

Don't expect the phone to replace the wallet soon

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Don't throw your wallet away yet. Many big-name retailers from Gap to Toys R Us are partnering with banks, payment processors and Google to let shoppers tap their mobile phones instead of swiping their credit cards to pay for goods. But the new mode of payment is not expected to take off in earnest for at least another couple of years.

A KPMG study released on Wednesday found only 23 percent of consumers were willing to use their mobile phone in place of other forms of payment, with 30 percent of younger adults much more willing to do so.

And that means that all those hopes of retailers becoming more efficient at checkout and banks finding another revenue stream won't be a reality soon.

Shoppers in cities such as New York, San Francisco and Chicago are warming up to the idea of paying by phone, but it will still take another two to four years for widespread adoption, potential participants in the mobile payment industry said.

One major obstacle to universal adoption of the new payment method is doubt among consumers and some companies that paying with one's smart phone is secure and easier than using a credit or debit card or cash.

"Just the act of paying with your phone is a new thing for most of us. We're also working hard to educate people about why mobile payments represent the future of commerce," said Marc Freed-Finnegan Sr. business product manager of Google Wallet.

Still, it is hard to ignore the small but

growing pay-by-phone market. Research firm Aite Group expects the pay-by-phone transactions to total \$2.1 billion in 2012 and \$22.6 billion by 2015.

While the long-term potential seems huge, near-term hurdles related to security concerns, availability of contactless payment machines and installation costs for retailers are working against the initiative.

Currently only about 500,000 NFC readers (contactless payment machines) have been installed at

of 970 companies surveyed by KPMG said they believed they must overcome security concerns to succeed in mobile payments.

And changing that will take time.

So far, U.S. wireless operators Verizon Wireless, AT&T and T-Mobile USA have joined with Discover to form a joint venture targeting mobile payments.

Wireless competitor Sprint meanwhile has joined with a host of companies in another joint venture. In it

rewards, some store chains are currently testing the payment method, and more merchants are expected to join the pay-by-phone bandwagon in 2012.

Currently about 200 Toys R Us and Babies R Us stores let shoppers pay using their smartphones, Toys R Us spokeswoman Katie Reczek said.

"We will continue to evaluate the program to make a determination about expanding its offering to additional locations," Reczek added.

In addition to the playing the convenience card, many such as MasterCard and Google said the pay-by-phone method is actually safer than regular credit card transactions.

Purchases by phone are safer because of the added software limits in place to keep people from accessing your data improperly, whereas they can just swipe a number off a debit card illicitly, MasterCard executive Mario Shiliashki said.

"Google Wallet goes far, far beyond the protections that you have in place for your wallet today. Google Wallet is a much more secure platform -- it's truly a wallet you can lock," Google's Marc Freed-Finnegan said.

Also, consumers are more likely to carry their phone than anything else, because it has become a key social tether.

"You're more likely to leave your home without your wallet or your cigarettes than you are your phone. And I mention cigarettes because the phone has become more addictive than the most addictive substance out there," Shiliashki said.

Source: Reuters



retailers' point-of-sale locations, or checkout registers, in the United States.

PayPal is watching developments in mobile payments but also getting ready to roll out a "wallet in the cloud" initiative that lets shoppers pay using their computers, cell phones and cards that give access to their coupons, or by simply typing their mobile number and pin at checkout counters.

Amid other challenges, 71 percent

Google will supply Google Wallet software that today can hold MasterCards issued by Citi, and FirstData will provide infrastructure for securely delivering payment credentials to Google Wallet.

Google has also signed agreements with Visa, American Express and Discover, and hopes to include their cards in Google Wallet, Freed-Finnegan told Reuters.

Despite the lack of immediate

Qubee gets 100,000 likes on FB

IT & TELECOM DESK

Qubee, a WiMax internet service provider, has crossed 100,000 fan base of Qubeezone, its Facebook page. The feat said to be the first for any corporate house in the country.

Officials said in addition to traditional ways of promoting (press, radio and billboards), they chose Facebook as it is the perfect way to reach the mass. And the top of that they always thought focus point has to their main business the internet.

They said the coolest thing about a Facebook page is it's just like a public profile with loads of fans.

Any message can reach to audience in seconds. For Example, they said "if we post any message on Qubeezone, it will now be seen on 100,000 fans homepage instantly. Is there any media (press, radio, billboard or even TV) that can guarantee that! And you even know the demographics and other information about who saw that".

Understanding the result earlier, they decided to open the page. And as more fans started to join, the more it became a platform for both existing and potential Qubee users to interact and give feedback.

Third Bangla Blog Day observed

KAZI ZIAUR RAHMAN

The word Blog is one of the most spoken words of the year 2011 in the field of social media and communication. Blog has gained increased notice and exposure for their role in breaking, shaping, and spinning news around the world.

It is being considered as one of the most alternative powerful tools of the social movement of present time. This medium is playing a significant role in present socio-political world from Arab Spring movement to Wall Street movement.

Blogging has gathered its pace in Bangladesh too, especially in Bangla.

On December 19, 2005, Bangla Blogging started its journey through an initiative of somewhereinblog.net. Six years later, it is assumed that there are over 1.5 lakhs bangla bloggers in the country.

To mark the inception, Bangla bloggers' community started to observe December 19 as Bangla Blog Day since 2009.

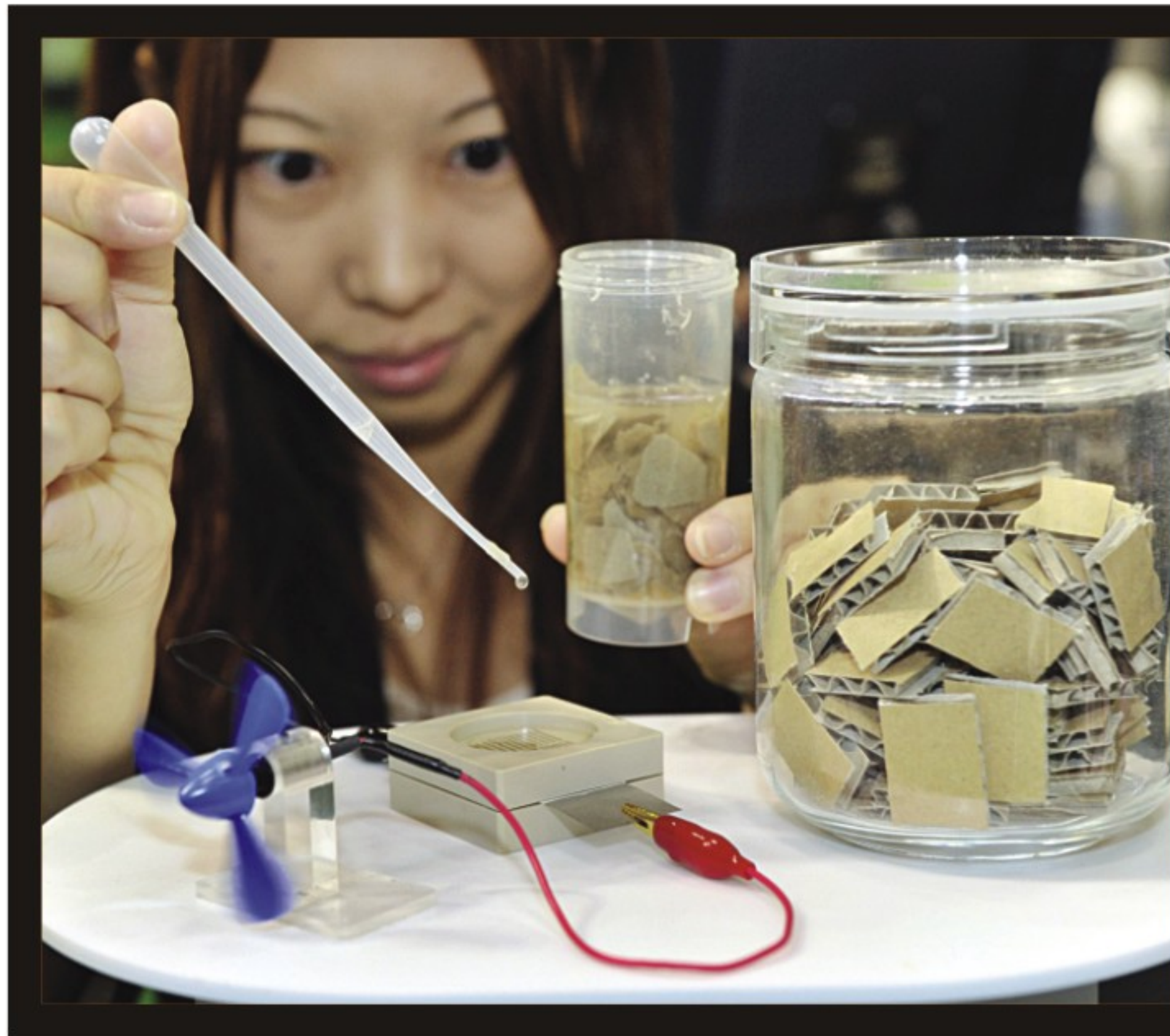
This year, the 3rd Bangla Blog Day was observed at the Public Library in the capital on Monday with the slogan of "Social media in mass awareness and

cyber law".

Thirteen community blogs and forum platforms participated this programme.

Prothom alo blog, bdnews24 blog, projonmo forum blog, somewherein blog, techtunes blog, priyo.com, comjagat.com, ekhushe blog, drishtipat, muktoblog, unmochon, banglanews24, somewherein blog are among those.

Noted educationist Professor Sirajul Islam Chowdhury, Dr Anisuzzaman, Professor Emeritus at Dhaka University and Nazrul Islam Khan, personal secretary to prime minister were the key speakers at the event.



TECHPHOTO

Bio battery from recycle paper

An employee of Sony demonstrates a new bio battery, generated from the cellulose of recycle papers, powering a fan (L) at the Eco-Products exhibition in Tokyo on December 15. The electric fan is powered by a bio battery cell whose energy source is solution of cardboard. Sony exhibited various eco-friendly power sources, including the bio batteries at the exhibition.

PHOTO: AFP

Samsung to roll out Galaxy Note

IT & TELECOM DESK

Samsung rolls out Galaxy Note, latest addition to its Galaxy family, in the local market next week, says a press release.

The Note is a combination of tablet and smartphone that reflects the South Korean tech giant's continuous implementation of innovative ideas.

Galaxy Note has been designed for the users who want to do more on the go.

With 5.3" large HD Super AMOLED screen, the Note is both incredibly slim and lightweight. Its 5.3" large immersive screen minimises your screen transition and scrolling. There is an S Pen (stylus pen) that comes with the Note..

Galaxy Note also features a powerful performance with advanced 8MP camera and 1.4GHz dual core processor and 2500mAh strong battery.

The device will have a pricetag of Tk. 62,000.



IBCS-PRIMAX gets best RedHat Partner Award

IT & TELECOM DESK

IBCS-PRIMAX Software (Bangladesh) Ltd, an authorised RedHat Linux Training and Exam Partner, has been awarded the best RedHat Partner Award in Bangladesh at the annual RedHat Global Learning Services (GLS) Partner conference in Kerala, India.

Kazi Ashiqur Rahman, manager of education department, received the award on behalf of IBCS-

PRIMAX.

Established in 1989, IBCS-PRIMAX has been conducting RedHat Linux Certification Professional Courses in Bangladesh with RedHat Certified Administrator (RHCA) and RedHat Certified Engineer (RHCE).

It is also the first Oracle Approved Education Center (OAE), Oracle University-Reseller and the first Zend Authorised training partner in Bangladesh.