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# NEXT STEP

## TELENOR VISIONS FROM THE VISIONARY

*Telenor is easily one of the most far-sighted businesses in the world today. Where others dwindle and decrease in prominence, Telenor has gone from strength to strength. But what does it take to not only be a market leader but to keep a firm grip on such a coveted position? The Telenor Youth Forum held in Oslo, Norway, offered a chance to pick the brains of the visionaries behind Telenor and understand a little of what concepts are worked on at the Telenor Headquarters on a daily basis.*

In a short question and answer session following a keynote speech delivered by Sigve Brekke, the group's CEO summarised a few of the telecom giant's future plans, for Bangladesh along with the rest of the countries they operate in. Sigve began his speech, by underlining the reasons behind the tremendous growth experience by Telenor across its numerous markets. He pointed out how one of the leading factors behind the growth was the demand for communication in countries like Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, with the first two countries amassing 53.1 million and 39.8 million users, respectively.

Spread across 13 markets worldwide, Mr. Sigve explained the telecom's reliance on the Asian markets, which generates nearly 51% of the total revenue. "When we went to Bangladesh in 1996, people said we must be out of our minds. They said that no one in Bangladesh could afford a cell phone," he recalled. The growth soon showed how wrong detractors were and Telenor's ambitious project was indeed a great success. Perhaps Bangladesh's response could be credited with the group's further expansion in Asia.

Speaking after his speech at the Telenor Headquarters in Fornebu, Norway, Mr. Sigve explained Telenor's strategies going forward, especially in terms of dealing with the



digitalisation of the global markets. "Telenor today is making decisions for the mass market, which explains our localized approach. The main customer growth is coming from Asia and there is no growth being observed in the European market," he further said. "We are treating each market differently, providing localised services. Therefore, we are planning keeping digitalization in mind, in

terms of distribution and provision of services."

When queried on how they can counter the growth of alternate means of communication, such as Whatsapp and Skype, Mr. Sigve said that in such cases they would usually take two approaches. "We can take a position on these services or have our own services and apps for communication. The second

method is to continually improve our services and our network." "The internet traffic volume doubles every year and I think this doubling will continue. Consumption of data by using video services such as Youtube and Netflix has further augmented the demand for data and thus the need for reliable providers," he continued. On the matter of possible free internet for all, he said it would not be as beneficial for consumers as one might think.

On the matter of digitalization of Bangladesh, Mr. Sigve pointed out that Telenor had a great role to play. "If you want to digitalize Bangladesh, you have to do so through the mobile network. You cannot put fibre optics cables everywhere. Thus, we can come to an agreement with the government to deliver the required network for fully achieving a digital Bangladesh," he said. He also pointed out that with the possible auctions for licenses coming up, if made profitable, this could benefit all stakeholders greatly. With such plans and visions, with Telenor on-board, not only can we hope for a prospering digital Bangladesh, but we can also hope for a better world in the near future.

OSAMA RAHMAN

## INSPIRATION TO FLY HIGH A PLATFORM FOR ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS



Many of us have thought of starting our own venture. We have great ideas, but don't know where to start. Bearing this in mind, Fly High Career Guidelines, a startup career consultancy firm, organised called Inspiration to Fly High, a platform where successful entrepreneurs and professionals from diverse backgrounds and disciplines united to share constructive suggestions and inspiring stories of how they overcame hurdles to become who they are today. The event at Dhaka's NewsCred office was aimed at intrapreneurs who are about to launch startups of their own.

The event took off with a speech by Mohd. Fahad Ifaz, an alumni of North South University and Director at Edge Consulting Ltd, on the importance of thinking outside the box and coming up with smart business solutions that result in long-term business investment.

Up next was Shazeeb M. Khairul Islam, the Founder of Social Business Youth Alliance- Global. His speech was directed at getting the audience to look into their own community, recognise the plethora of social problems surrounding them and come up with solutions.

Samid Razzak, a student of North South University and one of the initiators of 10 Minute School, an education website on the verge of creating a massive disruption in the education system by revamping the ways of learning, talked about their startup journey. He was a great source of inspiration to the audience as he upheld the original spirit of the event - to help young minds shape their ideas into reality.

Naimul Kader, Founder & CEO of Fly High Career Guidelines, concluded the event with a discussion of the Business Model Canvas, which unites all the key components of a business under one single tabular formatted page and makes it easier to present to stakeholders.

## 5 BOOKS FOR INSPIRATION THIS NEW YEAR

*Books can be an amazing source of solitude and inspiration at the same time. As the year-end holiday season sets in, it also brings along one of the best times of the year for a bookworm to kick start a book-reading marathon. This writer has compiled a list of books which tries to adhere to the needs of (binge) readers, according to their different preference of genres, for the holidays and the New Year.*

### 1. OPEN BY ANDRE AGASSI

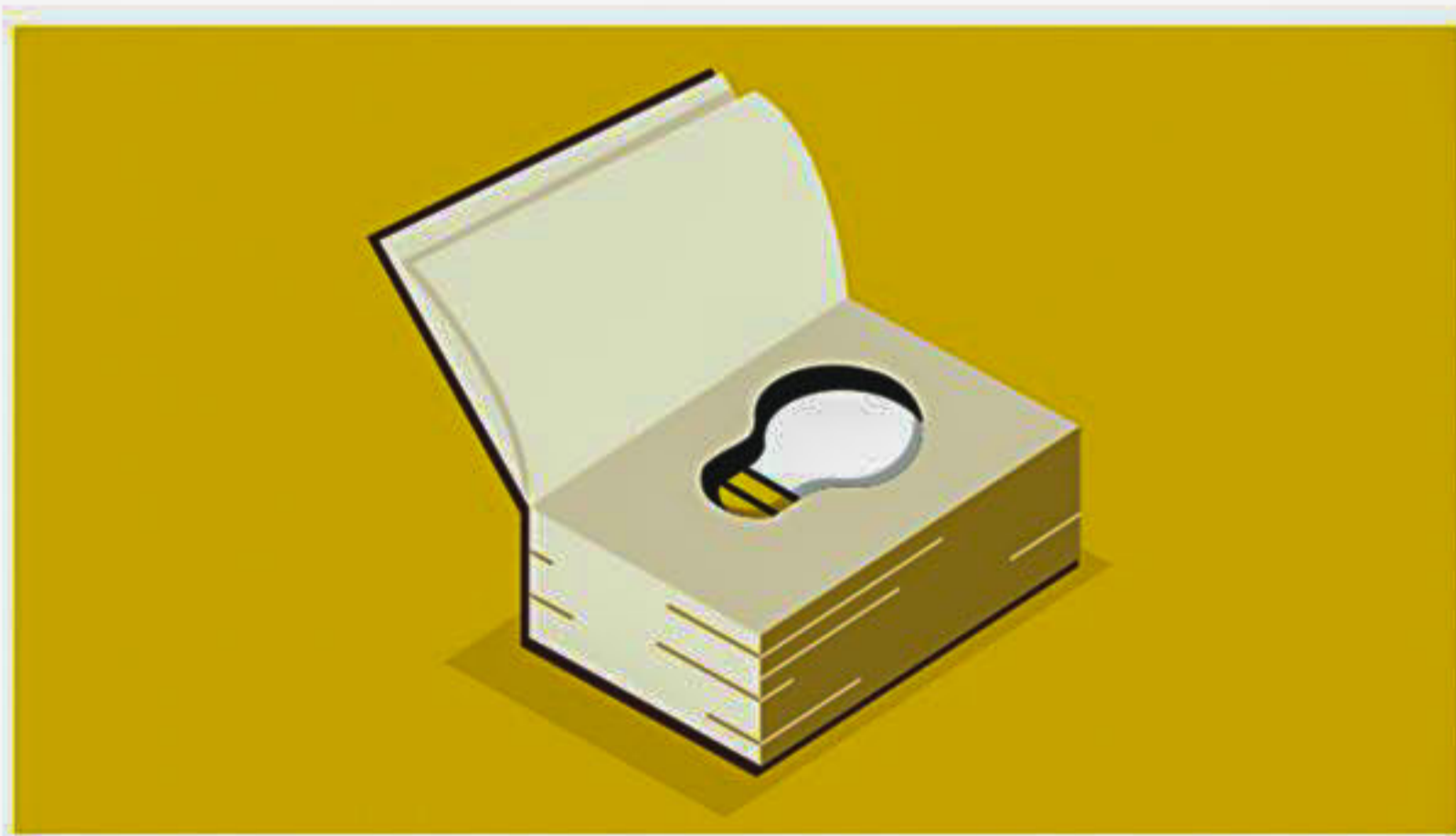
Imagine a world where your favourite sports person admits to hating the one sport she/he has played their whole life and carved their career out of. For those who love tennis and have grown up watching Andre Agassi, they were faced with the same situation when he published his autobiography back in 2009 where he admitted to HATING the game. Few books have stuck with this writer like this. The revelations made in this book force the reader to genuinely question their life choices - something which not many can achieve as easily. This highly recommended book will haunt you for a long time and teach you an invaluable lesson - nothing is as it seems, for anyone.

### 2. A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS BY KHALED HOSSEINI

Published four years after the internationally bestselling debut, The Kite Runner, Hosseini's second book accomplished the rare feat of being just as good and heartbreaking as, if not better than, its predecessor. Set during the war-inflicted Afghanistan of the 1970s to the early 2000s, it is a story of two women, Mariam and Laila. Regardless of their own age difference and circumstances, the women form a bond, as strong as that of a mother and child, and eventually decide on changing their own fates. Upon ending the book, one may feel lucky to have not had encountered conflict like the one in Afghanistan, but there is so much more to learn. Perhaps the greatest lesson to take away is to never stop dreaming and striving for a better life, no matter the situation one is in.

### 3. HOW ASIA WORKS BY JOE STUDDWELL

Part of Bill Gate's annual list of books to read, How Asia Works tackles two of the most important questions of development economics: "How did countries like Japan,



Taiwan South Korea, and China achieve sustained, high growth? And why have so few other countries managed to do so?" As Bill Gates himself mentions, "The agriculture section of the book was particularly insightful. It provided ample food for thought for me as well as the whole Agriculture team at our foundation. And it left us thinking about whether parts of the Asian model can apply in Africa." This book is especially important in a world where everything and anything is increasingly becoming globalised. For those who would be interested in development economics, business, or are just broadening their reading choices, this book is definitely recommended.

### 4. CHOKHER BALI BY RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Termed by Tagore as one of his first attempts at the novel form, Chokher Bali is considered an eternal classic of Bengali Literature. It gives an impeccable portrayal of late-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, and how the family and societal structures worked during that period in history. When compared to how the societal structures work now in our region, one can definitely see a great deal of both similarities and differences at the same time, both for the good and bad. To this day, Chokher Bali can be an amazing source of reference

for those who wish to understand the times in which our grandmothers' lived and why we have certain social structures.

### 5. SARAH'S KEY BY TATIANA DE ROSNAY

When talking about the Holocaust, one can almost vividly imagine the trains loaded with millions of Jews being taken to the gas chambers of Auschwitz, or any other PoW camps, to their eventual deaths. With her international bestselling historical novel, Rosnay visits a rarely touched upon and tabooed part of French History - the Vel' d'Hiv roundup of millions of French Jews in which the police forces had active contribution to the holocaust of the Second World War. Each page of the story brings along with it a new wave of goose bumps and loath for the war. However, by the end of the story (and the next couple of weeks as the story lingers on with oneself), one does start seeing the similarities between the situation of the Jews during the time of world war and the current treatment of Arab Refugees. Hopefully, upon reading the story, the reader will be able critically look at the depiction of the incident and at the same time assess the current world situation according to one's own ease.

RAISA ASHRAF

## Making a DIFFERENCE

Bangladesh is rapidly moving towards middle income status by 2021. Our businesses definitely offer immense opportunities for the growing economy and this diversity needs a stage for the stories untold. See Bangladesh make its mark on the global map as Making a Difference brings you our proudest success stories from across the country.

## HOW TO STAY PRODUCTIVE FOR 2 STRAIGHT HOURS

Staying productive all week is a challenge for most of us. But weeks are days and days are hours. Get through them two at a time and you'll work better and faster than you (or anyone else) ever expected.

**Clearly define what you need to get done:** Before you even start working, jot down every small task you need to do to complete the work at hand, on a piece of paper. Write down these tiny sub-goals with bullet points. Complete them one by one in the next two hours.

your war zone.

**Make sure there's sufficient airflow around you:** You know this! Don't suffocate yourself and sit in a damp old stuffy place for two hours.

**Block out social media and restrict phone usage:** Checking social media and taking that not-so-important call from your buddy will downright kill your productivity. Use apps like SelfControl to block specific websites for a certain period of time.

**Get ready with everything you need:** You already know what you might need while working. Try to get those beforehand and avoid leaving the desk in between.

**Set a timer not a stopwatch:** A stopwatch puts pressure on you. You keep thinking about how much time you don't have left and lose focus on work. Instead, set a timer on your phone. You'll be working with a more positive vibe.

**Noise-cancelling headphones:** There's nothing like these for blocking out the entire world from interrupting. Plus, the people around you know that you don't want to be disturbed now.

**Play ambient sounds and white noise on your headphones:** Listening to repetitive sounds that don't distract you is one of the best ways to focus. Check these out: [www.coffitivity.com](http://www.coffitivity.com), [www.asoftmurmur.com](http://www.asoftmurmur.com)

**One tab at a time:** "Multi-tabbing" doesn't help. Moving back and forth between articles and opening more and more links is wasting your time. Go to the next tab only when you're finished with the current one and don't open any page that isn't relevant to your work. No matter how interesting it seems.

**Get up and stretch every 30 minutes:** Two hours isn't much when you're working but it will give you a sore back if you keep sitting for that long. Get up from your chair, remove the headphones and take a small break for half a minute or so.

ABHIK HASNAIN



**Drink coffee before starting to work:** Caffeine needs time to kick in. And while the worries of whether or not your coffee's getting cold and the regret that there's no more left in the cup are minor issues - they are still distractions.

**Lock yourself up in a room:** If you're working from home or if you can manage a small meeting room in the office all to yourself, then get in, shut the door and stop any living creature from entering

**Remove distractions from your workspace:** Distractions don't always come from outside. That magazine you have, that toy you keep playing with, stationeries lying around, all of these can keep stealing your attention every few seconds or so. Throw 'em out (temporarily).

**Turn off device notifications:** Mute your devices and turn off notifications about software updates and what not. You can deal with those later.