Taiwan University of Science and Technology (NTUST) adjusts a robot in Taipei on September 16. The world's first panda robot is also taking shape at a cutting-edge lab in Taiwan where an ambitious group of scientists hope to add new dimensions to the island's reputation as a high-tech power.

PHOTO: AFP