

# Nurture the genius within

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When you find your child making his first call, fiddling with your mobile phone, or tapping illegally on your computer keyboard for the first time, all grown-ups around start to swoon and giggle and talk about him becoming a great computer expert or a prodigy. But jokes apart, there have been quite many children who actually grew out from mobile and computer fiddlers to real geniuses who work for or run big companies at ages such as 13 or 14.

There are a good number of teenagers all over the world who are currently doing high-profile jobs in companies like Google and IBM. Many have gained scholarships and are pursuing their studies in reputed universities like Harvard and Oxford. Still more are running their own big businesses.

History has brought into light time and time again such child prodigies who have found their ways into our everyday life and chores. Names such as Bill Gates, Shawn Fanning and Mark Zuckerberg have become household. But to think these sensations once had themselves started out as teenage computer enthusiasts who have a whole new meaning to the widely disliked word 'geek'.

These rare breeds usually start off using computers for fun. Many begin exploring their interests and expertise through small time hacking programs. But in the end, a prodigy cannot be hidden for long and their expertise usually does come out in the open for all to notice. Most former teenage hackers end up working as security consultants for big firms, as they tend to have a better idea of



Bill Gates

the loopholes in the company's 'secure' programs and applications.

IT legend Bill Gates developing an early interest in computer science began studying computers in the seventh grade at Seattle's Lakeside School. He immediately realised the potential of the young computer industry. Gates's early experiences with computers included debugging programs for the Computer Center Corporation's PDP-10, helping to computerise electric power grids for the Bonneville Power Administration, and founding a firm called Traf-O-Data while still in high school. Their small company earned them twenty thousand dollars in fees for analysing local traffic patterns. From then on, there was no looking back. He went on to become the world's richest man.

Napster mastermind Shawn Fanning also began designing the peer-to-peer file sharing platform while still in high school. After graduating from high school, he dropped out of university to launch his brainchild.

By the age of 20, Mark Zuckerberg dropped out of Harvard -- where he was a programming prodigy -- and launched what is now the world's preeminent social networking site,

Facebook. Within two years, he was the world's youngest billionaire. By age 26, he was Time Magazine's Person of the Year.

A new prodigy joining the masterminds has his roots in our very own Bangladesh. Young Salman Khan, a.k.a. Sal, is founder of the Khan Academy, a free online education platform and not-for-profit organisation. He has produced over 2,200 videos elucidating a wide spectrum



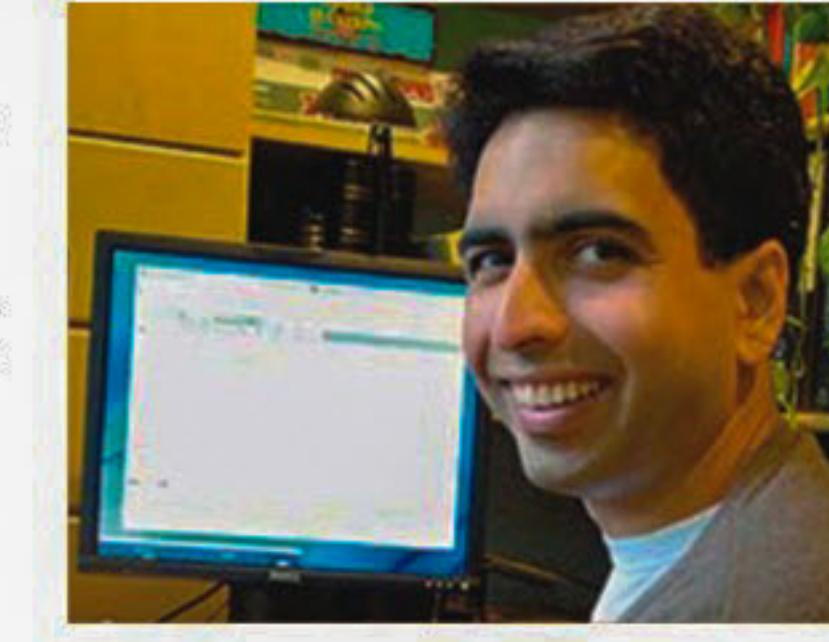
Mark Zuckerberg

of concepts, mainly focusing on mathematics and the sciences, in his home. His official channel, 'Khan Academy' has, as of May 2011, attracted more than 53 million views. While at MIT, Sal was the recipient of the Eloranta Fellowship, which he used to develop web-based math software for children with ADHD. He was also an MCAT instructor for the Princeton Review and volunteered teaching gifted 4th and 7th graders at the Devotion School in Brookline, MA.

Google recently awarded Khan Academy \$2 million to support the creation of more courses and to enable translation of its core library into the world's most widely spoken languages. In October 2010, Khan

was tied for #34 in Fortune's annual '40 Under 40', a list recognising business's hottest rising stars. The Khan Academy website has numerous student followers worldwide, and one of Khan's fans is none other than Bill Gates himself. In March 2011, Salman Khan was invited to speak at TED by Bill Gates who claims to use the Khan Academy Exercise Software to teach his own children. "Part of the beauty of what he does is his consistency," says Gates. "I kind of envy him," he tells Fortune.

For parents of born prodigies, the task of raising these children is a big responsibility. Parents should be able to identify the hidden whiz kid in their child and be able to encourage and guide them in the right direction, so that their talents are not wasted. They should also be counseled and steered away from using their talent in the wrong way. In most of our



Salman Khan

South Asian countries, parents tend to discourage children from touching their computers and mobile phones for fear of them ruining or breaking them. But sitting with the child and helping him learn will help the parent to gauge their child's talent and interest.

## Budget should reflect Digital Bangladesh vision

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Speakers at a roundtable observed that the national budget for fiscal 2011-12 should focus on the vision of a Digital Bangladesh or it will remain just a slogan.

Bangladesh ICT Journalist Forum (BIJF) organised the roundtable styled 'Budget 2011-2012: Towards a Digital Bangladesh' as the national budget will be tabled in parliament on June 9.

Experts at the event said the government vowed to establish a Digital Bangladesh by 2021 in its election manifesto in 2009. However, the last two budgets did not have much reflection of that.

Speakers observed that if it does not get proper importance in this year's budget, the government will not have much time left to achieve the vision, as it will have to think about the next election before placing the 4th and 5th national budgets.

Speakers also discussed the budgetary requirements to make a Digital Bangladesh, what has not been implemented from the previous budgets, what would expedite the process of making a Digital Bangladesh and other important issues in this regard.

State Minister for Science and ICT Yeafesh Osman was chief guest at the event while Dr. Akram Hossain Chowdhury, MP and chairman of Centre for e-Parliament Research and Mahfuzur Rahman, Executive Director,



Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) were special guests. Mustafa Jabbar, president of Bangladesh Computer Samiti (BCS), moderated the event.

The chief guest in his speech said the ICT ministry will start working harder and considering the significance of a Digital Bangladesh. It has already taken quite a few short-term and long-term projects under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, he added.

He also said the IP phone network has already been set up in 32 districts. An initiative is being taken to bring the price of bandwidth to a reasonable level, so that internet becomes more easy access for people.

He further said the prevailing problems will have to be faced as challenges to achieve the vision of a Digital Bangladesh and the government has specific plans to face the challenges. He expressed the need for working

together.

Special guest Dr Akram Hossain Chowdhury said he would place the suggestions of the discussion regarding budget and Digital Bangladesh in the budget discussion in parliament. How ICT could be used in poverty alleviation would also be discussed, he said.

Speakers also discussed about VAT-tax, importance of digital management of government works, successful use of eBooks in education system, 3G and 4G network and other issues. They also proposed to set advanced income tax (AIT) on all computer and networking products.

BCS, Bangladesh Association of software and information services (BASIS), ISP association of Bangladesh (ISPAB), mobile phone operators, 4G internet service providers, academics, ICT experts and high officials of different NGOs attended the roundtable.

## German scientists beat data transfer record

AFP, Berlin

The scientists at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) Monday said they had broken the world record by sending data at a speed of 26 terabits per second.

The data, sent over 50 kilometers (31 miles) on a single laser beam, was coded thanks to a system known as orthogonal

frequency-division multiplexing (OFDM) in which the laser beam is divided into separate colour streams.

"With 26 terabits per second, you can simultaneously transmit up to 400 million telephone calls per second," said Professor Juerg Leuthold of the institute in a statement.

## Microsoft Government Solution Day held



State Minister for Science and ICT Yeafesh Osman watches Microsoft Government Solution products at the event.

IT.TELECOM REPORT

Microsoft Bangladesh organised 'Microsoft Government Solutions Day' at a hotel in the capital on Wednesday. Over hundred key government stakeholders and Microsoft partners attended the event.

The day-long event was inaugurated by Feroz Mahmud, country manager of Microsoft Bangladesh and Seng Heng Chuah, regional director, government industry, Microsoft Asia Pacific.

State Minister for Science and ICT Yeafesh Osman was the chief guest of the event while Nazrul Islam Khan, PS-1 to prime minister and project director to Access to Information (A2I) programme and Md. Abdur Rob Howlader, secretary, ministry of Science and ICT were the special guests.

This is the first time Microsoft Bangladesh arranged such solution based event in the country with resources from abroad to enhance the expertise of the public sector officials. And it has been done in line with the company's commitment to develop the IT infrastructure and capacity building skills in Bangladesh to help support the government vision of 'Digital Bangladesh'.

In the event Microsoft officials explained the audience various features of their solutions such as how it can enhance efficiency and speed up delivery of improved public services while freeing up resources, lowering cost and reducing energy usage; how it engages citizens using innovative ways anytime, anywhere.

Apart from the presentations, there were two showcases of Microsoft Partners.

Kodak, a foreign partner, demonstrated a process-driven document capture for governments to improve efficiency in document management in an affordable manner. Dohatech New Media, a local partner of the company, displayed a solution for public procurement MIS system which is used by the Bangladesh government and a voter registration solution that features multi-biometric capture. All the solutions run on Microsoft platform.

The event also highlighted that the vision of 'Digital Bangladesh' can be achieved through close collaboration between private and public sectors, and the use of a proven technology to create new solution for today or use of a technology that has already worked in this region or a country similar to ours.

## Yahoo ready to deliver on promise to upgrade email

AFP, San Francisco

Yahoo Inc. is giving its popular email service a long-promised facelift in an attempt to make it more appealing to people who are increasingly using Facebook, Twitter, Google and other online alternatives to communicate.

The changes announced Tuesday build upon a redesigned email format that Yahoo began testing seven months ago. The estimated 277 million users of Yahoo's free email service will be switched to the new version during the next few weeks.

The overhaul will enable updates to Facebook and Twitter accounts to be posted from within Yahoo's email boxes. The revamped service is supposed to be two times faster and capable of sending attachments of up to 100 megabytes. Other tools include better junk-mail controls and the ability to chat with friends and family logged into Facebook.

Yahoo is counting on the changes to help attract and retain email users at a time when more people are flocking to the rival Gmail service run by Internet search leader Google Inc.

Although Yahoo's service remains larger than Gmail, it has been losing ground in the past year. Through April, Yahoo boasted 277 million email users worldwide, a drop of about 3 million, or 1 percent, from the same time last year, according to the research firm comScore Inc. Meanwhile, Gmail had grown to 220 million worldwide users, up 43 million, or 24 percent during the

past year. Most of Gmail's gains appear to be coming at the expense of Microsoft Corp.'s Hotmail service, which remained the global leader with 327 million users, according to comScore. But that figure was down 27 million, or 8 percent, from last year.

Cultivating loyal email users is important because they tend to be frequent visitors and they often remain logged in when using other online services run by the email providers. The return trips and logged-in activity create

Yahoo's purple 'Y!' logo.

ates more opportunities to show Internet ads, the main way that both Yahoo and Google make money.

Yahoo, though, hasn't been luring as many advertisers as Google for years, a problem that has weighed on Yahoo's stock.

The email upgrade is expected to be among the signs of progress that Yahoo CEO Carol Bartz emphasizes Wednesday when she and other top company executives are scheduled to update analysts on their turnaround plan.



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Executive Technologies Ltd (ETL) recently introduced Gateway's new NV Series notebook in the local market, says a press release.

The NV Series features 15.6-inch High Definition LED-backlit TFT Widescreen display with 16:9 aspect ratio and 1366x768 resolution. It can deliver multitasking performance with the latest technology including processors and graphics from either Intel or AMD.

The notebook line also comes with integrated media card reader, DVD burner and up to 320GB of hard disk drive, DDR2 memory up to 4GB, integrated webcam, and latest WiFi b/g Draft-N Certified connectivity with WLAN and Bluetooth.

The Gateway NV Series features a convenient MyBackup Button, a one-touch way to quickly and easily back-up all the important files and information stored on it.



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