

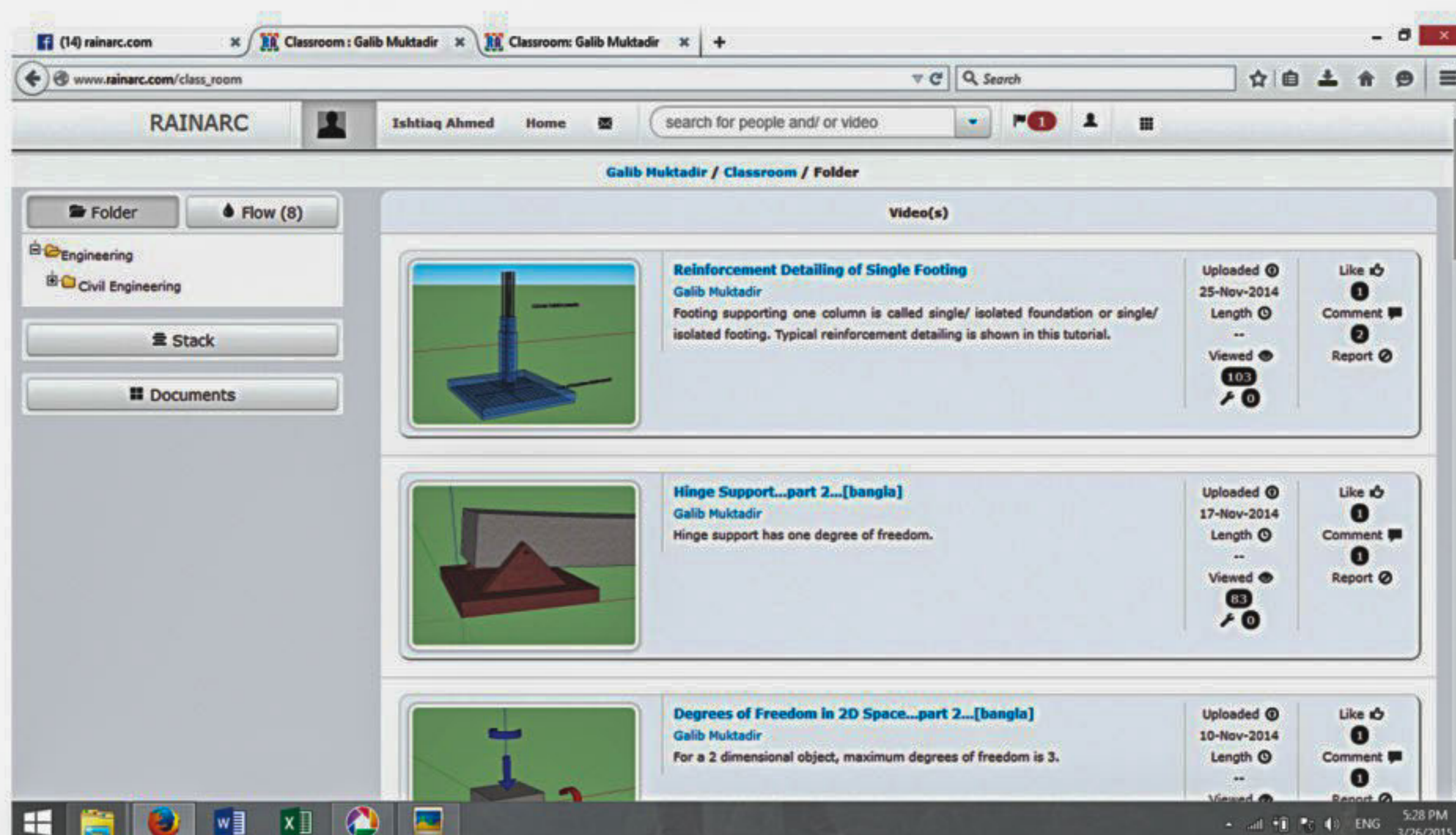
Taking E-learning to the Next Level

ISHTIAQ AHMED

The mechanism of learning and knowledge sharing is gradually becoming diversified with the spread of technology. Thanks to World Wide Web, the scope of teaching and learning has leapt out of the constraints of a classroom and has become accessible to anyone willing to learn, anywhere. Thus, E-learning based websites have flourished over the past decade globally. Thankfully, Bangladesh is not lagging behind much either.

Rainarc.com was one of the first of its kind to realise the utility of E-learning based social networking website in the context of Bangladesh. It was the brainchild of Galib Muktadir, a lecturer at Department of Civil Engineering, Ahsanullah University of Science & Technology (AUST), and three of his friends – Shajid-Ul-Alam Shishir, Moshir Rahman and Nayeem Hasan. The idea of creating such a website dawned upon them back in 2012. After overcoming many difficulties and with quality technical assistance, together they launched www.rainarc.com from the studio of Rainarc at Katashur, Mohammadpur, Dhaka in February, 2014.

Inspired by the experiences from their student lives, the idea of creating a social network devoted to sharing knowledge had occupied the minds of Galib and his friends. They wanted to overcome the



limitations of classroom education and create an interaction based learning experience. They said that to make the education system more interesting, was the main inspiration of this project.

Let's now have a look at how rainarc.com is to be used to maximise your learning experience. What's good about the website is its basic function, like just another social network. You can login from your Facebook, Google Plus or Twitter account and sync your rainarc.com account with those. It's a place for both who want to teach and who want to learn.

One willing to share knowledge can

either upload documents or video tutorials. One advantage of this website is the structured learning mechanism that helps a student build his basics and gradually enhance his/her expertise on the subject matter. This mechanism is facilitated by the arrangement of lectures in someone's "Classroom", which is supposed to act as a virtual room where he/she will upload video tutorials specifically categorising them into "Folders", "Flows" and "Stack". "Folders" contain lectures classified according to broader subject matter whereas "Flows" is the preferred learning order of the topics that the teacher thinks you can follow to better understand the

topics.

Anyone can upload videos and classify them into specific categories while uploading. The learners can communicate with the teachers through the "Comments" section if they have any queries. If anyone has any objection about the video content, they can easily "Report" it or "Suggest a change" if necessary. While watching a video, a "Related Video(s)" list pops up that can also prove to be useful.

At present, rainarc.com offer contents relevant to different fields of engineering, but they hope to expand to cover all sectors of knowledge.

Rainarc.com also realises the importance of developing the mobile version of their website so that students can access it via their handsets or tablets. Their goal is to serve the students at all times. Also, they are planning to launch an Android app in near future, to make the mobile browsing more comfortable and easy.

The site has a distinguished advisory panel with teachers like Dr. Raquib Ahsan (BUET) and Dr. Charisma Choudhury (University of Leeds).

Galib and his friends believe that if students get to visualise class lectures with better presentation, they will stop memorising without having the clear concept, and will develop a better reasoning capability. At present, very few websites do that. Rainarc.com promises to be one of those few.

ARDUINO DAY 2015

AMITABHA DEY

Arduino is an open source electronics platform based on easy-to-use hardware and software and each year on March 28, the world celebrates Arduino's birthday.

Arduino Bangladesh is an initiative to connect and to enlighten people about the latest in Arduino technology. It is a platform for Arduino users and developers from all around Bangladesh to come together and share ideas. Everything from lighting up a bulb to home/office automation to diverse robotics projects can be developed by this small Arduino device. Arduino Bangladesh started their journey back in June, 2013. It distributed stickers to the community and held an introductory workshop on Arduino at BRAC University, Dhaka.

Arduino Day is a worldwide celebration organised directly by the community in different parts of the world, or by the Arduino team – where people interested in Arduino get together, share their experiences, and learn more. On March 28, 2015, Arduino Bangladesh took the initiative to organise this event in Bangladesh for the first time. It took place at BRAC University premises, and was open to students from all the institutions of the country.

The event was powered by BRAC University Computer Club (BUCC) and The Tech School (Dhaka's engineering school for children). The event took off with the inaugural speech by Annajiat Alim Rasel, Advisor, BUCC. He pointed out how important a platform like this is in our society, so that young tech enthusiasts and experienced users can come together within a community. BUCC's member Zafar Iqbal welcomed all the participants and delivered a warm Introduction to Arduino Bangladesh. One of the highlights of the event



was when The Tech School and their bright, young apprentices took over the stage, shared their experiences, talked about frugal innovation (the process of innovating products at a lower cost and with lower complexities) and the opportunity to solve social problems in rural Bangladesh with its help. Jonayet Hossain, an embedded system enthusiast and software engineer, explained how we can take a board and write few lines of easy code and make it do amazing things. Samiul Hoque, an Arduino enthusiast, has worked on remarkable projects like E-braille and the Argus Helmet,

and gave a talk on how he got into the tech scene.

A very experienced Arduino user of the community, S. Mahubub-Uz Zaman extensively covered Dot Matrix and Android-8, aimed for the more experienced users in our community. Md. Shamsul Kaonain, Co-Advisor, BUCC wrapped up the session with words of wisdom and encouraged the users to never stop chasing their dreams.

The event was sponsored by TechshopBD and ToolsBD and the partners were Rupantor, The Tech School, Campus Star, Wexard Studio, TechshopBD and ToolsBD.