Fuel consumption (combined): 6.4-3.8 l/100 km
CO2 emissions (combined): 148-98 g/km*

HANDS ON REVIEW

SYMPHONY
XPLORER Z II
POWERPLAYER OR NOT?

Pro

Let's start with the good things first. It has a bright super AMOLED screen with 306ppi. The gorilla glass gives it a smooth, cool and tactile feel. It's light and at 10mm it is thin enough so it can be easily carried in the pocket. Although the 4.8 inch screen surrounded by a thick bezel means it is not for totally one handed operation.

1Gig RAM is contemporary enough but not so for something marketed as a flagship. Everybody else has moved to 2GB. But for now, it suffices. The Quad core Cortex A7 1.2 GHz coupled with the mid range GPU is fast enough for most games out there. Asphalt 6 ? Runs smooth as Vin Diesels head.

The speaker is louder than the average ones. The 2200mAh battery will last the entire day on average use. As for connectivity, it is 3G enabled with simple tethering software and bandwidth control. It comes with Android JB 4.2.1 out of the box and is upgradeable to 4.2.2 now.

Camera app is full of features. It has 1080p video recording and a 5MP front camera for better 'selfies'. The rear sports a 13MP camera with auto focus, geo-tagging etc.

Con

Now comes the bad part. Megapixels don't make a great camera unless the sensor is updated. In case of Z2, the camera takes very good pictures in bright daylight. As light conditions deteriorate, so does picture quality.So does the auto-focus . So if you plan to take pictures after dusk, forget about it.

Volume buttons are hard to get at but that's just a personal quibble. The launcher is terrible and great at the same time. If you love iPhone, you'll love this. Otherwise, you'll hate the same old look. The auto brightness feature is supposed to help save battery life but it simply doesn't work; the screen only flickers. The frame rate is surprisingly low for a quad core unit. Benchmark tests show about 40fps whereas it's expected to give at least 50fps. So far Symphony has not provided any firmware update which might have fixed this issue. Maybe they should take a page from similarly spec-ed Walton phones and provide more regular updates so that

Symphony sets don't feel outdated a few months into the purchase.

The phone comes overloaded with bloatware and apps. Factory reset doesn't remove installed apps. Aside from the camera issues, this is a great performing phone. In my opinion, this phone would be better if it came with vanilla android, meaning the version they release for Nexus devices. We contacted Symphony about rooting the device and they removed our question from their website which leads me to believe they have no expertise to deal with such tasks.

It is common practice to install custom ROM on android devices but it doesn't look like the Symphony phone will allow it. But I have found a way to root it and remove all the bloat ware.

Step A. Turn on, connect to WiFi or the newly available 3G.

Step B. Enter Gmail info and register device with Google.

Step C. Let the already installed apps update.

Step 1. Install any other launcher (nova, go, sicksky, aviate) from play store.

Step 2. Disable as many of the thousand apps already installed, as you can (the non system ones)

Step 3. Uninstall the half games and get what you want.

Step 4, choose a black wallpaper (requires less battery)

Step 5. Brightness should be at the lowest.

Step 6. Copy some music and videos to it or don't.

Step 7. Reboot phone and I think you're good to go

Total Score
7.0

Value: 7.5 | Features: 7.0 | Build: 7.0 | Performance: 7.0

S M NIAMUL HAQUE

Reviewer runs Aalok IT and takes the occasional break by giving new smartphones a thorough workout

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SAY HELLO TO THE OCULUS RIFT

Oculus Rift. The name sounds surreal. The experience it provides is just that. The Oculus Rift is a Kickstarter success story, when funding seemed inadequate; they raised $2.4 Million via crowdfunding. With everything almost complete and development kits already shipping out, expect it in the market sometime in 2014.
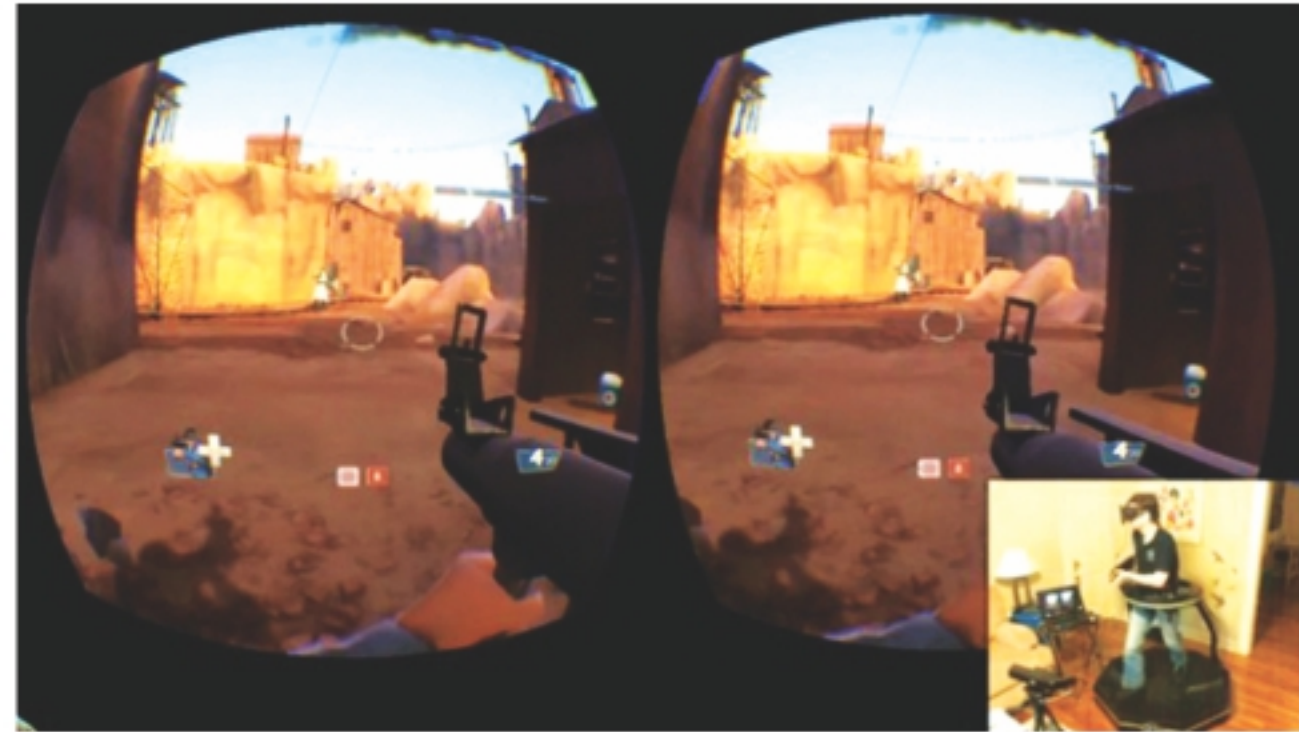

So what is the Oculus Rift? It's a head mounted display, which does things we imagined as children. Imagine you're playing Project Cars, the best looking car game if screenshots are to be believed. You're sitting there in a first person view, looking at your steering wheel and dash. Still, something isn't quite right. You're constricted to a single monitor. Maybe 3 if you're lucky. The environment is amazingly detailed, but the experience is lacking.

Even if you've got a Racing kit: Steering wheel, gear box, brakes, the works. You're still staring at a screen. Now imagine that you're wearing the Oculus Rift. It eliminates the need for a monitor. The screen is in front of your eyes. You are in the drivers seat. It's going to be annoying to look

around, with gears and a steering on your hands, how do you look around? It's not real enough, right?

Wrong. The Oculus Rift has a head tracker. You look right, your perspective shifts to the right. You look up, your screen moves up. It's the ultimate set up. It's puts you in that seat, it lets you look around. This works well with FPS games too.

Online multiplayer, you don't have time to look and aim. So just look around with your head, like you would in real life. It's real, but a virtual reality. So if you're playing Battlefield online, just put on your Rift and fire away.

The Oculus Rift, with the potential that it has, can turn the gaming world on its head. As of now, it's only available for PC's but we should expect that to change. In the meantime you can just grab a regular head tracker for around $300. Or you can wait and see if the Oculus Rift delivers what it promises, and if it does, be ready to get sucked into games in a way you could only imagine before.

SAMAMA RAHMAN

TECH SCHOOL

Rumble the 'RED PHONE'

If you are a follower of the politics of this great nation of ours, you surely have heard about the RED PHONE. If not, then I would request you to check back the news headlines of the last two weeks to soak in to the context.

Well, coming to the point; Red Phone! Red Phone is a land-lined phone that connects the government's policymaking top brasses via a secured network. But in 1950's Red Phone had a totally different meaning. In fact, the term 'Red Phone' derived from the cold war era when Washington and Moscow had a secured Teletype Link. Many citations often misinterpret the term by saying Red Phone was an actual 'PHONE' that made direct connection between Washington and Moscow. In actuality, any US presidents' calling any head of the state is a direct call itself. You might be wondering then why 'Red Phone'? The significance of Red Phone is, it was the most secured type of communication with the then USSR. Since any misinformation would lead to a full-scale nuclear war, so the hotlines between Moscow and USA were specially encrypted. To even make sure more protection, Red Phone was always kept disconnected when the US president was away from the Oval Office. Adding to that, 'Red Phone' handset's where not even of red color. It was just a Media hype after the 1960s popular TVshow 'Batman' where

Commissioner Gordon contacted Batman via the red BATPHONE.

In Bangladesh, all the Red Phones are connect via a Red Exchange. Red Exchange is the special exchange dedicated for all Red Phones connected in the network. It is situated in the Sher-E-Bangla Nagar Zone and all the technical support to keep this phone up and running is provided by BTCL. But the main switching station is situated in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). To reach out other parts of the capital, there are some remote connections with other important Exchanges as well. The entire Red Exchange was updated few of years back. Most of the copper wires where replaced with optical fiber to ensure voice clarity and security. Moreover the connection capacity of the Red Exchange was increased from 500 to more than 1500 lines. Also, now most of the connections come with secured broadband now. Since the Red Phone and Red Exchange carries high volume of sensitive traffic, thus it requires special kind of security. It is the duty of Forces Signal Intelligence Bureau [a department of Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI)] to keep these connections secure from prying ears.

SHAHRIAR RAHMAN

JUST IN

LG IPS LED monitor of cinema screen design

With a 22" IPS LED screen, resolution of 1920 x 1080 and a wide view angle of 178°, LG 22EA63V monitor is a must have. Thanks to the CINEMA SCREEN design with an ultra-thin bezel width of only 1.2 mm (10.8 mm in operation) are as good as any recognizable side skirts - so this screen provides a true visual experience. The monitor has a D-Sub, a DVI-D Dual port, a HDMI connection, PC audio I/O port. With a stylish black finish and remarkably thin bevel, the 22EA63V looks great and offers a fantastic Cinema screen style experience, allowing you to fully immerse yourself in your work and play alike.
Price: Tk. 14,500/-

Lenovo G400 sturdy and affordable 14-inch laptop

Lenovo G400 is an essential notebook PC powered by your choice of 2.6 GHz 3rd generation Intel Core i5 processor. It has a 14.1-inch display with a resolution of 1366 x 768 pixels. The laptop has 4GB RAM, maximum RAM supported by this laptop is 16 GB DDR3 1600 MHz For storage, it has 500 GB hard disk. It has AMD Radeon™ HD8750 2GB graphics with 2 GB VRAM. Ports you'll find on Lenovo G400 are a USB 2.0 port, two USB 3.0 ports, an HDMI port, a headphone jack, a microphone jack, a VGA port, and an RJ45 port. In terms of connectivity, it features 10/100 Mbps LAN, 802.11b/g/n Wi-Fi, and Bluetooth. There's a 2-in-1 card-reader for SD and MMC cards.
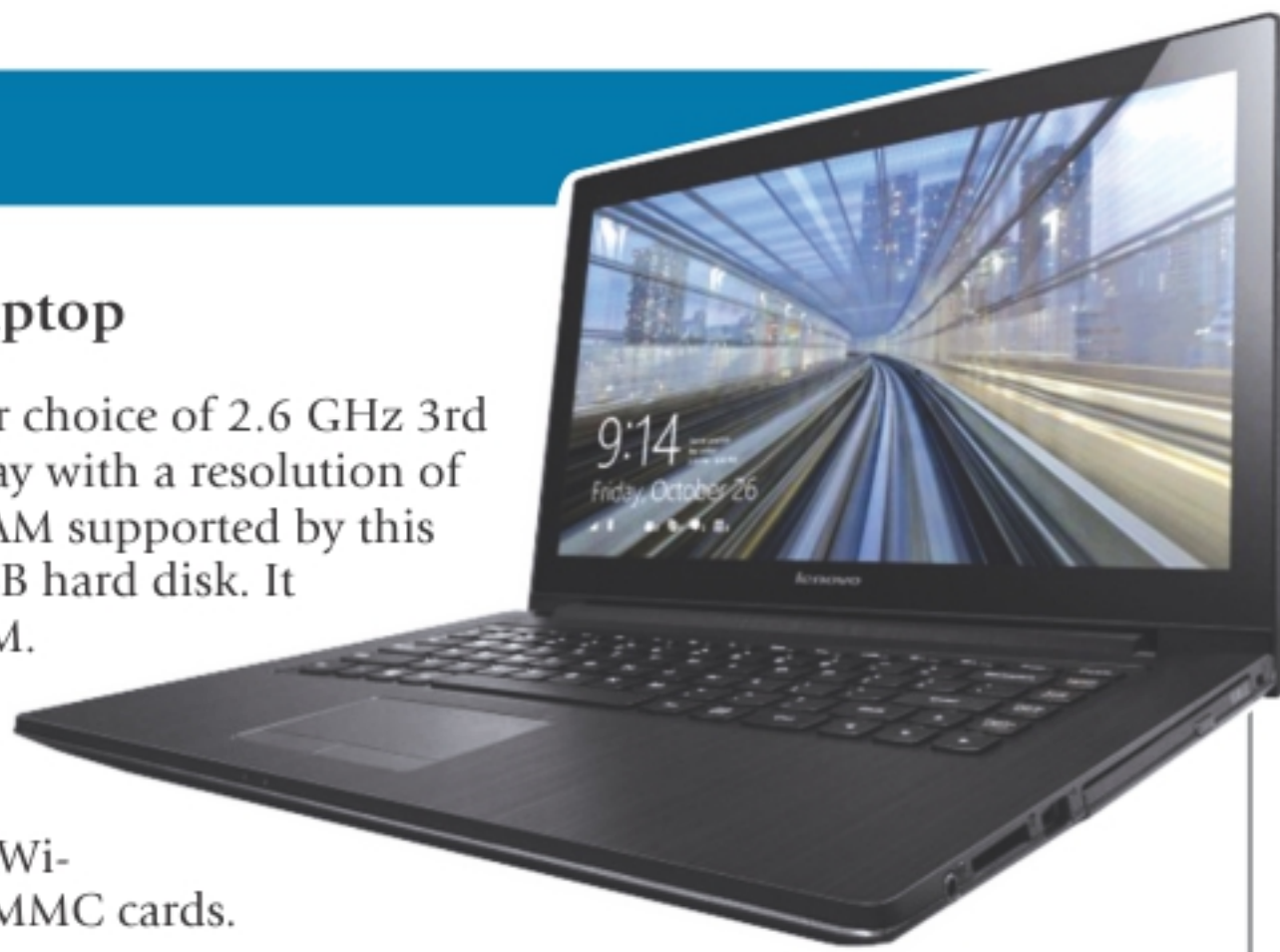**Price: Tk. 48,000/-.**

Dell Inspiron 3421 Touch offers scratch and win

Computer Source has introduced a 14 inch touch screen laptop by Dell with an affordable price in the local market. This 3rd Gen. Inspiron series laptop comes with 4GB DDR3 RAM and 500GB HDD. It has 3MB cache memory and also contains Intel HD Graphics 4000 as well as Intel 3227M processor. Its processing speed is 1.9 GHz. Any purchase of this laptop between 7th November there is a scratch and win offer, which includes exciting gift like a Pen drive or Wireless Mouse, Backpack, External HDD, T-shirt, LED Monitor even an Optiplex Desktop.
Price: Tk. 48,000/- with one year service warranty

New admin takes charge of Wikipedia Bangla

Wikipedia (bn.wikipedia.org), the most popular online encyclopedia in Bengali, is getting a new admin. Last Monday the formal announcement came declaring Mr. Nurunnabi Chowdhury Hasib as its 13th admin. Mr. Nurunnabi has been actively involved with Wikimedia Commons and Wikimedia Foundation since 2008. Besides adding, editing & enriching more than eight thousands contents of Bangla Wikipedia, he also arranged workshops and seminars educating the Wikipedia Cause to the common mass. Recently he was also assigned as the Bangladesh Ambassador to UK based nonprofit entity 'International Open Knowledge Foundation Network'.