

# TOGGLE

WEEKEND LIVING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

A publication of The Daily Star



**Eid Festival**  
GRAB THE CHANCE TO GET  
**up to 20 LAG TAKA**  
OR PRODUCTS WORTH OF CRORES TAKA **FREE**

Digital Campaign 2022  
Season-15

Buying Fridge  
from Walton Plaza  
Panishail  
Kashimpur, Gazipur

**GOT 20 LAG TAKA**

Parvin Aktar, Father: Rahel Fokir  
Latifpur, Kashimpur, Gazipur

**WALTON**  
Smart Fridge

**Conditions:**

- Have to complete product registration after buying Walton Fridge.
- This campaign is conducted by fully computerized system facility.
- Digital campaign facilities will be void in case of more than 3 registrations of fridge from the same mobile number in a year.
- The authority reserves the right to change the campaign anytime.

This initiative is taken to ensure maximum customer facilities through research & development of products and digitalization. Return SMS may be delayed for the technical/network problems.

For Details: 16267 | [waltonbd.com](http://waltonbd.com)



# Local agri-tech platform iFarmer raises \$2.1 million in fundraising

The local agri-tech company iFarmer has recently raised \$2.1 million (over BDT 18 Crore) in a new financing round led by IDLC Venture Capital Fund.

IDLC Venture Capital Fund is the VC arm of IDLC Finance and one of the largest non-banking financial institutions in Bangladesh. Millville Opportunities, a hedge fund firm based in New York, and Startup Bangladesh Limited, the flagship venture capital fund of the ICT Ministry under the Bangladesh Government, also participated in the round.

iFarmer is a full-stack agriculture platform that provides agri based services to farmers. The company started operations in 2019 and facilitates retail and institutional funders to finance the farmers. It enables access to high-quality agri-inputs through a partnership with companies and retailers. This, in turn, creates better market access for the farmers by aggregating products from the farmers and selling those to institutional buyers, retailers and wholesale markets.

According to a press release, iFarmer works with nearly 2900+ agri-input retailers to supply agriculture inputs, enabling the farmers to buy quality agro-



inputs at an affordable price from nearby retailers. iFarmer currently supplies 8000+ tons of agri produce directly procured from the farmers and then sells to institutional buyers, wholesale markets and retailers.

The startup plans to deploy the fresh capital to expand to more districts in Bangladesh, expand its supply chain infrastructure to supply agri inputs, and also aggregate farm produce. iFarmer has also been conducting pilots on agriculture insurance and developing sensor and remote sensing-based

advisory services such as soil analysis, fertilizer recommendation and weather advisory.

When contacted, Fahad Ifaz, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of iFarmer, said that the fund will be used to expand business in the Southern region of Bangladesh. He added that the fund will also help further improve supply chain management across the country. There are currently about 140 members in the team, and the company plans on taking on board some key hires soon.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

### Skills for tomorrow. Start today

Landing a new job is tough. But planning ahead and building an apt set of skills to answer the ever-increasing demands of the job market is something that will make it easier. Check out this week's Cover Story on useful tips on staying ahead of the competition and arming yourself with the necessary soft and hard skills for your next job.

In Shift, we featured a travelogue with the Toyota GR Yaris. In Tech Tips, some useful tools you might consider for your next vacation. In Next Step, some more tips - this time on saving money to prepare ahead for emergencies.

As always, variety for everyone. See you next week. Stay safe.

Shams Rashid Tonmoy  
Sub-editor & Feature Writer

## Meet Javier Olivan, Facebook and Meta's next COO

Meta Platforms veteran Javier Olivan is taking over as the company's chief operating officer after playing a crucial but largely behind-the-scenes role in stoking the social media company's explosive growth for 15 years.

The Spaniard will replace Sheryl Sandberg, who announced on Wednesday she was stepping down from Meta.

The move comes as Meta struggles with slowing growth and rising costs. It is transforming from a social media company to one focused on building the metaverse, a collection of virtual worlds that could be a decade away.

In his new job, Olivan will continue to lead infrastructure and corporate development. But his portfolio will also include advertising and business products, Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg

said in a Facebook post.

One thing is unlikely to change. Olivan will continue to stay out of the limelight as he carries out the COO job. This contrasts with Sandberg,



who appeared before Congress, wrote a best-selling book about women in the workplace, and often represented Facebook to outside audiences.

"This role will be different from what Sheryl has done. It will be a more traditional COO role where Javi will be focused internally and operationally, building on his strong track record of making our execution more efficient and rigorous," Zuckerberg said.

"Now that Meta is a mature business with \$118 billion in revenue, Olivan may have less autonomy than Sandberg did when she joined in the company's early years," said Brian Wieser, global president of business intelligence at ad agency GroupM.

A key question is whether Olivan will be "more attentive" to issues regarding data privacy as well as protecting brands from having their ads appear next to unsuitable content, Wieser said.

## TOGGLE

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## Facebook and Instagram Reels receiving new features

Meta, Facebook and Instagram's parent company, recently announced that new creative tools and features will be added to Reels over the coming weeks.

Some of these features include polls, quizzes and emoji slide stickers, which were previously available in Instagram Stories.

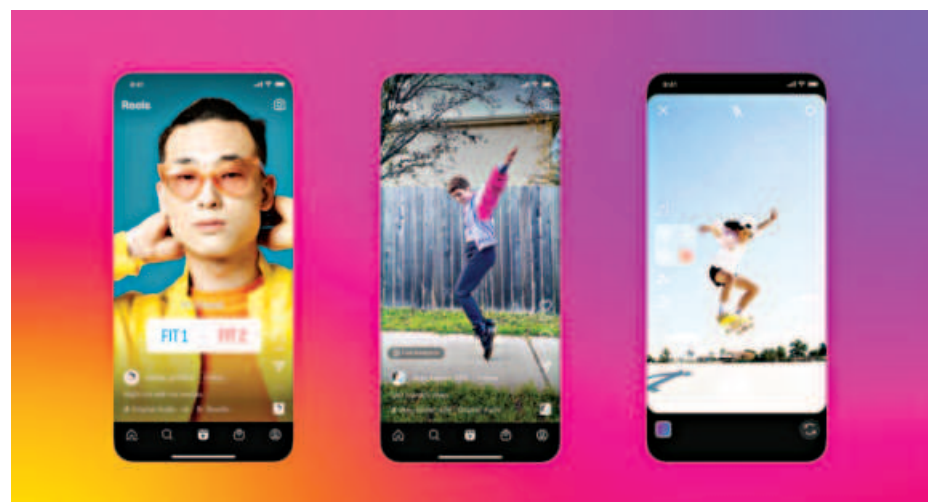
Meta also announced that suggested reels will be launched in Facebook feeds globally. This will give creators more ways to be found by new users and increase reach.

Facebook Reels is also receiving the option to create and schedule reels on desktops through Creator Studio - an option that was available in only iOS and Android before.

Meta will also launch video clipping tools on desktops to publish both longer videos and short clips. Video game streamers will also get the option to make short clips in the form of reels using their recorded streams.

New audio tools are also announced to be added to Facebook Reels that will reportedly enhance the quality of voiceovers and recordings. The new audio features will also enable users to have digital voices read texts on reels using the text-to-speech function.

In Instagram Reels, users will now be able to extend videos for up to 90 seconds, import audio and use a new 'Use Template' function to pull audios and clip sequences from other reels.





# Saving for a rainy day

## Best practices for saving money

TAHSEEN NOWER PRACHI

If you have second thoughts about getting that expensive mocha latte from that fancy cafe, then you probably shouldn't. It is wise to save money where you can, just in case you have to pass through the rainy days. Here are some tips that you can check out to minimise your daily spending.

### Set saving goals

One of the best ways to start saving money is to visualise what you will do with your savings. It can be for a specific goal or a backup for tough times. If you need motivation, set saving targets, and include a timeline to make it easier to save. You can start by identifying the sectors in which you must spend and the ones where you can save.

Set your goals towards minimising the extra spending every month and forward it to your savings account. Make a budget specific to every section according to your earnings and decide how your savings patterns should be.

### Manage your spendings

If you are trying to save money through budgeting but still carry a massive debt burden, start by dealing with the debt first. Once you are free from your debts, you can put money into your savings. You can also automate savings from your checking account on each payday. Try not to miss out on this one. Identify habits that can add up to a massive annual

savings sum, like the money you spend daily on your office vending machine, which can add up to a substantial amount of money.

### Smart household

If you live with a family, then there are tons of options to save money smartly and minimise the cost of living by dividing the expenses. Initially, paying utility bills on time can save you from incurring late fees every month. Taking care of your electronics will lessen the maintenance cost. Reducing energy costs and cancelling automated subscriptions and memberships for unused services should be practised.

In case of shopping for groceries, always make a list beforehand. This practice can be applied to other kinds of shopping as well. Try to prepare food at home, use all the fresh items at once and save them for later servings. Make sure to avoid wasting food. You can try growing your veggies and herbs as well.

### Lifestyle changes

You might want to make a few changes to your lifestyle as well. Cut off on that trendy lavish style you chose to follow beforehand and set goals on how to adapt to the lifestyle you desire. Stop visiting restaurants often and eat at home. Prepare food at home and pack your lunch. Try to avoid eating at high-end restaurants regularly. And if you

must, then include it in your budget!

You can also avoid buying expensive luxury clothes and adapt to more sustainable local brands. You can always use ride-sharing services in emergencies, but try not to make it a habit. Use public transport often to save up on your transportation costs.

Cut back on unnecessary online shopping and track what amount you are allowed to use. One way to avoid overspending is to give yourself a cooling-off period between the time when an item catches your eye and when you make the purchase. Use Netflix, Amazon and Disney Star subscriptions as alternatives for your expensive cable connection.

You can save money with more affordable gift ideas like books, plants, and herb gardens, or take the DIY route. Making cards, baking cookies, creating art or preparing someone's dinner can demonstrate that you care just as much as making an expensive purchase, and perhaps even more so.

### Tips for students

If you are a student, your spending mostly depends on your study discipline. But there may be pressure to buy books and supplies for all the subjects. To minimise your expenses, you can try purchasing old books rather than new ones. You can also hit the library for an abundance of free books to read. You can also subscribe or register to e-book websites and avail books from the internet for free. Try to cut off unnecessary school supplies as well.

Many people think having fun means spending lots of money on movies, parties, clubs, theme parks or expensive restaurants. But there are many types of free entertainment available in any city – it just requires a little extra effort and dedication to finding the right places. Check out what on-campus activities your university offers like a gym membership, swimming pools, sports teams, drama club, reading circles, etc. Track expenses

Tracking your spending regularly can give you an accurate picture of what you are buying with your money and where you would like it to go instead. Evaluate which sectors to minimise or which ones need a little more tightening. Focus on the major expenses and plan out how to tackle them. Surprise spending can spring up anytime, like hospital fees or sudden changes in the overall economic state of your family, etc. But tracking your expenses can give you a heads up for what's ahead, and you will have a fair chance of surviving any rainy day that comes your way!

ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ







PHOTOS: AHBAAR MILKY

AHBAAR MILKY



If you're not already familiar with Toyota's semi latest concoction, the GR Yaris, a quick Google search will immediately fill you in about its importance in the world of cars. Toyota has always been predominantly fixated on the world rally championship since the early noughties while their road car offerings dwindled both in numbers and appeal as the rise of the Prius race took over their factory floors. After a few unfruitful launches of some lukewarm Yaris here and there, they finally figured out the winning formula - a modern homologation special Yaris built as an excuse to go racing again. To sum it up, it's a really big deal, so much



so that Akio Toyoda, the CEO of Toyota himself, was extensively involved in its development stages. Even collectors can't get enough of it, for this is probably the only Yaris one would find sitting beside a Porsche in some millionaire collector's garage.

Having the chance to go on a trip to Chittagong with a GR Yaris was something we couldn't miss. Day 1 consisted of catching a red-eye flight to Chittagong from Dhaka through one of US Bangla's countless noisy ATRs on rotation, which was thankfully on schedule. The Radisson Blu Chattogram Bay View, however, was not. Our personal chariot awaited us in the parking lot, and it was a sight for sore eyes. We took our sweet time checking the all-wheel-drive hoonicorn out and meeting its owner Raidur. We all unanimously agreed that pictures and videos on the internet never did the GR Yaris and its stance, stature and road presence any justice.



The very first lasting impressions were just how wide the fenders and the haunches of its tracks really were. And with a face like a Dementor, it's hauntingly beautiful all around; It sounds as angry as it looks. The tiny 1.6-litre three-cylinder definitely punches way above its weight, extracting just shy of

300 horsepower and 370 nm of torque through a wonderfully weighted and notch 6-speed manual. What surprised me most was the legroom in the rear and the fact that four average-sized individuals could comfortably sit inside.

Being a post-2020 car, the GR Yaris does suffer from the complicated OPF particulate filters because of emission regulations like all recent performance cars, which is why the car sounds so angry all the time from the inside, through the speakers, while the best way to describe how it sounds from the outside is to compare it to a vacuum. Although it does seem to tear through the air, leaving behind an empty vacuum in its trail; it goes like a distressed gecko abandoning its tail.

The FOUR in GR-FOUR makes sure it pulls like a freight train all the time. The Michelin Pilot Sport 4s are standard with the special wheels in Circuit Pack, and they mean business, offering a whole



full tank of petrol, we started for Kaptai, following the river Karnaphuli as we made our way to the outskirts of the city. Onto the two-lane highway, we finally encountered check-posts which meant we were getting nearer to the Kaptai Lake. The construction and conception of the Kaptai dam and valley are rooted in tragic ramifications, but the views were well worth it, for you would have to take my word for it since we left our cameras in the car amid concerns of heavy policing by the BGB in and around the lake. As golden hour was nearing its end, we stopped by the side of the road for what felt like our 400th photo op for the day.

Sombre melancholy and a sense of profound sadness were written on our faces on our last night in the port city. We woke up the following day, setting out for rolling shots of the UFO by the sea, on our way to the airport, back to boring old Dhaka, bidding adieu to a whirlwind of a weekend with Bangladesh's only GR Yaris.

# Top skills for staying competitive in the job market

NUSAIBA NOOHIN

In today's ever-changing job market, options are more diversified than ever before for people seeking to secure a steady place in the industry. Workers in all professions must acquire a unique set of skills if they hope to stand out in the highly demanding job market. Whether you are a student looking for an internship or a fresher looking for a full-time job, having a contemporary skillset sets you apart from your competitors and pays off in the long run.

**HARD SKILLS:**

Relying solely on soft skills can only get you so far in the competition. Hard skills are what will make you stand out as a candidate among your competitors. While mastering these skills is not strictly mandatory, they will undeniably give you a head-start in the ever-competitive job market.

**MS Office**

Having a better grasp and understanding of Microsoft Office tools than the average candidate ensures a stable position in the industry for any job seeker. Among its three tools, the most essential one is, without a doubt, Microsoft Excel.

With the job market becoming more data-oriented, you need an above-average grasp of Excel to get among your competitors. "Excel is not a skill you should have, it's a skill that you need to have," says Ashraful Shabab, Management Trainee in HR at a world-renowned multinational company. "No matter what role you'll be getting into, you'll be working with data. And to sort and work with data, the best tool out there is Excel," he adds.

Microsoft Word and PowerPoint are no less significant either. In Word, you can create professional reports by incorporating your designs, graphs, pictures and symbols. With PowerPoint, you have the freedom to visualise and present your ideas professionally to leave a lasting impression on the audience. Microsoft apps will help you work more efficiently, becoming a better coworker and a more effective leader in your office.

**Google Analytics**

Google Analytics comes in handy for any job that you plan to apply for. It provides a vast quantity of information about who visits your website, what they are looking

starting in the field. Learning Python as part of a broader data analytics skill set will make you a more competitive candidate. Having a computer science background is not necessary to master Python, nor do you have to be a professional at it, as many people start to learn coding simply to learn a new skill.

"Python is better for business grads because it gives you easy access to data science," says Mursalin Kabir, Analytics Engineer Trainee at Intelligent Machines, who completed his undergrad from IBA, Dhaka University. "When it comes to jobs, recruiters prefer someone who can solve problems methodically and programming teaches you exactly that," he adds. There is an abundance of affordable courses on Udemy and Coursera that will help you start your journey with Python, as well as free videos on YouTube.

**SEO**

Search Engine Optimization is a vital skill in marketing, content writing, website building and branding. Having an up-to-the-mark grasp of SEO shows that you know what kind of keywords will gain the most traction for a website.

**Data analytics**

Data analytics not only helps you stand apart from your competitors but also opens up a wider range of job opportunities that you can explore. With the demand for data analysts skyrocketing every day, an employer tends to single you out as a better fit when they notice your expertise in this field.

**Organisational tools**

Organisational tools are resources, approaches, and applications that facilitate the optimisation of your workflow. Apps such as Microsoft To-Do, TaskIt, and nTask help you organise, track, and schedule your tasks according to their importance and help you become more efficient and productive.

**SOFT SKILLS:**

While hard skills help you gain more technical knowledge, soft skills help you to properly implement and utilise your skills as an individual. They help you develop relationships and solve difficulties so that you can make the most out of your hard skills.

**Communication skills**

Having the ability to communicate well is something that almost every employer looks out for in candidates. Every job requires human interaction, be it with managers, coworkers, clients, or customers. Developing good communication skills can facilitate these interactions, allowing you to accomplish your job more effectively and efficiently. While some communication abilities are innate, you must develop other abilities to create a lasting impression on the people with whom you interact.

**Teamwork**

Being a team player is crucial for any role out there. No matter what industry you target, team chemistry has more impact and significance than an individual. Working in a team builds resources

because it makes employees better equipped to deal with challenges and conflicts. Being a good team player lets you work with others to reach the same goal seamlessly.

**Stakeholder management**

Stakeholder management includes maintaining a good relationship with stakeholders and making sure their work contributes to the success of the project. A company's performance is directly connected to its employees' ability to interact, speak to, and, if necessary, dissipate the negative impressions of its stakeholders. Even during job recruitments, you might be given hypothetical situations where you will be asked to solve the given situation with a stakeholder, be it a bank, an NGO, or an MNC.

**Decision making**

A competent employee must be unbiased and have a strong ability to make sound judgments. Decisions are at the heart of every step of the management process. A competent employee must be unbiased and have a strong ability to make sound judgments. Taking advantage of opportunities and solving challenges necessitates making decisions. How quick and effective you are at decision making is reflected in your working style.

**Adaptability**

It is also essential to have a high level of adaptability because this demonstrates your leadership abilities, determination, and analytical skills. These are all highly desirable characteristics that a prospective employer looks for in an employee. "You will have to learn to work and cooperate with a vast range of different people, from all over the world, at your workplace," says Monwar Hossain Rokon, Assistant Manager of Finance at Standard Chartered Bangladesh.

**Crisis Quotient**

Crisis Quotient (CQ) is a key skill in the volatile job market of today. A person with sufficient CQ can handle any crisis thrown their way by sorting priorities and making important decisions, says Sakshi Handa, Human Resources Director at Unilever Bangladesh Ltd, "Other components of CQ include vulnerability - having the courage to say that we don't necessarily have all the data and information, and psychological stamina that is needed to face ambiguities."

According to Sakshi, CQ translates into sharp prioritisation and the ability to focus intently on the greatest areas of leverage. This also means being able to find deeper levels of connection, prioritising self-care and leading others with compassion and empathy.

In the end, soft skills allow organisations to use technical skills and knowledge efficiently without being slowed down by incoming challenges and conflicts, while hard skills help pave the path to becoming a more qualified individual. You can always stay one step ahead of the game by obtaining a unique set of skills that reflects your authenticity as a worthy candidate in the ever-changing job market.



ILLUSTRATION: TANZID SAMAD CHOUHDURY

for, and how they arrived there. Excelling at this tool is a must for any company and individual that wishes to extend and grow their job-market presence.

**Python**

Since Python is widely used in data science, it is a crucial tool for anyone



# New MacBook Air, the powerful M2 chip, and more

here are Apple's biggest announcements from WWDC

At WWDC 2022, Apple announced a slew of exciting new products, including macOS Ventura, iOS 16, the M2 chip, a new MacBook Air, and much more.

Here's a rundown of Apple's most significant announcements made on June 6.

## The iOS 16

Apple has released iOS 16, with a completely redesigned and customizable lock screen interface. This allows you to create custom wallpapers, change the font and color of the date and time, and add new widgets for weather, activity rings, calendar events, and more. Notifications and Apple's Focus feature are also getting updates.

Live Activities are a new feature in iOS 16 that allows you to pin and manage notifications on your lock screen, such as live sports scores. Apple is also introducing the ability to hide notifications from the lock screen's bottom.

You'll also be able to edit any messages you send in the Messages app, as well as undo any messages you send by accident, with iOS 16. Apple is also introducing the ability to mark messages as unread so that you can find them later.



## The next-gen M2 chip

The next generation of Apple silicon is finally here, after months of speculation. When compared to the M1, Apple claims that the new M2 chip improves performance by 18%.

Apple is using new performance and efficiency cores on the M2, as well as

100Gbps of memory bandwidth and 24GB of unified memory, to improve performance over the M1. This is 50 percent more bandwidth than the M1. On the M2, Apple uses four high-performance cores and four high-efficiency cores, with a shared 16MB cache for performance cores and a

shared 4MB cache for efficiency cores.

Apple's M2 also has a new secure enclave and neural engine, as well as an updated media engine that can handle 8K H.264 and HEVC video. In practice, this means that systems with M2 chips will be able to simultaneously play multiple streams of 4K and 8K video.



## The revamped MacBook Air and MacBook Pro

The upgraded M2 chip replaces the M1 in the new MacBook Air, Apple's most popular MacBook device. It's only half an inch thick and comes in four colors: silver, space grey, starlight, and midnight. With prices starting at \$1,199 for an M2-equipped model, it also has a larger 13.6-inch display,

thinner bezel, and a tiny charger with two USB-C ports.

The 13-inch MacBook Pro, like the new MacBook Air, is getting an M2 upgrade. It has up to 24GB of RAM, 2TB of storage, and a battery life of up to 20 hours — and it still has a Touch Bar. The new 13-inch MacBook Pro will be available next month, and preorders are now open, with prices starting at \$1,299.

## New Safety Check feature

The new Safety Check feature from Apple is designed to help people who are in abusive relationships. It allows survivors of abuse to see and control who has access to their apps, passwords, and other personal information.



## The iPadOS 16

iPadOS 16 includes a new collaboration feature that allows you to collaborate with others in office apps like Pages, as well as a new whiteboard tool called Freeform. With Stage Manager, Apple has improved multitasking capabilities, allowing you to resize and overlap windows on your iPad. With iPadOS 16, the Weather app is also finally available on the iPad.



## The WatchOS 9 and the Fitness app

Apple has added new running metrics, atrial fibrillation tracking, and medication reminders to its health-tracking features. WatchOS 9 includes four new watch faces in addition to all of these new features.

All iPhone users will now be able to use Apple's Fitness app. It was previously only available to people who owned an Apple Watch.



## macOS Ventura

The newly announced macOS 13 Ventura has a new multitasking tool called Stage Manager. And there are also new updates to Spotlight and Apple's Mail app.

In Safari, macOS 13 Ventura adds support for called Apple Passkeys.

This new feature effectively eliminates the need for a password, allowing you to sign in to a variety of websites using only your iPhone or Mac.

You can now also use your iPhone as a webcam with macOS by attaching it to a specialized clip that will be available later this year.

# Gadgets for your next getaway

SOFIA NOOR RAFA

Gadgets are not just types of equipment; they support your journey to a new destination by making life easier and relieving difficulties that show up while you travel. Below are some gadgets available online that enhance the experience of travelling to any part of the world. Please note that price and availability may vary across different stores and websites.

## AKASO V50X 20MP 4K Waterproof Touch Screen Wifi Action Camera



This camera is an outstanding option if you want to go in aeroplane mode during your trip. It has a V50X model and can record 4K full-HDR video at 30 FPS. The versatility of the styles available for photography or videography makes this gadget a valuable item.

The device comes with electronic image stabilisation and has a 2-inch touch screen enabled with an In-Plane Switching (IPS) display, with which you can shoot at various angles and click images of fast-moving objects. This Wi-Fi connectable camera comes with a removable battery and can hold 1350 mA of charge per hour. It also supports slow-motion recording. The camera is waterproof to approximately 40 metres of water.

**Price:** Starts from Tk. 12,000/-



## Nori Press Iron

Carrying this gadget to faraway destinations will lift the load of fixing dry clothes that need a little bit of straightening. It works faster than usual irons due to its mobile setup. The iron is only 14-inches long and weighs no more than 1.5 pounds - ideal for travelling purposes. It is small to fit in, and one can comfortably iron without any board. The tool takes approximately 10 minutes to steam clothes. The heat settings are customisable based on the type of garments.

This iron comes in multiple shades, including blue, white and green. A steam solution is available with the iron that dampens the cloth - making the iron's work more effective. The steam solution and the iron function together to deodorise and sterilise the garments.

**Price:** Starts from Tk. 11,000/-

## Philips GoZero Everyday Insulated Stainless Steel Water Bottle

Fresh and purified water is essential to the human body to keep ourselves hydrated while travelling. This auto-purifying bottle has an activated carbon fibre filter that turns water healthy and clean. It can reduce chlorine, odour and bad taste in water and transform it into drinkable water. It comes in multiple shades, including pink, blue and grey.

The bottle comes with an 18/8 food-grade stainless steel and a double-wall insulated figure. The insulated figure cools water off and helps keep the water cool for a day. The silicon mouthpiece eases sipping water down through the mouth. The bottle comes with a built-in carry loop, a cup holder and a top rack. This reusable water bottle helps create fewer carbon footprints by replacing go-to plastic water bottles. It can contain approximately 1.2 pounds of water.

**Price:** Starts from Tk. 1,770/-



## HoMedics 3D Shiatsu and Vibration Massage Pillow



A massaging pillow works effectively to ensure a comfortable and relaxing journey. The HoMedics 3D Shiatsu and Vibration Massage Pillow delivers a circling squeezing massage, with nodes that move in and out to make the massaging experience truly relaxing. The vibrations help revitalise the body and help loosen tightened muscles.

The pillow comes with a robust and lightweight figure that can fit any chair or seat. It also features a 6-foot 120-volt cord that mobilises the device to remove pain from the back, neck or shoulder areas. It creates a comfortable aura for the users by effectively working with the built-in functional integrated controls.

**Price:** Starts from Tk. 4,500/-

## Anker Powercore-iii Elite 25600 60W Powerport

The Anker Powercore-iii Elite power bank is sturdy enough to charge multiple devices. The battery delivers 25600 mA of charger per hour, sufficient to recharge one or two electronic items. The speedy power port comes with a power IQ 3.0 that enables it to deliver power to any device.

This power bank consists of potent heat-dissipating materials, and the multi-layer protection system guarantees safety to the consumer. There are two USB A ports and one USB C port that can support three devices in one go. It also comes with a 65W charger and cable.

**Price:** Starts from Tk. 9,450/-







# The future of streamlining sales support

Alice Labs founder Shuvo Rahman in Forbes 30 under 30 Asia Class of 2022

SHAMS RASHID TONMOY

Forbes 30 under 30 Asia Class of 2022 was announced recently, with seven Bangladeshis selected to join the global ranks of thinkers and shapers of tomorrow. Among them, selected under the category 'Enterprise Technology', was Shuvo Rahman, the founder of Alice Labs, an AI-based multi-channel sales and support platform that helps online businesses. Last year, the company raised \$500,000 in a seed round by Anchorless Bangladesh and HOF Capital.

Alice Labs, founded in November 2018, caters to e-commerce and B2B (business-to-business) companies by providing digital tools that streamline customer service and sales. Their core product MyAlice is a SaaS (software as a service) platform that manages sales support and marketing needs via a social messaging channel that automates conversations with the use of AI and machine learning. According to Shuvo Rahman, founder of Alice Labs, MyAlice helps clients reduce operational costs, reduce friction in customer support and enables more organised control of

businesses.

Alice Labs currently has around 300-400 paying customers, with about 2000 businesses, including Unilever and Maybelline, using MyAlice to support their sales service. MyAlice works by connecting a majority of social and messaging panels like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Telegram, Viber, etc. into one dashboard. This way, the user can combine all support and sales queries in one place, enabling the team to manage the business better. This not only helps with creating and managing orders but also helps connect with customers and clients as well.

"If you are using multiple channels and there are queries coming from those different channels, there are chances of mistakes and miscommunication happening. Due to this, customer experience is bound to turn negative after some time. Addressing such issues, MyAlice puts all sales and e-commerce channels in one window where the user can have the whole picture - being able to support and sell easily," explained

Shuvo. He added that the data from the software can be used for marketing the product as well.

Regarding his recent achievement of making it to the Forbes 30 under 30 Class of Asia 2022, Shuvo expressed that this was a dream come true. "In 2019, when I saw Elius (Hussain Mohammed Elius, co-founder of Pathao) in Forbes 30 under 30, I challenged myself to be there one day. I think I am happier than I should be because I lived up to that challenge. This achievement helps me believe that persistency and planning can achieve anything," he stated.

Shuvo completed his CSE from BUET in 2015, and he believes his experience has helped him address the growing trend of social media being used to conduct wholesale support worldwide. "My background involved working with machine learning and AI, so when building my team, I tried to bring in people who have the calibre and willingness to implement new technology in this country," said Shuvo. He believes that the landscape of natural

language processing (NLP) and AI has improved over the years, so it is crucial to utilise such technology to solve existing problems.

In terms of improving the current IT sector of Bangladesh, Shuvo believes that there is already a large quantity of international-level talent in Bangladesh. "These are the same people that go to Google, Apple and Amazon and work at higher incentivised rates. We need to make sure these talents stay in the country by providing them similar rates and ensuring we can nurture them whenever required," he added.

"Being a SaaS company means that anyone can go into the MyAlice site and start using the software by subscribing to the service," said Shuvo. Regarding future goals, Shuvo said that what he wants "In the next 15-18 months, we want to make our ARR (Annual Recurring Revenue) \$1 million. Not only do we want to increase revenue and client size, but we also want to help more people improve their sales and support as well," he claimed.

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ঠিক যেমন রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য মানেই

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