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BYTES

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Staying safe in digital space

We have entered the digital age and while technology has opened many doors to make lives easier for honest, hardworking citizens, it has also opened up numerous alleyways for the more crafty minds to exercise their deceptive 'talents'.

There are quite a few ways someone else's pocket can be loaded up using technology as a tool and you as the victim. First, let's take a look at the classic 'Friend in Distress' act. The first step would be to target a particularly rich person. The next step is a little harder for the impostor- pose as a friend of the said rich individual and hack the unsuspecting friend's social media and/or email account, or make up a whole new one- whichever's easier. Then, it's a simple matter of cooking up a little sob story of how he/she got lost/mugged (preferably both) in an alien area and how some extra cash forwarded to him/her by the friend would totally be a life saver! The messages always mention how soon the money will be repaid and how incredibly grateful he/she is for this little help!

Ahmed Rabib, an executive at a local organization, can vouch for the effectiveness of this method. After all, in his good Samaritan spirit, he bKashed Tk. 3000 to a friend who had messaged him on Facebook, asking money as his own wallet was 'lost' and hence was stuck on the outskirts of Dhaka. A few days later, Rabib met his friend-in-need, only to learn that while the friend had indeed lost his wallet and phone, he never asked anyone for any financial help. It was a clever touch put in by the pickpocket who had not only relieved him of his valuables but his friends too.

Speaking of bKash- swindlers can use their crafty head to make some quick cash. For this though, he/she's need to be friends with local bKash and Flexiload vendors. Then, it's simply a matter of faking a text message to resemble those automatically generated ones when transactions are made. After that, the charlatan sends the message to an unsuspecting scapegoat, and calls him a few minutes later asking for the money back. Once again, to ensure maximum returns, using the 'sob story approach' is usually a good idea.

If you want pointers on how it's done- simply go on to Facebook and check your newsfeed. You're bound to come across numerous stories of how people have been scammed in these ways, and more often than not, screenshots of messages are usually posted. And the scary part is- the way such posts on Facebook has increased in frequency only implies how little is being done by the authorities to apprehend the perpetrators. It's a shame knowing there are so many kind hearted people who are parting away with their money without double checking only to realize the blooper when it's too late. And since it's Eid season, so everyone is urged to exercise extra caution while dealing monitory issues particularly in digital space.

ZISHAN MAHMOOD

DIGITAL COWS

For those who don't want the hassle, the mud, the grime and the long walk to the haat

If you've ever bought a cow for Eid-ul Azha or gone along with other people to the *haat*, you will know exactly how unpleasant the whole ordeal is. You stand a 50% chance of being skewered by a non-co(w)mpliant cow, a 150% chance of being covered in mud and grime and cow dung and a 100% chance of being ripped off, even though you think you got the bargain deal of a lifetime. That was just the easy part (aside from the math, percentages are terrible things). Next, you have to walk the cow home because putting it on a van is just too uncultured and not enough fun, so you end up half dragging and half shoving a 200 kg meat bag across half of Dhaka city because your dad said it's so much better to buy cows from Savar. On the way back, you'll be forced to answer how much your cow cost over and over again, all because they've been doing it forever and they can't find a way to stop.

But you can. You can stop all of it.

Through a digital revolution that gained momentum last year and cemented itself as a thing that should exist and does this year, you can buy a cow off an online portal. How does it work? Well, you go to any of the sites that advertise about selling cows online, browse through, pick a car and then eat it. Wait, no that should be cow, but meh. It's exactly the same procedure: seller lists details of the cow, such as how many teeth, its citizenship and country of origin, how fat it is, etc. That last bit should be illegal because dating sites don't list the weights of the cows that populate them, do they? Anyway. You pick a cow, call up the seller, bargain over the phone, and if you want to see what you'll be eating in a couple of weeks before buying, you're all welcome. If you'd rather keep a digital barrier between yourself and your eventual beef, that can be arranged too. To save you the hassle of actually walking your beef home, the sites will usually offer you a deal where they will deliver the cow to you, for a little bit of a service charge.
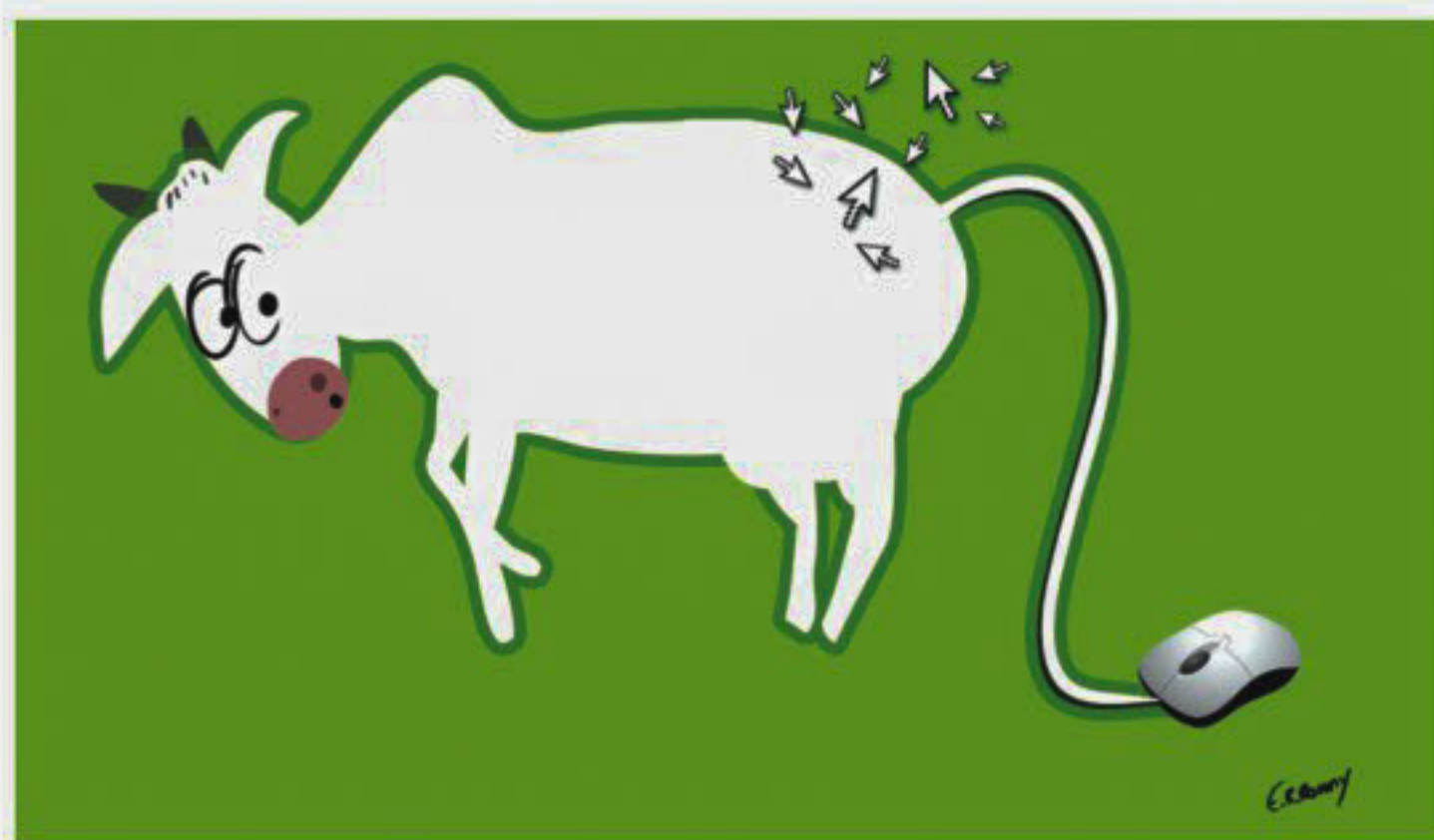
Of course, buying and sacrificing a cow on Eid is all about being humble and showing respect to the animal that you are sacrificing. It's not all about scrolling down the ordered list of cows and picking the most expensive one, so take your time. These sites save you a lot of time and hassle anyway, but there's no need to treat it the same as shopping for a handbag. Some say that walking home the cow gives you a sense of perspective, of how tough it is for animals, and that it instils in you a sense of respect for a sacrificial animal. Keep in mind this is a living animal that you are buying off the internet.

So feel free to browse through the e-*haats* that are popping up everywhere if you have no other choice, and may you have a great Eid.

Eid Mubarak.

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JUST IN

Samsung and Grameenphone introduce Galaxy Note 5 in Bangladesh

Samsung Mobile Bangladesh & Grameenphone announced the launch of the Samsung Galaxy Note 5. The device was unveiled at an event by Yasir Azman, Chief Marketing Officer, Grameenphone and Choon Soo Moon, Managing Director, Samsung Electronics. Interested customers can now pre-book the device. As a pre-booking gift, GP customers will receive 8 GB data at a discounted price of 500 taka for 2 months (3 times). Customers will also receive a gift voucher worth Tk. 10,000/- from Timezone. The device is priced at Tk. 69,900/- only. Customers can enjoy up to 12 months' EMI at 0% interest. Customers can pre-book from Sep 9 – Sept. To confirm, customers will have to deposit Tk. 5,000/-

Two Prolink Dual WAN access routers launched

Prolink PRN 2001 & PRN 3001 support local FTP servers provided by the ISP service providers in the country. RN2001/PRN3001 comes with a universal repeater mode which offers you the ability to extend your existing wireless signals to blind spot areas where the wireless connection is inconsistent. The data Transfer Speeds of PRN2001 is up to 150Mbps and PRN3001 is up to 300Mbps.

PRICE: PRN2001 Tk. 1,600/-; PRN3001 Tk. 1,900/- . Both has 2 years' service warranty

TECH HAPPENING

Intel and SMobile launch first Intel-based smartphone in Bangladesh

Intel Ltd (Dhaka Liaison office) and SMobile recently introduced a new lineup of Android devices, including the first smartphone device designs by S-Mobile, using Intel Atom x3 (SoFIA) processors. The announcement was made at a major event on 9th September 2015 at the capital hosted by senior executives from Intel and S-Mobile. "Intel has become the processor of choice in Android systems," said Zia Manzur, Country Manager, and Intel Bangladesh. Speaking on the occasion, Lin Yin Kun, CEO, S-Mobile said, "These are the first Intel powered smartphones to be launched under the banner of S-Mobile in Bangladesh." The new S-Mobile smartphones are equipped with the Intel Atom x3 processors, and comes in four sleek sku options. The phones come preinstalled with Android 4.4.4 OS and supports 3G data, SIM and voice calling features.

An app launched for parents of a newborn

To obtain information related to a newborn's health, growth and vaccination, renowned pharmaceutical company Sanofi Bangladesh Limited inaugurated 'Mommy's Book' – a mobile application for new parents. It was unveiled by National Professor Dr. M R Khan, and present at the time was French High Commissioner Sophie Aubert, BIRDEM's Director General Prof. Dr. Nazmunnahar, BPA President Prof. Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah and BPA Secretary General Prof. Dr. M A K Azad Choudhury.

A new global job seeking platform for engineers

The Global Jobs BD, an online jobs portal bring opportunity for local engineers to place themselves in foreign job markets. Many Bangladeshi engineers can get job placements abroad through the sister concern project of BJIT, a Bangladeshi technology organization. Yasuhiro Akashi, Chief Executive Officer of Global Jobs BD, shared this while he was talking at the Internet Week -2015 in the capital recently.

KASPERSKY SECURITY UPDATE

Five ways to protect your private photos: Part 1

Remember last year's well-publicized leak, which exposed some celebrities' nude photos? The story not only made some individuals' day (and probably night), it turned to be a very educating precedent. For instance, it made many people realize that their pet's name is not the safest password, and two-factor authentication is not meant exclusively for IT geeks, but for any Swarovski-adorned iPhone owner as well. However, 2FA in iCloud, as well as in Gmail, Facebook and many other web services, is optional. Thus the consequences can be devastating, especially if your work at an Internet company. Here's part 1: **Two locks are better**

The majority of people think of two-factor authentication as of the system sending one-time passwords in text messages. Well, it's the most prominent method of 2FA for web services, yet it's by far not the only one.

In general, 2FA is like a door with two padlocks. One of them is the traditional login-password combination, and the second could be anything else. Moreover, if two padlocks are not enough, you might employ as many as you like, but it would make the process of opening the door much longer, so it's good to start with at least two.

Passwords sent via SMS are a comprehensible and relatively reliable way of authenticating, which is not always handy. If you don't have coverage (which is frequently the case when you travel), that means no password for you. You might lose your phone, after all, and being unable to leverage other means of communication in a situation like that is even more frustrating. To cover you in such cases, many web services like Facebook and Google, offer other options. For example, they offer a list of one-time keys which you can preemptively compile, print out and store somewhere safe.

Moreover, 2FA with one-time codes delivered via SMS might be enabled not at all times but only when someone logs in from an unknown device. So, unless you are logging in from a new device every day, SMS-enabled 2FA is not a big deal. Once setup, it works ok.