

# FOUR MOTORCYCLES

## under BDT 100,000 to get you into riding

RAHBAR AL HAQ



### HONDA DREAM 110

PRICE: BDT 89,900.00

If you're looking for a no-nonsense versatile point A to B machine, the Honda Dream 110 will do you nicely. Bangladesh Honda Private Limited claims to have exclusively designed this motorcycle for Bangladeshi mass people. This means the bike comes with a 180mm high ground clearance, a long seat to accommodate all types of buttocks, and a fuel-efficient engine making it capable of 74kmpl in a strictly controlled environment.

Being an entry-level product, it is devoid of advanced features such as disk brakes, LED headlamp, or even an RPM Gauge. But considering you're paying less than the price of a half-decent laptop for a motorcycle from a very reputable brand, it's not that big of an issue.



### RUNNER SKOOTY

PRICE: BDT 99,000.00

The Skooty is for those who are looking for something more suited to Urban life. One of the newest offerings from our local motorcycle maker Runner, the new scooter—unlike their Kite+ moped—features a full-sized footrest.

Other features include front disk brakes, a USB charging port, and an automatic gearbox to help stop-and-go traffic a bit more bearable.

The storage under the seat is big enough to hold a full-sized helmet, along with a nifty engine kill switch to help prevent less-than-honest people from commandeering your ride. Overall, the best bang for your buck if you're looking for a scooter.

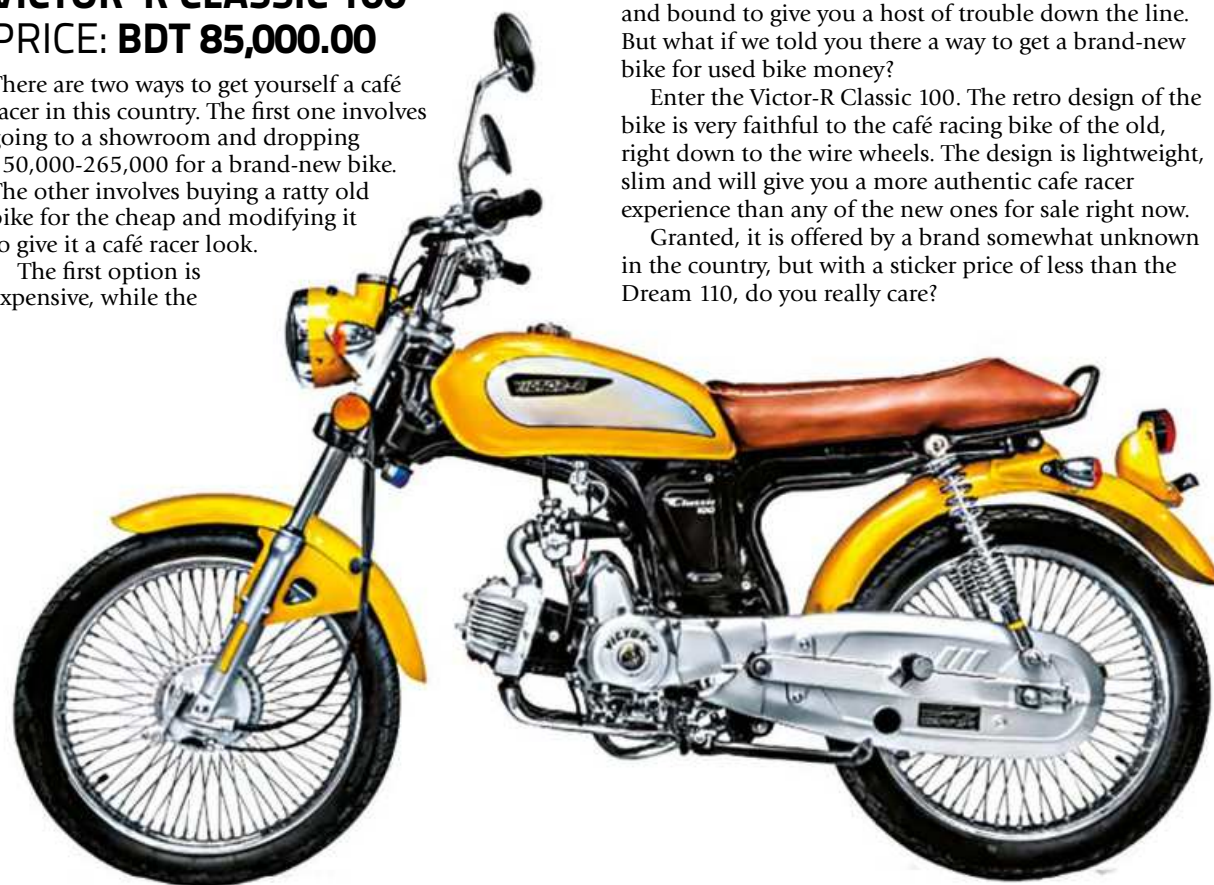


### VICTOR-R CLASSIC 100

PRICE: BDT 85,000.00

There are two ways to get yourself a café racer in this country. The first one involves going to a showroom and dropping 150,000-265,000 for a brand-new bike. The other involves buying a ratty old bike for the cheap and modifying it to give it a café racer look.

The first option is expensive, while the



other results in a bike that is problematic, uncomfortable, and bound to give you a host of trouble down the line. But what if we told you there a way to get a brand-new bike for used bike money?

Enter the Victor-R Classic 100. The retro design of the bike is very faithful to the café racing bike of the old, right down to the wire wheels. The design is lightweight, slim and will give you a more authentic café racer experience than any of the new ones for sale right now.

Granted, it is offered by a brand somewhat unknown in the country, but with a sticker price of less than the Dream 110, do you really care?



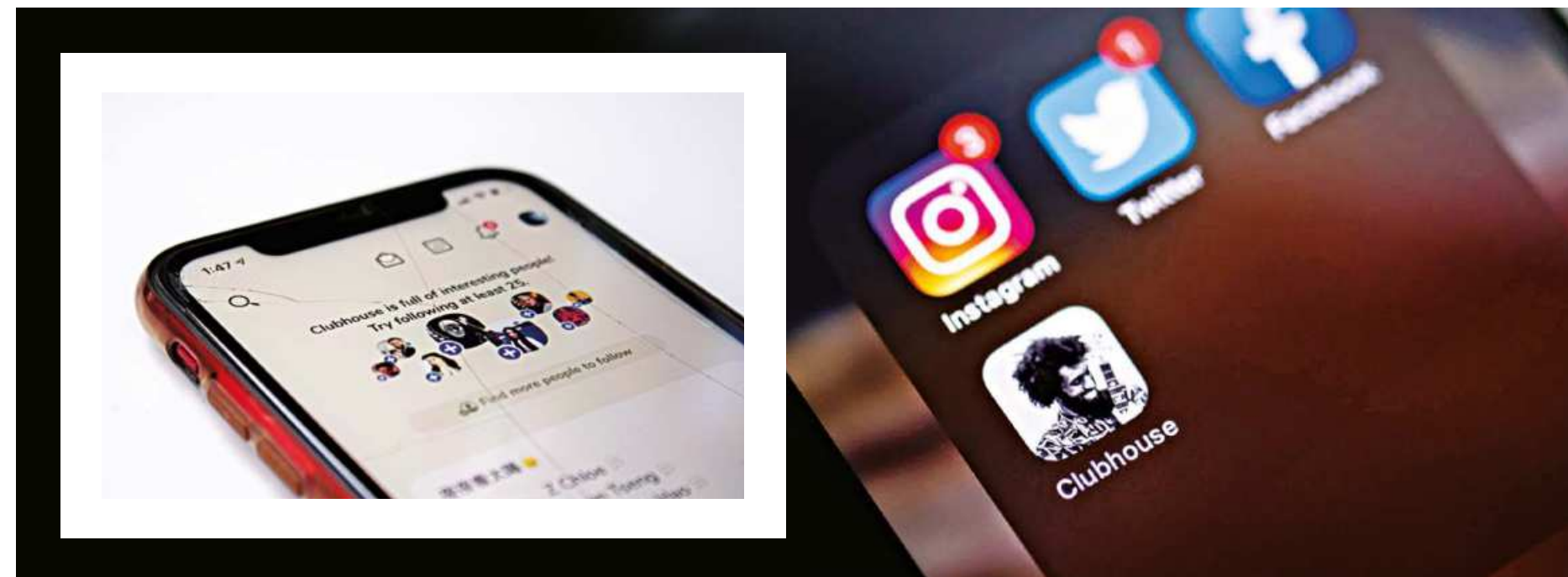
### TVS RADEON

PRICE: BDT 95,000.00

A compromise between the Dream and Vitor-R, the TVS Radeon combines the retro styling of a café racer with the convenience of a modern commuter. Meaning lots of chrome bits, straight body lines and a faux leather seat

combined with rubber knee grip pads, side stand indicator and synchronized braking system, known to the rest of the industry as the combined braking system.

The built quality of the Radeon is far better than that of the Victor-R, and the fit and finish of the switchgear are much nicer compared to the ones found in the Dream 110. If you're looking for a well-built commuter bike with a touch of retro styling, this is your best option without going over six figures.



# CLUBHOUSE

## The platform that wants to transform social media, explained

MADIHA ATHAR KHAN

Launched in April 2020, Clubhouse has speedily made its mark in the social media realm as an innovative platform to engage its audience. As the raging Covid-19 pandemic prevented human connection, people built an appetite for unique ways to communicate and interact. Clubhouse made its mark in people's lives by being an audio-only platform.

Gone was the pressure to maintain an aesthetically pleasing Instagram grid or to write an effective tweet in 280 characters or less. Instead, Clubhouse users get to join 'clubs' and 'rooms' where they can hear people speak on specific topics, and potentially speak and engage with others as well.

What effectively marketed Clubhouse as an appealing social media app was the fact that celebrities used this app and gave the chance to ordinary people to possibly interact with them directly. Clubhouse gained popularity when Elon Musk joined the platform and participated in a room which eventually led to a discussion between him and the CEO of Robinhood, Vlad Tenen.

Since then, it has been speculated that this was an immense PR strategy executed by Venture Capitalist firm Andreessen Horowitz which, not only is an investor for Clubhouse and Robinhood, but is also said to support startups that work with Elon Musk's companies. Regardless of whether this was a carefully orchestrated event, it stood to successfully launch Clubhouse into mainstream attention.

Another element that added to Clubhouse's appeal is its exclusivity.

Unlike Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, Clubhouse is not free to be joined by anyone and everyone: you have to be specifically invited by someone you know who is already registered on the app.

Inherently, this presents Clubhouse as an elitist platform, especially given the fact that each user gets only two invites to dispense when they join. However, a few weeks into using the app, a user will most likely be given three to four more invites, though this seems to be done in a purely arbitrary manner.

The scenario painted is not unlike that of a crowd of people restlessly waiting outside a high-walled and gated community armed with the knowledge that whatever exists inside is to be coveted. Once let in, however, the sights that meet the eye can be underwhelming. This was the experience of one user, Shovon Ahmed, who said, "Clubhouse was hyped up to be so much when I was not on it. Now that I'm registered, I am not impressed."

Clubhouse representatives assert that the app is merely in its beta phase and that soon it will be available to everyone. Nevertheless, the current situation begs to ask the question: if the allegedly temporary exclusivity is working so well for the platform, will they have enough of an incentive to make it more accessible? Many people have contrasted Clubhouse to the likes of Twitter saying that where on the latter, content regulation is virtually impossible and misinformation and hate-speech can spread like wildfire, Clubhouse is a new, healthy take on moderation. Within the rooms, which

are like conferences being live audio-streamed, moderators have full control over who they allow speaking.

In the room with Elon Musk, there have been concerns voiced surrounding the lack of opportunity given to journalists to pose questions. While some may be lucky enough to ask a celebrity a question, it is perhaps more likely that the privileged few with pre-existing social connections will stand to gain the most.

Ultimately, Clubhouse can be seen as yet another manifestation of the privileged and rich to maintain their celebrity status quo, while potentially bringing a slightly different form of entertainment to their audience.

On the other hand, there are a variety of topics surrounding which rooms can be hosted where people can engage easily (albeit, only those who have been invited to join the app). Many people have found Clubhouse to be a refreshing change of pace from the usual ways of interacting on social media.

Much like listening to podcasts, one can use the app while doing chores like folding laundry or cooking. All the rooms happen in real-time and cannot be re-listened (unless someone streams it to another platform like Youtube) which is unlike the mindless scrolling that countless people fall prey to as a result of the addictive design of most social media apps.

Instead, on Clubhouse, the user is forced to be present. Many users have found a safe space to discuss common problems or challenges that they faced, for example, growing up in the West as

children of immigrant parents or effective practices to maintain emotional health. Something is reassuring about being able to interact with other people, through speaking about a topic that is meaningful to you, especially in today's isolated world.

Given that Clubhouse is still in its early days as a social media platform, much remains to be seen about its impact on society. However, within this short period, the user experience that it has generated and the social context into which it has played itself is interesting, to say the least.

What makes it even more worthy of attention is its relationship or the complete contrast that it poses to the existing social media giants. Clubhouse's policy on censorship and content regulation will be important to keep an eye on, especially until it becomes a platform accessible by all.

After all, over the last decade, the inefficacy and harmfulness of the likes of Facebook and Twitter have heightened. This is also reflected in the recent move by Twitter, where they have launched a similar product called Spaces to compete with Clubhouse, suggesting that this new paradigm shift in social media is probably here to stay. Facebook is also said to be working on something similar to jump on the bandwagon.

While it is safe to say that social media as a whole is not going anywhere anytime soon, it is perhaps high time for us to see a complete change in the way we perceive it and interact with it.