

| SCI-TECK |

Our children hold the key to our future, and are our nation's greatest asset. They are also the most vulnerable and volatile members of the society. How we handle them today will determine where we as a nation will stand in the future. To ensure that all children are at their best possible elements when they become adults, we must take care of them in a way that they can extract the best of all the resources at their disposal for continued growth.

The Internet has radically changed

Bangladesh. We know that some children are becoming victims of cyber bullying, offensive content, online predation, due to relative inexperience about the real world. The advent of social media has on one hand made connections between people around the globe easier, but has also made cyber bullying more convenient. The rising dominance of pornographic material on the internet has made children susceptible to offensive and highly inappropriate material.

In light of this circumstance

So, how should parents ensure that their children are properly educated about internet use? According to the guide book, first, they should educate themselves on the pros and cons of the internet, because an avid knowledge on any issue is required before guiding anyone on it. In 2014, a survey conducted in Malaysia found that half the children using internet are not supervised by parents, which may be the case in other Asian countries in future as well. The same survey says that, one out of four children have been

on ill-advice from their inexperienced peers or other unreliable sources that would make them prone to misguidance. Especially, this is important because children have access to diverse information sources on the internet, many of which are unreliable.

It is impossible, and sometimes wrong to continuously monitor activities of your children. Sometimes, it is important to trust them to do the right thing. For that, it is vital to provide them right guidance and educating them about the right and wrong courses of action from an early age. However, sometimes a degree of monitoring is indeed necessary, because children growing up communicate with different people who may misguide them into engaging into activities that may put them in harm's way.

There are various apps on iOS and Android platforms that enable parents to keep a responsible eye on their children's activities. Apps like Life-360,

# KEEPING YOUR CHILD SAFE ON THE INTERNET

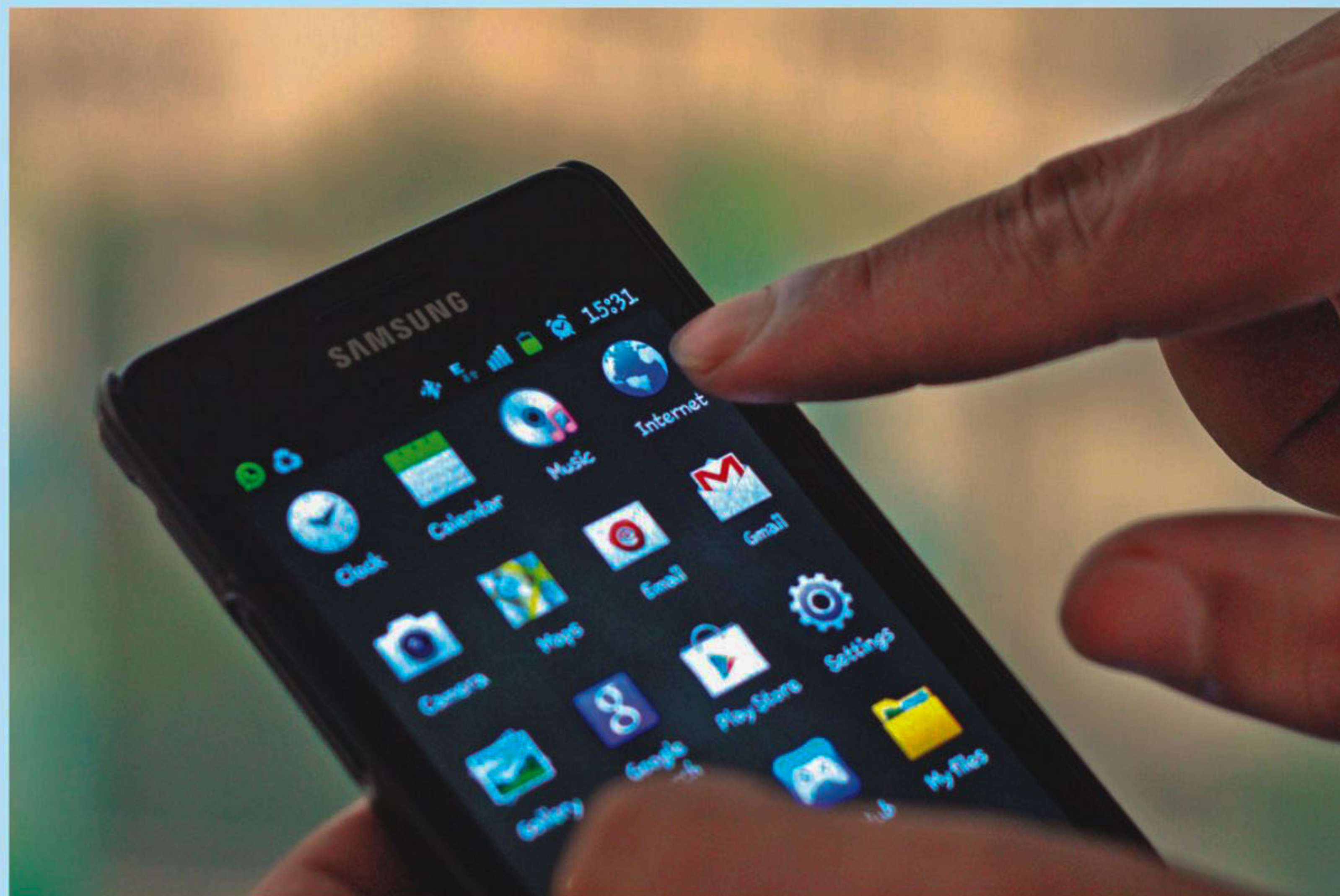
MARCUS ADAKTUSSON

PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

our lives in ways unimaginable even a decade back. There is something on offer for people of all ages and social backgrounds. Limitless knowledge on any perceivable topic has come within the grasp of our fingertips. Our children are also not left behind. They can use it to research for school assignments, play interactive games, watch educational videos, communicate with teachers and other children, and learn about current affairs. The advent of affordable smartphones has made them a tool of daily use for children and teenagers. There is also a universe of information on the internet that is highly improper for children, and unless children are properly educated on responsible use of the platform, it can distract and derail them, or make them perpetrators or victims of hideous crimes, sometimes scarring them for life.

In the near future, an estimated 500 million Asian children will be able to access the internet from handsets on their palms. Although the South East Asian region has not gained as widespread access to high speed internet as the first world countries, they are swiftly catching up due to their advancing economy, increasing availability of high-tech affordable smartphones. Parents in these regions, although should rejoice the endless world of possibilities and opportunities unveiled in front of them and their children by the internet, must also be careful about the possible harmful impacts of irresponsible internet use or unintentional abuse of the platform. In Bangladesh the problem could be more complicated as many of the parents are also using internet for the first time and not armed with sufficient knowledge to guide their children.

We have the opportunity to learn from other countries where internet penetration is higher than in



Grameenphone has recently launched a parent's guide that outlines in detail the various steps parents could take to ensure their child's safety in the digital world of Internet. The company is distributing this guide book among parents and children across the nation, while also conducting various workshops on internet safety with the help of BRAC. Telenor the parent company of Grameenphone, has also taken various initiatives to spread the word about safe internet use in different markets it operates. Grameenphone and Telenor Group both have an ambition to provide "Internet for All" but they are also committed to make it safer for the children so that they can exploit its full benefit.

victim of cyber bullying. A majority of the children surveyed are between 13 and 15 years old.

The best way to approach children in this regard is simple – to make them perceive you as someone they can rely upon with their emotions and various confusions prevalent at this stage. Parents, especially in this region of the world, often hesitate to talk to their children about the sensitive issues of adult life. This trend must change, and parents must develop a comfort level on talking to their children about these issues from an early age. This will ensure two things – children will depend on their parents for guidance on these issues, and they will not depend

Mamabear, My Mobile Watchdog, and are among the prominent apps used by parents all over. A free tool called Time Away on Android serves a very similar purpose.

Using these tools, and nurturing a healthy, friendly relationship with children, parents can that their children avail the best of the internet to bloom into globally connected, informed, and empowered citizens.

The Safe Internet guidebook is available here for download <http://www.grameenphone.com/sites/default/files/Safe-Internet-Parent-Guidebook-English.pdf>

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| SHUTTERSTORIES |



## THE LEGACY OF THE GREAT WAR

Photos: FERDOUSI BEGUM

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The Chittagong Commonwealth War Cemetery is a historic burial place where hundreds of brave soldiers from all over the world were laid to rest in peace who had fallen more than 70 years ago during the Second World War. Soldiers from England, undivided India, Netherlands, Canada, USA, Burma, Japan, New Zealand, Australia and as far as East and West Africa are buried here who had sacrificed their lives during the deadliest war of all time. This well preserved cemetery has become a famous tourist spot in Chittagong for its appealing gardens,



beautiful walkways and lush, picturesque lawn. Health seekers, students, relatives and comrades of the fallen soldiers visit this place to show respect to these brave souls while enjoy the place's solemn beauty.

