



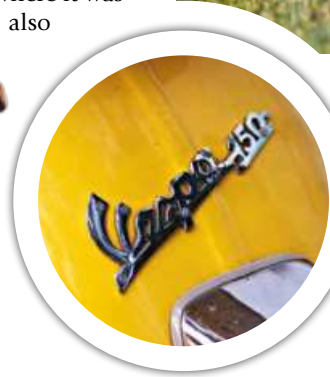
For the love of VESPAS

ARFIN KAZI

Piaggio has been making motorcycles and small motor vehicles since the dawn of time where the Vespa, a motorbike, changed the course of the two-wheeler segment; promoting a thick culture of enthusiasts who swear upon the smiles per gallon talking about their 'La dolce vita' when they ride their bikes.

As the world finally is starting to go back to normal, rising from a pandemic, World Vespa Day in Bangladesh takes place for the third time, where this year, it is said to be one of the largest Vespa meets in the country, welcoming over 150 Vespas both old and newer generations. Keep reading to find out more about the meet.

The event was hosted by Vespa Club Bangladesh at Narayanganj where it was also



showed our fellow representative, Akif Hamid, the state in which Sujan found the Vespa in a shed. It has now been restored to its former glory, sporting an almost chocolate caramel colour. Every year, for the sake



PHOTOS: AKIF HAMID

of solidarity within a common interest, meets like these are arranged and every story told by these bike owners gives the Vespa character, spreads compassion, and fuels an enthusiastic platform: one where you can't just put a price tag on.

sponsored by Biskut Factory, Modina, Bismillah enterprises just to name a few and the whole meet was powered by Runner Automobiles Ltd.

The event started by meeting up and briefing the day at 300ft and from there, there was a rally that went up to Narayanganj. It's quite a sight to see when about 50-60 Vespas keep together from which some are new, others were old enough to bring the Federico Fellini nostalgia with 'La dolce vita', but all of them had a common ground; a distinct, unique story attached to the bikes.

One such Vespa was a completely restored 1964 Model Vespa GS owned by Md. Didarul Islam, better known as Sujan VW who also happens to be a local legend when it comes to restoring old cars and bikes. He also happens to be an admin of Vespa Club Bangladesh. Sujan completely resto-modded his Vespa with all OEM original parts, where he also

Where do we stand with our digital rights?

From virtual goods to AI-powered avatars that can be hired out by companies, a fast-growing digital world is pushing ownership and privacy rights into uncharted territory.

Facebook's recent announcement that it is investing heavily in the so-called metaverse - a virtual environment where people can meet, play and collaborate - is fueling debate about how to protect basic rights as more and more activities move online.

"What Facebook and, in all fairness, all companies want is to keep (people) on the platform for as long as possible so they can learn things about you," said Sandra Wachter, an associate professor at the Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford.

"(The metaverse) will just exacerbate problems that we already have," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Facebook and its parent company Meta unveiled plans last month to create 10,000 jobs to build the metaverse, saying the plan involved spending \$50 million to ensure the virtual world included privacy, diversity and user safety

of dollars each year, according to a report by market research company L'Atelier.

That includes virtual accessories such as digital outfits and hairstyles for avatars to cutting-edge AI-chatbot tech and social media lifestyle bloggers who make their living through advertising revenue linked to the clicks they generate.

"We definitely see the world becoming more virtual, (we are) increasingly going to live in a metaverse," said Natalie Monbiot, head of strategy at Hour One.

Fredrik Hellberg, co-founder of digital architecture studio Space Popular, said virtual reality spaces can "bring people close together" even when they are physically distant. But he added that potential pitfalls of the metaverse include privacy risks to users and the energy cost of processing ever larger amounts of data.

"That is why the public needs to be a part of the conversation and have a say ... otherwise tech becomes a part of your life without you ever having made that choice," he said.

Workplaces are also grappling with questions

said Sophie Goossens, a partner at Reed Smith law firm who specialises in media and technology. In most cases, an NFT does not sign over full intellectual property rights to a digital creation but instead offers some form of service agreement or licence to use it less than the ownership rights over an equivalent physical object, she said.

It is also unclear whether digital creations generated using AI should be given the same ownership rights as those made by humans, she said, as companies look to create entire proprietary virtual worlds to harness for profit.

"You will be on borrowed land all the time," she said of the metaverse. "If you can generate using AI a whole virtual environment, should that belong to everyone? ... Is there going to be such a thing as public domain left in the metaverse?"

PRIVACY QUESTIONS

However, some of the thorniest issues around the metaverse revolve around users' personal data and privacy rights. Putting more of ourselves into digital worlds will offer a wealth of new data that can be captured, recorded and sold.

Working out which country's laws apply in digital spaces could be challenging, and managing data consents could quickly become unwieldy as users move through complex worlds bringing together multiple organisations, said lawyers at Reed Smith.

Data can also be combined and analysed to infer and sell on personal details that users never agreed to share from their sexuality to their politics or health status, Wachter added. "Your data is an extension of your personality, of your soul, of who you really are," she said.

Wachter said that while Europe's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) recognises data rights - with Europe's huge market meaning it effectively acts as a global standard, it is not clear whether the law extends to such "inferred" data.

She urged courts and lawmakers to ensure inferred data is protected, calling for regulators to put limits on how far companies interpret users' data for commercial ends - something many people are unaware of. "They think it's a convenient thing that they, for free, get the ability to talk to their friends and families," she said. "Data collection just runs in the background. And you don't actually know that you're revealing your diary to the whole world."



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

guarantees. The term "metaverse" has been used to describe an array of shared spaces accessed via the internet from fully-immersive virtual reality (VR) spaces to augmented reality accessed through devices such as smart glasses.

Liri, a 23-year-old Israeli student, said she was intrigued when she heard that she could sell the rights to her image to a Tel Aviv-based company using artificial intelligence (AI) technology to create digital characters, or avatars. The characters can be "hired out" to companies and programmed to voice scripts.

"It is definitely a bit strange to think that my face can appear in videos or ads for different companies," Liri, who was identified only by her first name, said in a statement provided through AI avatar company Hour One. "But it's also very exciting," she was quoted as saying.

DIFFERENT WORLDS

The emerging virtual economy already includes some 2.5 billion people and generates billions

over the opportunities and risks posed by the metaverse, said Khurshid Anis, a New York-based human resource consultant. "We will have to rewrite entire contracts and employment policies ground up, rather than trying to edit the existing rules, because these are totally different worlds," she said.

DIGITAL FAKES?

The rise of the metaverse also presents a tangle of legal and regulatory issues to be resolved, such as whether people should be informed when they are dealing with a bot and which agencies should be in charge of regulating virtual spaces. Amid an explosion in crypto art and other virtual assets sold through NFT tokens, there are questions about ownership rights, too.

NFTs have been pitched as readily tradable assets backed up by permanent proof of ownership on blockchain digital records. But buyers may be getting less than they realise,

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