INFORMATION | GADGETS | TECHNOLOGY

DELL
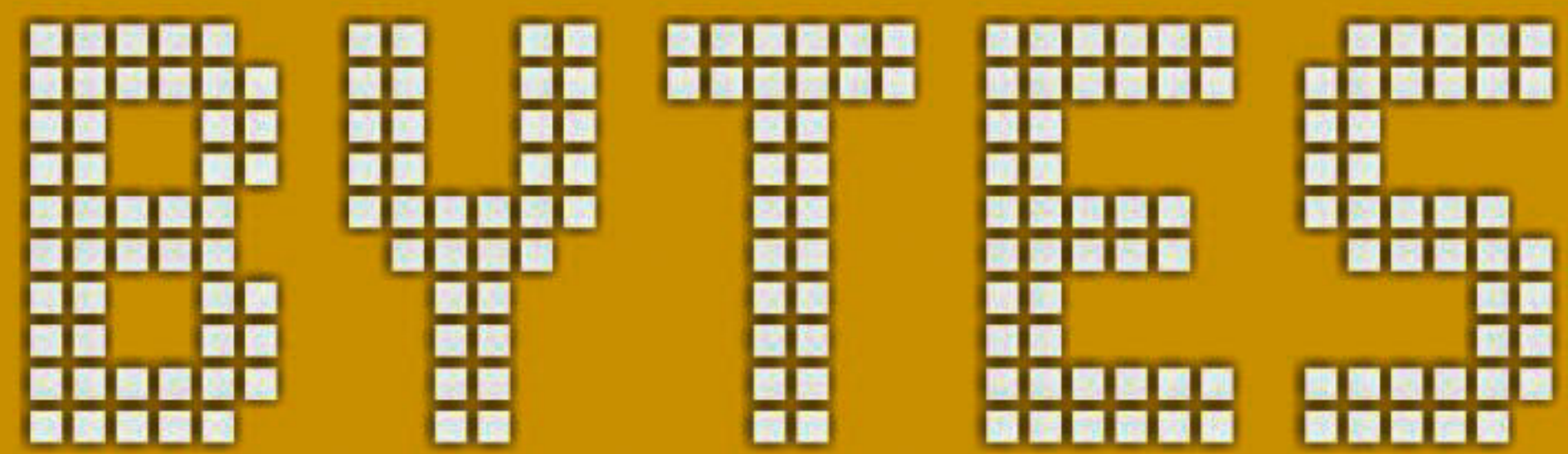The power to do more

The Daily Star
BYTES
DHAKA, MONDAY, APRIL 25, 2016
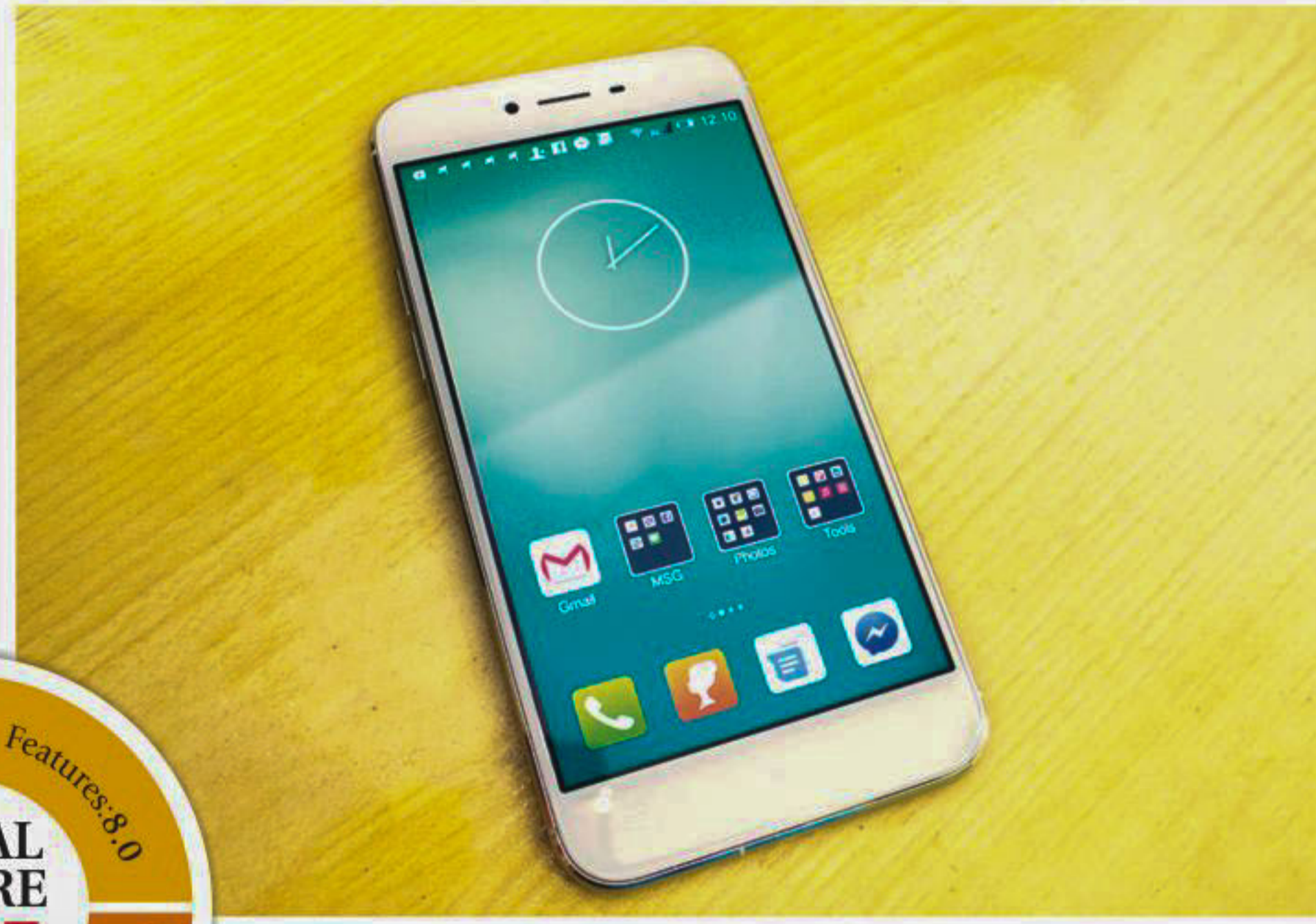e-mail: bytes@thedailystar.net

HANDS ON REVIEW
WE X1 & Smart Solutions

FIRST IMPRESSIONS
The sleek, red box with minimal graphics oozes a little class not common in most local packaging. First impressions matter and WE has got that part covered rather well. Then comes the device itself. First glance it will remind you of a certain fruity device. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and this time it is done well.

BUILD
The X1 is a 6.15mm thin, full aluminium bodied unit with rounded corners and very minimal logo work on the rear. The top is a 5.0" HD AMOLED display with soft rounded glass edges. There are two white plastic strips on the rear top and bottom that are design elements that need not have been there because these eventually get scratched up. But the rest of the design is solid and classy. The 720*1280, 294PPI display is sharp enough for regular viewing but

TOTAL SCORE 7.25
Value: 7.0
Features: 8.0
Performance: 6.5
Build: 7.5

SPECS
Display: 5.0"HD AMOLED, Corning Gorilla Glass III
CPU: 1.2GHz Quad Core, Snapdragon 410
OS: 4.4.4 KitKat, Fine OS UI
ROM: 16 GB; **RAM:** 2 GB
Camera: Rear- 13 MP, Front- 8 MP
Battery: 2000 mAh
Sensors: Accelerometer, Light, Proximity sensor etc.
PRICE: TK 18,600/- with 100 GB cloud storage

VERDICT
It's a great looking phone with a sharp display. The sleekness makes it a little slippery but it's a price you pay for style points. Easy to carry, easy to slip into a pocket, the X1 wins on style points. It packs decent hardware that will serve most people for most purposes coupled with a slick, lag-free user interface. Just one gripe: it has a dated version of Android.

the very small icons can have noticeable jagged edges. Colours are on the right side of vibrancy with the automatic brightness control working properly all the time.

HARDWARE
There is plenty of juice packed into that slim body. Power is from 1.2GHz Quad Core Qualcomm Snapdragon 410 chipset backed up by 2GB RAM. The 64-bit processor would have been better served with an updated OS. I wonder when WE will address that required update. It comes with 4.4.4 KitKat and a familiar interface called Fine UI that successfully manages to merge iOS looks and Android functionality. While most users won't notice any difference in using KitKat, a newer Android would definitely be able to better utilise that hardware combo.

The Adreno 306 is a capable GPU for most available games with a major chunk spent trundling through unforgiving terrain with SUVs in Off-road Driving 2016. 3D games are mostly rendered with smooth framerates although the device will warm up a bit.

STORAGE AND CALL:
There is 16GB available memory and WE's proprietary 100GB cloud service. The sound quality is excellent and loud enough to hear clearly in crowded situations.

CAMERA
The 13MP back unit takes very good photos even at slightly low light. Just make sure it's not a lot of moving subjects. Colours are a little on the bright side but detail is sharp. An 8MP front unit does a good job capturing a lot of detail and has a neat timer function with display numbers so you don't have to fiddle with the shutter button for those all-important selfies. Bottom-line: the cameras will easily take care of all your social media needs.

BATTERY
The 2000mAh battery may not seem like a lot, but the device managed to run an entire day of regular usage that involves gaming, social media activity while always being connected via Wi-Fi or mobile data.

EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

SMART SOLUTIONS
This is where WE amped up their game from the competition. It is the first Bangladeshi company to provide a solution service alongside the device. The device is sort of the gateway to the WE Smart Solutions. Currently WE Smart Solutions consist of two cool services: WE CLOUD & WE WIFI.

WE CLOUD is actually personal cloud storage for WE device owners. All the WE devices come with free 1 year access to WE CLOUD. The storage capacity varies from 20 GB to 100 GB depending on devices. You can access the WE CLOUD from your internet and also via WE WIFI. With WE WIFI you can actually access the stored content as if you are on your LAN. The data stored in the cloud is secure and can be deleted or recovered remotely in case you lose the device. Moreover, WE plan to get telecom operators onboard their cloud coverage which we think is going to be a game changer.

WE WIFI is another treat that many might find amusing. Currently WE has free WI-FI Zones spread out around 380 locations in Dhaka, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and many others. WE plans to add another 1500 free WI-Fi locations by end of 2016. If you have a WE device, then you get FUP-free VIP access to the whimsical world of internet . Non WE device holders are going to enjoy the WE WIFI as well but they are going to get a limited access. We find this concept really good. If you are residing in Dhaka or Chittagong then most of your favourite restaurants, coffee shops, university campuses, shopping malls and hangout places will be covered by the WE WIFI.
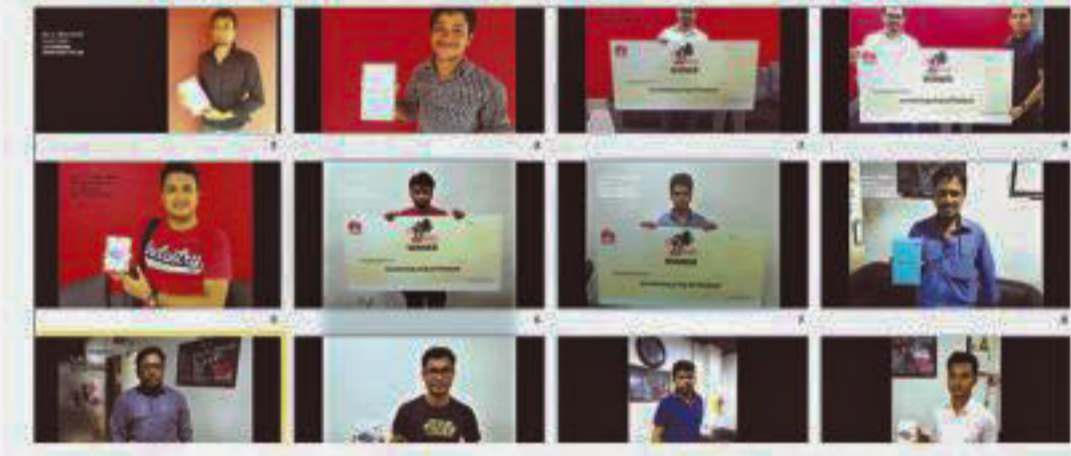
SHAHRIAR RAHMAN

WE WiFi
Connect

Banglalink & Opera introduces premium app store for the first time in Bangladesh

Opera   banglalink

Banglalink has partnered with Opera, to introduce the largest premium app store, "Banglalink App Store", in Bangladesh. Aligned with a focus towards digitalization, Banglalink has created an exclusive opportunity for its subscribers to access the largest collection of premium apps in the nation. Once users activate this offer, they will enjoy unlimited downloading of premium apps and games from this app store. As part of the initial offer, they will enjoy a 7-day free trial on first subscription. The subscribers gain exclusive access to a catalog of over 300,000+ apps. Banglalink will conduct a simultaneous app acquisition process of updating and adding new apps.

Huawei's 'Fly to Thai' offer to end this month

The Huawei 'Fly to Thai' offer has made a significant impact on smartphone lovers in Bangladesh. Between April 1 and April 20, twenty lucky customers who purchased a Huawei smartphone have been selected for a travel to Thailand for free, forty customers have each won a Huawei tab, and two hundred customers have won a power bank each. The offer will run till the end of April. Starting on April 1, one lucky Huawei customer was selected every day for a free trip to Thailand. Moreover, two lucky winners received a Huawei Tab each and 10 lucky winners received complimentary Lionel Messi T-shirt for free. Customers purchasing a Huawei smartphone till April 30 will be considered eligible to be a potential winner under this offer.

NASA Space Apps Challenge wraps up in Dhaka

Finale of the world largest programming contest 'NASA Space Apps Challenge-2016' organised by United State-based National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), wrapped up with prize giving ceremony at Independent University of Bangladesh(IUB) at Dhaka on Saturday. Over 200 programmers selected across the country took part in the 36 hour long hackathon to hack the problem on six specific issues related to the space technology. Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Service (BASIS) organized the 220 nations-event for second consequence time in Dhaka. State Minister for Information and Communication Technology Zunaid Ahmed Palak attended the Closing & Award Giving ceremony as the chief guest. IUB Vice Chancellor Prof M Omar Rahman was special guest while BASIS President Shameem Ahsan presided over the closing session. NASA Chief Scientist Ms Ellen Stofan connected the session through video conference. BASIS Director & NASA Space Apps Challenge Convener Ariful Hasan Opu give the welcome speech.

MyCell reduces SPIDER A7's price

This week, MyCell reduced the price of SPIDER A7. It's a phone of 5-inch HD screen. SPIDER A7 has an IPS screen. Along with Android OS 5.1(Lollipop), 1GHz Quad-core processor (64bit), MT 6735, 2GB RAM and 16 GB ROM. It has an 8 Mega Pixel Camera on the front and 13 megapixels on the back with Dual LED flash. Sensors like the G-Sensor, proximity Sensor and Light Sensor are included. 3-finger screenshots, eye tracking and OTG support are a few unique features of this phone. It can also be used as a universal remote.
PRICE- **BDT 9,990/-**

Why local companies can and should make up the majority of our IT sector

SHAMEEM AHSAN

When our vision is sky-high, strategies should be most fitting as well to achieve the target. Dominance of local IT players is crucial for local market development, whereas multinational and transnational companies are dominating the Bangladeshi IT industry. Foreigners are given access to important and confidential documents. Consequently, the country is facing major threat and our national security is at risk. Bangladesh Bank became prey to the hackers during the recent debacle of about USD 100 million electronic theft. To amend this situation, control of our IT industry must be in the hands of local companies.

We want growth of our local companies. Conversely, we have seen that ICT public procurement for foreign funded projects are easier for the foreign large organizations to get. Local companies cannot participate in spite of having the proficiency due to the difficult conditions imposed by the foreign funding agencies. As a result in most cases these money flows out of the country. Singapore, Malaysia and many other countries have public procurement guidelines where it's specified that 50% or more of the public procurement must be done by local body.

Bangladesh and Worldwide media reported how Chinese hackers broke into the systems of Bangladesh Bank. Speculations on the rise that confidential information were also stolen during the hack. Few months back, hackers robbed money in ATM booths of number of banks. These banks use expensive foreign Software and technology. Our local IT companies offer high quality IT and ITES. Yet we are bringing foreign companies and experts spending a fortune. We are using IT solutions made by these foreign companies disseminating our sensitive information to them.

Our local IT companies are creating world-class Software. Corporation like Microsoft, Dell, Nokia, Samsung, Wells Fargo Bank, City Bank NA, Standard Chartered Bank Limited, State Bank of India, HSBC are using Software developed by Bangladeshi IT companies. Many of our local companies have massive global presence. These companies are contributing in our economy and creating employment for thousands.

Foreign Software vendors who supply IT solutions to Bangladeshi businesses generally leave the country after making the sale. So there's no source codes available for these Software which make it difficult to customize. After sales support from these vendors are also poor. Mega public projects like

obtaining National ID Cards and Passports are handled by foreign companies. Our private and sensitive information are now exposed to threat from these foreign countries. Government must give these projects to local companies to safeguard the sensitive information.

We have seen in India that Telecom, Heavy Industries and Renewable Energy sectors have policies to protect domestic producers from the increasing penetration of foreign manufacturers. Creating policies that put highest significance on local investment was the reason behind the developments in Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Taiwan. Instead of spending money on

foreign products, these countries nurtured their local entrepreneurs which gradually had taken them almost to the level of developed counties. World economists termed it as "Asian Miracle". In Bangladesh, current investment scenario is opposite. Local investors have to undertake a lot of risks while the importers of the same IT products are enjoying incentives. It's causing adverse effect on our local IT industry and flowing a large pile of money out of the country every year. We encourage foreign investments. However, to ensure survival of local IT com

panies, foreign investors must work in at least 50% participation with a local company. It will create level playing field. Besides, tender participation must include 50% partnership condition.

We are optimistic that by 2018, we will achieve 1 billion dollar IT export and the IT sector will be able to contribute in country's economy like RMG; given that these amendments and proposals are materialized. Local companies can and should make up the majority of our IT sector.

Shameem Ahsan is President, BASIS; Director, FBCCI; General Partner, Fenox Venture Capital.