



The power to do more

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INFORMATION | GADGETS | TECHNOLOGY

BYTES



# ROBOCOP Possible or Not?

That rugged toy figure we all had as kids, the one where a button would light up his red visors, I used to carry it everywhere as an interpretation of my profound love for that thing; my vision still blurs as I picture my very first RoboCop. I guess I wanted to start on a familiar note; I mean we all grew up drenched in the sheer awesomeness of the 'oh-so-cool' RoboCop, daydreaming throughout the years about one that would appear in real life. Well, I'm here to tell you that that day is closer than you may realize.

Florida International University's 'Discovery Lab' is working on a 'real-life' RoboCop which, as opposed to the non-existent one, depicted in the movie of 1987 by Paul Verhoeven, is actually quite manageable with today's technology and resources. Of course, it's not as 'badass' as you'd imagine, but I think the cause behind this effort is much cooler than that. You see, this is being developed so that one day in future, a disabled officer may still be able to perform the duties of a cop through their robotic form.

So how would this work anyway? While the actual mechanics behind this is far too complicated for us to comprehend, I will try to describe it in the simplest way possible. The 'Telebot', as they call it, is a 75-pound proto-type that is trying to master the combination of telepresence and robotics in order to attain the ultimate purpose; amazingly, this was made completely from scratch. It uses an 'Oculus Rift' headset, a motion-tracking vest, arm bands and gloves; these are meant to be worn by the officer in question completely remote from the actual robot. As you might have guessed, the headset is used to see the robot's field of vision while the vest lets the robot imitate the person's movements and the gloves also do the same with the help of 'motion-sensing'.

I don't want to mislead you; this initiative will still take years to actually produce a feasible robotic form let alone the walking, talking, crime-fighting Robocop from our favourite movie. Unfortunately, our world does not consist of the kind of battery power that a full grown robotic cop would require; at least, with not that many



moving parts. Think of it this way, our precious smart phones don't last us more than a day. The 'big boss' Tesla Model S can only last 300 miles before it needs to be plugged in for charging and even if we considered that distance to be enough, it's just too heavy at an unbearable 1300 pounds.

Charles Higgins, an electrical engineer and professor of neuroscience at the University of Arizona has said: "That's one serious limitation that our technology is not approaching yet. In order to do a real RoboCop like you see in the movie, you need to have a very compact power source that's going to power all those motors all day—it doesn't look like RoboCop has to plug in every hour."

That being said, Sci-fi movies whose main ingredient is a bunch of robots are now becoming surprisingly

realistic. These comments, while unquestionably debatable, are interesting to say the least and give us all a sense of hope for brilliant forms of futuristic technology.

"Why creating a RoboCop is not that wild a thought"

1. Firstly, the production designer of RoboCop (2014) Martin Whist used 'graphene' for RoboCop's armor instead of different metal plates because it's 200 times stronger and 6 times lighter than steel; makes sense right? But you'll be even happier to know that in the real world graphene is being produced, be it in small batches, and companies like Samsung are trying to come up with ways to produce this material more efficiently.

2. In the same movie, RoboCop can identify faces in the blink of an eye. To those of you who are from this planet, we know that this idea isn't anything new; in fact, it is

very much possible. The FBI already uses the kind of technology that can almost accurately, 80% to be exact, match faces with mug shots. Moreover, algorithms that can identify faces in videos are also being developed. Therefore, it shouldn't be too long before RoboCop's all seeing vision becomes an everyday feat.

3. The next piece of tech may be the coolest and perhaps at some point the most morally questionable one: 'drone control'. We are all aware that this idea is being wrongfully exploited already but the point here is that if this already exists then taking it to greater heights should not sound crazy at all.

4. 'Medical mumbo jumbo' as I would say, disagrees with some facts about RoboCop. But to make things seem more practical in the movie it is shown that, in order to avoid infections, between shifts RoboCop enters a full-body docking station, which protects his brain, lungs, and other surviving biological bits by performing a complete blood transfusion.

While we're still lost in thought about the future, an important development is being made on another robotic form called the K5 by Knightscope. It looks insanely similar to that droid r2d2 character, so all you Star Wars fans out there should be jumping right about now because this might as well be the future of law enforcement in our world. Shaped like a bullet, it is 5 feet tall and right around the corner.

I guess when our elders say, and I quote, 'the world is getting smaller' they are really referring to the massive leaps in technology they have been around to see. Honestly, those who see the bigger picture are actually the most ordinary people living life in the most ordinary ways; and on that note, I want to mention that this attempt on 'Telebot' was made possible thanks to the very real Jeremy Robins, a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, who donated \$20,000 towards the project to help his disabled veteran friends get back into the work force. Now him and all those 'Alex Murphy's that live to protect us are the ones I'd salute to; our 'real life' RoboCops

MAISHA ANIQA

## Windows 8.1 What's new?



Microsoft announced Windows 8.1 Cortana update at their annual build conference! The tech giant also announced Windows Phone 8.1 with new personal assistant named after the Halo franchise. This update is expected to come with some major changes to improve the experience for Mouse & Keyboard users. When you can download for your phone? That I'm afraid will not be until somewhere around next month. On this update Microsoft concentrated on modern & sleeky interface, a right click which will now make desktop-menu appear & many more. But out of all: Cortana is the one that we are mostly excited about.

Cortana is mostly Microsoft's way of catching up with other major players in the leagues of virtual assistant. And what we have learnt from Microsoft is that it has a long tradition of taking best parts from the competition to make the most useful tool in the market.

Coming back to Cortana, she learns by going through not just your phone, but also she hooks herself into your search engine (Bing) and social networks. Which is indeed a great idea but it takes time to really work. To be completely honest, we didn't see that

much prudence, but she definitely doesn't forget to remind you about your friend's birthday.

Again back to the 8.1 updates: Weather app is a cool feature on this recent 8.1 update. From your home/office you can easily track current positions of Storms, Storm Eye's, Clouds, Rain & snow forecast as well (why would you do that, is a different story altogether!!). Bit locker which is another advance feature of this OS. As you might it's a data protection feature. Bit locker drive will help to protect files on your system drive & data drive. This new update will also help to develop apps & Games smoothly. Customer Service has also been improved manifolds.

Email service has also been updated. Windows 8.1 have attached outlook service. You don't need to use browser to sent email. There are some other advantages of Windows 8.1 e.g. Birthday Alert! This feature will remind your friends, cousin's & colleague's birthday. Windows 8.1 will also allow you to upload your files, Photos & documents without using any browser. Happy updating!!

HASSAN TANVIR MANSUR

## TECH HAPPENING

### Imagine Cup Bangladesh 2014 Selection Round was held

Two-day long Imagine Cup Bangladesh 2014 selection round was held at Microsoft office in Bangladesh on April 11-12, 2014. Various prominent universities made their appearance totaling 42 teams in this round. They presented their case and business model and demonstrated their Windows & Windows Phone apps in front of the judges, who are experts from relevant fields such as technology, development, investment, entrepreneurship and software. This year, 1100 students registered for this competition among those 250 teams submitted their app summary, 42 of which were selected for this selection round.



### Huawei Device Bangladesh brings “DOUBLE THE JOY OF BAISHAKH” offer

Huawei Device, the third largest Smartphone Manufacturer in the world, recently have launched a new “DOUBLE THE JOY OF BAISHAKH” offer in Bangladesh on the occasion of Pohela Baishakh. This offer is valid for anyone who buys a Huawei Smartphone from April 11 to April 25, buyers can participate in an exclusive raffle draw through Huawei's Facebook Fan Page. Here they will only have to upload the purchased IMEI number along with the purchase invoice of the smartphone via private message and get a chance to win another exact smartphone. Five exclusive Handsets are available in this offer. They are Ascend Y511, Ascend G700, Ascend Mate, Ascend P6 and



## JUST IN

### ASUS M11AD desktop PC

The modern ASUS M11AD desktop delivers incredible media performance to effortlessly handle movies, video, and mainstream gaming. Featuring Intel H81 chipset, running on 3.4 GHz 4th generation Intel Core i7 processor. Also featuring 4 GB RAM, 500 GB HDD, Intel HD graphics, DVD writer, gigabit LAN, HD audio, USB 3.0 port, HDMI port, VGA port, memory card reader etc. It comes with 18.5-inch LED monitor.  
**Price: Tk. 62,500/-**



### Lenovo Idepad S215-11.6" affordable, thin, & light laptop

Lenovo IdeaPad S215 is an affordable slim notebook powered by 1.0 GHz AMD dual-core processor with integrated AMD Radeon HD Graphics of 1 GB video memory. The display is 11.6-inch with a resolution of 1366 x 768 pixels and LED anti-glare technology. This mini laptop comes with 2GB RAM, 320 GB HDD, webcam, Stereo Dolby speaker, USB 3.0 port, VGA port, wireless LAN, memory card reader. The laptop is having up to 6 hours of battery life.  
**Price: Tk. 24,500/-**



TECH BITS

Facebook now adds 'Friends Nearby' Option



Robi's 'How to take proper selfie' workshop held recently



Government restructures Information safety and security policies



Sony Xperia Z, ZL, ZR and Z Tab users to get KitKat update next month



Beats Music update lets you subscribe from inside the iOS app

