

Apple launches first store in India



Apple's CEO Tim Cook recently inaugurated the tech giant's first retail store in India, situated in the bustling city of Mumbai. Named Apple BKC, the new store is located in Jio World Drive, Bandra Kurla Complex, Maharashtra, Mumbai. As per the website, Apple is launching another store in India, on the Select Citywalk in Saket, New Delhi's District Centre.

According to a report

by Reuters, around 300 people gathered at the venue hoping to be among the first customers to enter the first Apple store in India - some even queuing outside the store from the previous night. The inauguration event also featured local music and folk dancers, with dedicated Apple fans waiting in line to get Cook's signature on their beloved Apple products.

AI generated images of tech billionaires go viral

Some AI-generated images of the richest tech billionaires in the world have recently gone viral on the internet. Produced with Midjourney AI by Indian artist Gokul Pillai, the AI-generated images show portraits of tech billionaires Elon Musk, Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg and Jeff

Bezos in ragged attire as 'slumdog billionaires'.

Moreover, AI-generated images of US business tycoon Warren Buffet, Indian business mogul Mukesh Ambani and former US President Donald Trump also surfaced on the internet, owing to advanced AI technology.



Exclusive iPhone 15 reveals showcase redesigned looks

9to5Mac has exclusively shared details of the upcoming iPhone 15 Pro design, and it's looking like a game-changer. With an all-new titanium casing and a rounder-edged design, the iPhone 15 Pro is going to look and feel more premium than ever before. The iPhone 15 Pro will feature a bigger and thicker camera bump, with individual lens protrusions more than doubled from the iPhone 14 Pro's massive cameras. There are also rumours of an all-new sensor technology that will capture more light and reduce overexposure or underexposure in specific settings.

Another exciting development is the inclusion of USB-C on all iPhone 15 models, with the fastest charging limited to USB-C cables certified by Apple. Haptic volume and mute buttons will replace physical buttons and a mute switch, and the device will feature a subtle curvature of the edges, transitioning seamlessly into the titanium frame.

Perhaps the most exciting change is the all-new deep red



colour (exact colour code being 410D0D), which is rumoured to replace Deep Purple and sit alongside Apple's usual White, Space Black, and Gold. The device's dimensions have changed, making it slightly smaller than the iPhone 14 Pro due to its smaller bezels and the same overall screen size. With a measurement of 70.46mm by 146.47mm and a thickness of 8.24mm, the iPhone 15 Pro is designed to fit comfortably in the palm of your hand.

While these details have not been officially confirmed by Apple, the leaked information seems to be credible, and it looks like Apple is gearing up to reveal something remarkable. The iPhone 15 Pro is expected to make its grand appearance later this year.



Elon Musk to launch 'TruthGPT' to compete with ChatGPT

Elon Musk has recently stated that he plans to launch a new AI platform called 'TruthGPT' to compete with AI services from Microsoft and Google. In the statement, the Tesla CEO and current owner of Twitter openly criticised OpenAI, claiming that the company behind ChatGPT is "training the AI to lie" and that they have become a "for-profit organisation" after being "closely allied with Microsoft".

In an interview with Fox News Channel, Elon stated that his planned 'TruthGPT' AI will be a "maximum truth-seeking AI that tries to understand the nature of the universe". According to him, TruthGPT will be the best path to safety that is unlikely to "annihilate humans" - unlike other popular AI services.

According to a report by Reuters, Elon has been trying to employ AI researchers from Google to launch a rival AI company. He has registered a new firm named X.AI Corp last month, likely the foundation of his proposed TruthGPT AI.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Simplicity where it counts

In the modern world of mobile technology, smartphones are now everyone's best friends. However, despite such powerful mobile devices being so common nowadays, feature phones - one lacking the power and features of smartphones but still having the basic function of calling and texting - is making a comeback in the global market. Tune in to this week's Cover Story to find out why, and how.

As for the other pages, we have a list of free online AI tools to automate almost everything you need - in Next Step, a handy buying guide of affordable ACs - in Tech Tips, and a breakdown of how Estonia has become a successful digital society - in Spotlight.

Just like that, another weekend rolls by. Stay safe everyone. Until then.

Shams Rashid Tonmoy
Sub-editor & Feature Writer

TOGGLE

Editor and Publisher
Mahfuz Anam

Editor (Toggle)
Shahriar Rahman

Team
Zarif Faiaz
Shams Rashid Tonmoy
Tanzid Samad Choudhury

Graphics
DS Creative Graphics

Production
Shamim Chowdhury

Published by the Editor from
Transcraft Ltd, 229, Tejgaon
Industrial Area, Dhaka on behalf of
Mediaworld Ltd.,
52 Motijheel C.A., Dhaka-1000.

Netflix hits record high subscribers in Q1 2023



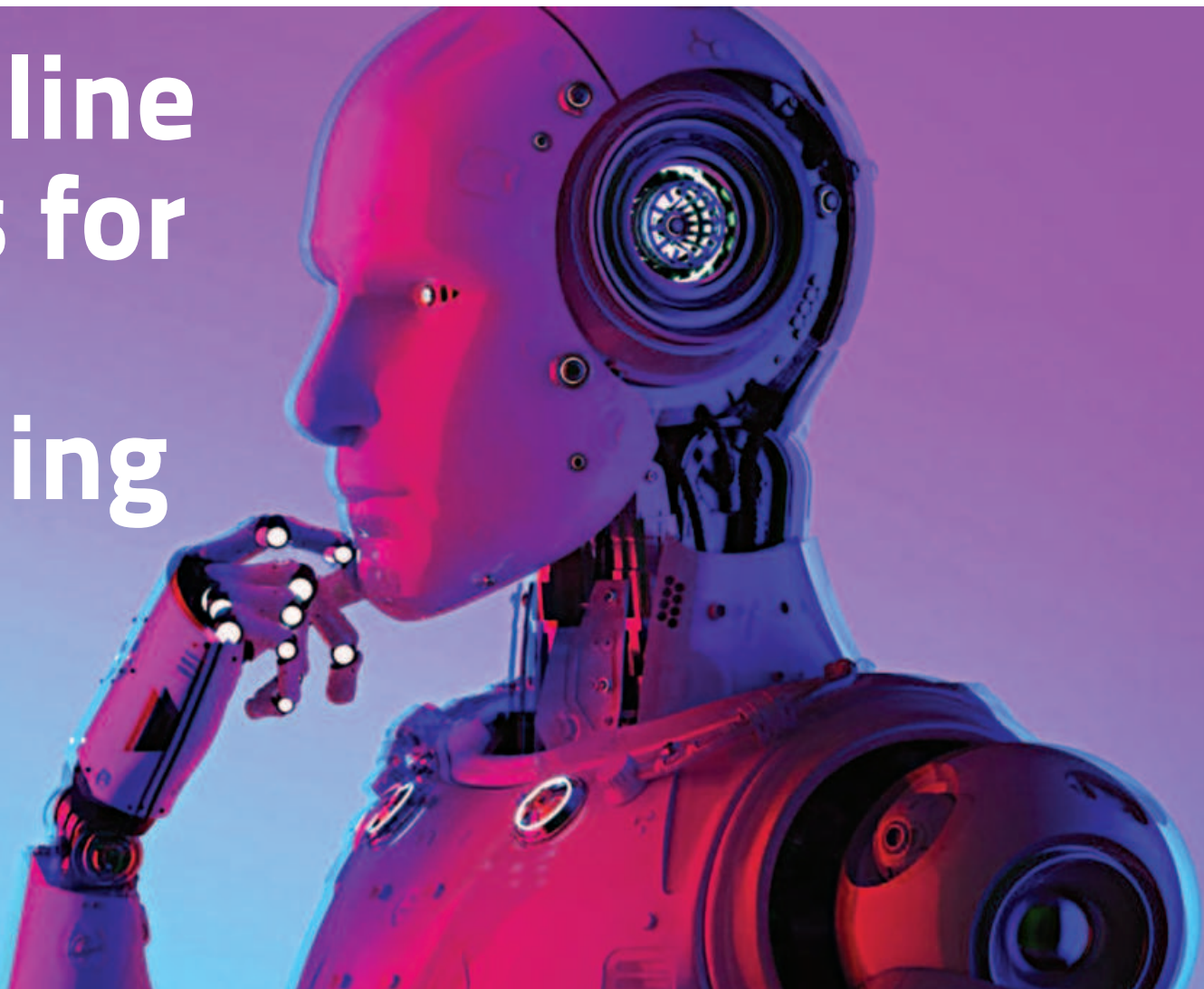
Netflix recently announced that they have hit a record high of 232.5 million subscribers in the first quarter of 2023, with their ad-supported tier faring well in terms of subscriptions as well.

The company also said that they have made a profit of \$1.3 billion in Q1 2023, adding that they had to delay the implementation of their previously announced password sharing rule to

"improve the experience for members".

However, despite the delay, Netflix plans on beginning the crackdown on password sharing soon, as early as Q2 2023. The streaming company further added that they are taking time to make sure subscribers have seamless access to the service away from home or on mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones.

Free online AI tools for almost everything



As the world becomes increasingly digitized, artificial intelligence (AI) is emerging as a powerful tool to help us do everything from creating art to analyzing data. While AI may have once seemed like a distant concept reserved for scientists and researchers, a growing number of free online tools are making this technology accessible to anyone with an internet connection.

From chatbots to image recognition algorithms, these AI tools are helping people tackle tasks big and small. Here, we've rounded up some of the top free online AI tools to help you do anything and everything.

Canva

Whether you're creating a social media post or a presentation for work, Canva's AI-powered design tools can help you create beautiful graphics in minutes. With templates for everything from Instagram stories to infographics, Canva takes the guesswork out of design.

Grammarly

A must-have for anyone who writes,

Grammarly uses AI to check for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. The free version of the tool is available as a browser extension or mobile app, making it easy to use no matter where you are.

Google Photos

With unlimited storage and advanced search capabilities, Google Photos is an essential tool for anyone who takes a lot of photos. Using AI-powered facial recognition technology, the tool can even identify specific people in your photos, making it easy to find the images you're looking for.

Hugging Face

If you're interested in natural language processing (NLP), Hugging Face is a great place to start. The platform offers a range of pre-trained AI models for tasks like sentiment analysis and text generation, as well as a community of developers who share their work and offer support.

TensorBoard

For anyone working with machine learning models, TensorBoard is an essential tool. Developed by Google, the

platform allows users to visualize their models and track metrics like accuracy and loss over time.

IBM Watson Studio

For more advanced machine learning projects, IBM Watson Studio offers a range of tools for data exploration, model training, and deployment. While the platform does have a paid version, the free tier offers plenty of functionality for beginners.

OpenAI GPT-3 Playground

If you're curious about language models, the OpenAI GPT-3 Playground is a great place to experiment. The platform allows users to input text prompts and see how GPT-3, one of the most advanced language models currently available, responds.

Deep Art Effects

If you're interested in creating digital art, Deep Art Effects can help you turn your photos into stunning works of art using AI. With a range of styles to choose from, the tool is perfect for anyone who wants to add a creative twist to their photography.

TensorFlow.js

For anyone interested in building machine learning models for the web, TensorFlow.js offers a range of tools and resources. The platform allows users to train and deploy models directly in the browser, making it easy to create interactive AI-powered applications.

Dialogflow

For anyone interested in creating chatbots or virtual assistants, Dialogflow is a great place to start. The platform allows users to build conversational interfaces using natural language understanding and machine learning, making it easy to create bots that can answer customer questions or perform simple tasks.

While this is by no means an exhaustive list of free online AI tools, it should give you a good starting point for exploring what's possible with this technology. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced developer, there's never been a better time to start experimenting with AI.



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TOYOTA BZ4X

The new electric SUV on the block

ARFIN KAZI

As the world goes by, it can be easily determined that the foreseeable future of the human race is electric. EVs in general have been getting more of the commuter treatment as electric cars are getting more accepted than ever before, and according to the statistics, so is the BZ4X - one of the first completely electronic subcompact SUVs from Toyota. With commuting in mind, this new SUV looks to shake up a few things in the world of EVs. Keep reading to find out more.

Design

The Toyota bZ4X takes many similar cues from existing models such as the Toyota C-HR and the Harrier (also known as the Venza) but still manages to keep the design different by introducing subtle sharp body lines prominent around the fenders, which is the only way it can be told that the bZ4X could be an EV. The fenders of the cars have sharp curves under which seats 20-inch wheels, while the bumper is rounded off. The headlights also reflect the sharp body language of the DRLs. The bZ4X primarily competes with the Mazda MX-30 as its local competitor and is ahead of the curve in terms of range and reliability.

The bZ4X also competes with the Tesla Model Y, Hyundai IONIQ 5, and the Audi Q4 e-Tron, just to name a few EVs in the similar class.

Interior

What seems like an EV in the bZ4X is when you get inside; greeted with a squared-off steering wheel outside



of the regular Toyota fashion. Behind the wheel, there is a digital gauge alongside the speedometer to show various information about the car. A 12.3-inch touchscreen with wireless smartphone mirroring is the given standard, supporting features like built-in navigation-free for three years, where later uses will require a subscription fee.

Some additional features of the Limited version include a motion-activated power liftgate, a heated steering wheel, heated and ventilated front seats,

a multi-view camera, 20-inch wheels, and Softex faux-leather upholstery.

Specifications

The Toyota bZ4X comes in two trim models with either a single motor 2WD or a dual motor 4WD, where the 4WD model costs extra above the 2WD variant. When it comes to the engine both variants use AC synchronous motors, where the 2WD variant has 201 horsepower and the 4WD variant has a slight edge with 215 horsepower.

Other than that, the regular 2WD

variant has a 63 kWh battery which can deliver up to 405 km of range, whereas the Limited model with two motors trades off some range for extra power, giving about 370 km of range from a larger 65.5 kWh battery.

Verdict

According to the current pricing on the official Toyota website, the Limited version starts from \$46,700 with 242 miles of estimated FWD range, while the XLE version starts from \$42,000 with 252 miles of estimated FWD range. Even considering the price, The Toyota bZ4X could be a fantastic e-commuter and would fly under the radar as it does not come with the 'e-flashiness'.

Although the lines in the cars are sharp, it gives off a good character to the car, making sure that a good look can answer the question of whether the car in question is an EV or not. Although the car is indeed an EV, do not expect its speeds to be in Tesla territories. Instead, expect convenience with zero emissions.

Being Toyota's first-ever car in the EV segment, it can be safely said that the electric vehicle revolution is to be expected sooner than the world thought. Being one of the largest automotive manufacturing companies in the world, they are accepting and adapting to change as soon as possible.

As the car is from Toyota, expect a couple of units even in Bangladesh - as it is the only brand where anything that is offered gets brought. Maybe when it's released, the Toyota bZ4X might be a popular pick in the local EV scene as well. Only time will tell.

In recent years, there has been a surprising resurgence in the popularity of "dumb phones", also known as feature phones. While smartphones have dominated the mobile phone market for over a decade, a growing number of people, particularly Generation Z, are looking to cut back on screen time and are turning to these simpler devices.

According to recent data, smartphone sales in the United States have been on the decline. In 2022, sales of smartphones dropped by nearly 20% compared to the previous year, marking the third consecutive year of decline. According to Counterpoint Research, in Bangladesh, smartphone shipments saw a 23.5% YoY decline in 2022. While there are a number of factors that could be contributing to this trend, including the saturation of the smartphone market, the rising cost of these devices, and the overall



high inflation rate, it is clear that many consumers are looking for alternatives.

One of the most notable alternatives is the feature phone. These devices are often smaller and more affordable than smartphones and offer basic functions such as texting, calling, and maybe some basic internet connectivity. They are also known for their long battery life, which can last for days or even weeks without needing to be recharged.

But why are feature phones becoming popular again? An important reason is that people are becoming increasingly aware of the negative effects of smartphone addiction, such as anxiety, stress, and social isolation. Feature phones provide a way for people to disconnect from constant notifications and distractions and focus on the present moment.

For many, it is simply a matter of wanting to disconnect from the constant barrage of notifications. By switching to a feature phone, they can still stay

connected with friends and family, but without the constant temptation to check social media or browse the internet.

This trend is not limited to the United States, either. In countries around the world, from Japan to Brazil, there has been a growing interest in feature phones. Some companies are even releasing new models of these devices to meet the demand. With sales up 150% from 2020 to 2021, American feature phone manufacturer Light Phone recently reported its strongest financial year.

Rafid Shadman, a final-year student at Brac University has been using a Nokia 105 for the last two years now. "I value the ability to disconnect from technology and focus on the present moment. With a feature phone, I am not constantly bombarded with notifications and distractions. Instead, I can simply make phone calls and send text messages without the temptation to check social media or browse the internet," he shares.

"I also appreciate the simplicity and reliability of feature phones. They are smaller, lighter, and more affordable than smartphones, making them easy to carry around and less likely to be damaged or lost. They also have a longer battery life, which means that I don't have to worry about constantly charging my phone."

Of course, it is unlikely that feature phones will ever completely replace smartphones. There are simply too many functions and conveniences that we have come to rely on, from GPS navigation to mobile banking. But for those who are looking for a simpler, less distracting way to stay connected, feature phones offer an appealing alternative.

As our relationship with technology continues to evolve, it will be interesting to see how this trend develops. Will we see more people switching to feature phones in the coming years, or will the convenience of smartphones continue to hold sway? Only time will tell.



THE NEXT ERA

Joining forces for a Smart Bangladesh

FARHANA ISLAM

During the recent Bangladesh Business Summit, it was clear that the next era of growth will come from a collective and collaborative effort. Today, Bangladesh is one of the world's fastest-growing economies and is proudly building up to the trillion-dollar journey ahead. During the opening ceremony, the event's Chief guest, Honorable Prime Minister Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, invited the world to join hands and support Bangladesh's journey to fulfil the vision of 2041, becoming a developed high-income innovative nation, Smart Bangladesh. The course of this progress offers a fascinating model for the rest of the world. But, to advance people and accelerate business, the road ahead requires systematic digital adoption and progress.

Next wave of growth

While established sectors like RMG will remain at the forefront of growth, the Smart Bangladesh trajectory requires further diversification of business and investment opportunities. The next wave of exports from our country must include tech, digital services, manufacturing and IT-led businesses.

Connectivity is a key enabler of the government's Smart Bangladesh 2041 vision, and a critical element as the country looks to broaden economic activities. It's an essential service for millions. And a recent Digital Lives Decoded survey that Telenor Asia conducted found that this dependence is only set to grow, with people expecting to increase the time they spend online in the coming years.

Above all, the application of new technology, embracing digital efficiencies and bringing innovation into business is essential to delivering on the master plan. During the summit, it was encouraging to see policymakers welcome innovative investment avenues. An example can be found in the 100 special economic zones that will be established across the country which will give a boost to our economy, and open significant opportunities for more digital and tech-enabled businesses! I feel hopeful about the FDI landscape in the country and applaud such timely initiatives by the government.

The potential of Bangladesh's digital capabilities

The nation's digital backbone and infrastructure can enable and unlock new frontiers of digital and smart business opportunities. Bangladesh offers a stunning \$100 billion investment opportunity and may become the next industrial and digital economy centre with a population of 170 million, 65% of whom are in the working age group! But technology alone cannot achieve such growth. The nation's young versatile population needs to be digitally upskilled to be fit for the IT and ITES industries in the making.

There are many possibilities for a digitally skilled population. Today Bangladesh has the second-highest freelancer workforce in the world mostly working for foreign companies. Moreover, Bangladesh routinely ranked as one of the leading countries favoured by employers and was the 8th largest exporter of online labour in 2019, according to a Payoneer survey. They rely on connectivity to deliver these services and there is great potential to grow the US \$150 million of yearly earnings they collectively bring into Bangladesh.

Today academia, industries, and the

public sector together are collaborating to equip them with new digital skills and critical competencies to help them for taking up the challenges within and beyond borders to achieve economic independence.

New dimensions

There are many new dimensions that connectivity and telecoms infrastructure can enable. Conversations during the Summit between automobile and industrial manufacturers, technology companies, policymakers and experts brought the possibilities closer to building smart industries and hi-tech manufacturing in Bangladesh.

For any new industry, achieving scale,

of facilitating driverless cars. This is just one example of the potential to leapfrog through innovation and combining knowledge and expertise. Unique future possibilities can be created through collaboration and partnerships between local and foreign investors.

Smart technology, Smart government, Smart Bangladesh

Industry 4.0 can play a significant role in driving growth and development in Bangladesh. Adopting advanced technologies such as automation and digitisation presents exciting new opportunities for businesses of all sizes. For Bangladesh to leap from Digital Bangladesh to Smart Bangladesh will



efficiency, and leveraging technology are critical factors to success. Taking the automobile industry as an example, by leveraging technology we can unlock new opportunities for growth and innovation, making it a key driver of economic development in Bangladesh.

While Bangladesh is considering the next step in automobile, from assembling to manufacturing with global players like Hyundai, Mitsubishi, Proton, and local players in the country, there are big opportunities in this space. To stay ahead of the curve and compete on the world stage, in this growing stage, the incorporation of cutting-edge technologies like 5G, IoT, and AI into our manufacturing processes can give us a proper lead.

By embracing these technologies, we can create smart factories that are highly efficient and connected, with optimised production processes and streamlined quality control. Our sister company in Norway has embarked on the journey

require innovative models, scalable partnerships and opportunities beyond. The next era rests on the existence of a good business environment with predictable policies that allow for cross-collaboration, shared contributions and enable the public sector to drive innovation.

It was amazing to see the warmth and keen interest in friendship among the foreign dignitaries and policymakers to sit and interact with potential B2B partners in Bangladesh. I would like to congratulate and express my sincere gratitude towards FBCCI for organising the three-day event. You not only helped highlight the economic and market potential of Bangladesh but established a strong network of local and global innovators and investors. Together we can truly accelerate our journey of becoming the Trillion Dollar Economy!

The author is the Head of Social Impact at Grameenphone.

Air conditioners from Tk 40k to 55k price range

Between unbearable heat waves and record-breaking temperatures every day, summer this year had an unfortunate beginning. The heat doesn't seem to want to cool off anytime soon, as Bangladeshis are finding it more and more difficult to find respite from the unwavering temperature. Air conditioners - everyone's new best friend - are now in high demand and definitely something you should have in your home or office right now. If you are tight on budget, here are some affordable air conditioners you can opt for between the 40k to 55k price range.



Transtec Classic Series AC | TSA-12CLN

Price: Tk 46,023 to Tk 52,900/-
Store: Transcom Digital
Type: Non-inverter, T3 compressor
Size: 850x290x200 mm (indoor unit)
Net Weight: 10.7 kg (indoor unit)
Power supply: 220-240 V, 50 Hz
Cooling capacity: 12,000 Btu

Input consumption: 1800 W

Transtec is a reliable electronic brand in the local scene when it comes to affordable products. Transtec Classic Series AC (model: TSA-12CLN) in particular comes with a 4-way swing system, allowing it to flow the air in both up-down and right-left directions. It also features a high-density air filter which helps remove dust particles and churn out clean air even in a room with dust. This AC has other features such as auto-restart, which automatically lets it restart after load shedding and a turbo mode for faster cooling.

Walton WSN-RIVERINE-12F

Price: Tk 45,900
Store: Walton BD
Type: Non-inverter, rotary compressor
Size: 844x296x210 mm (indoor unit)
Net Weight: 11 kg (indoor unit)
Power supply: 230V, 50 Hz
Cooling capacity: 12,000 Btu
Input consumption: 1,260 W

Walton is among the most popular electronic brands

in the local scene, with plenty of air conditioners in their lineup every year. Their Riverine series, which focuses on energy efficiency and eco-friendly air cooling, is a good choice to bank on if your AC budget is limited. Walton WSN-RIVERINE-12F comes with all the benefits you would want in your standard non-inverter AC, with key features such as minimum noise during cooling, a built-in ioniser that filtrates dust and bacteria, the multi-directional airflow that spreads across the room, and lower energy consumption than most other ACs at this price range.



ECO + Inverter AC | RAC-12QBINV

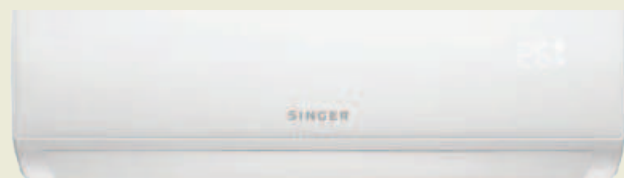
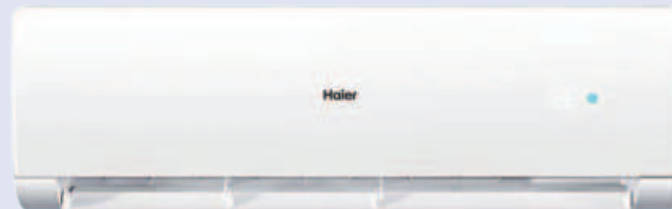
Price: Tk 53,899/-
Store: Butterfly Group BD
Type: Inverter, rotary compressor
Size: 855x204x280 mm (indoor unit)
Net Weight: 9.5 kg (indoor unit)
Power supply: 230V, 50 Hz
Cooling capacity: 12,000 Btu
Input consumption: 1,175 W

Butterfly Groups' Eco+ lineup of ACs has become popular recently as far as affordable ACs go. Despite being under the Tk. 55k price tag, the Eco+ Inverter 1-ton AC is, as its name implies, a rare instance of inverter AC in this price range. This means the AC has better energy saving, up to 50% than other ACs near its price range, while still packing the important features such as sleep mode, long-distance cooling, refrigerant detector, and a gold fin guard that protects the condenser from dust and rust. This AC also has a hidden LED display and has other user-friendly features such as auto mode, cool mode, and dry mode.

Haier Turbo Cool AC | HA HSU12TC-NM

Price: Tk 45,990/-
Store: Butterfly Group BD
Type: Non-inverter
Size: 855x204x280 mm (indoor unit)
Net weight: 10 kg (indoor unit)

Power supply: 230 V, 50 HZ
Cooling capacity: 12,000 Btu
Input consumption: 1,175 W
 The Haier Turbo Cool AC is a powerful and efficient air conditioner that has risen to popularity. With a cooling capacity of 1 ton, this AC is suitable for small to medium-sized rooms. Its Turbo Cool feature ensures that the room cools down quickly.



Singer Low Voltage AC | SRAC-SAS12IFLVSWT

Price: Tk 49,190 to Tk 54,990/-
Store: Singer BD
Type: Rotary compressor
Size: 777x250x201 mm (indoor unit)
Net weight: 8.5kg (indoor unit)
Power supply: 230 V, 50 Hz
Cooling capacity: 12,000 Btu

Input consumption: 1,175 W

The Singer Low Voltage AC is a high-quality air conditioner that is designed to provide reliable and efficient cooling performance, even in areas with low voltage. This AC has a cooling capacity of 1 ton, making it suitable for small to medium-sized rooms. With its low voltage operation, this AC can operate on voltages as low as 150V, making it ideal for areas with frequent power fluctuations. Its smart inverter technology ensures that the AC operates efficiently, saving you energy and money on your electricity bills.

How Estonia built the first successful digital society

Estonia, a small country in Northern Europe with a population of just 1.3 million, has emerged as a global leader in building a digital society. The country's success in creating a high-tech infrastructure has earned it the nickname "e-Estonia."

The country's journey towards a digital society began in the 1990s after it gained independence from the Soviet Union. Estonia invested heavily in technology, and the government introduced a range of digital services that made it easier for citizens to access government services.

Today, Estonia is home to a range of innovative digital solutions, including e-voting, e-residency, and e-health. The country's digital infrastructure allows citizens to

complete almost all government-related tasks online, including paying taxes, registering businesses, and accessing medical records.

One of the country's most innovative solutions is its e-voting system. Estonia introduced e-voting in 2005, becoming the first country in the world to do so. The system allows citizens to vote from anywhere in the world using their national ID card and a special PIN code. The process is entirely secure, with each vote encrypted and stored on a secure server.

Another popular digital service in Estonia is the e-residency program. This program allows non-Estonians to become digital residents of Estonia, giving them access to a range of digital services and allowing

them to start and run a business in Estonia remotely. The program has been a huge success, with over 80,000 e-residents from 174 countries signing up since its launch in 2014.

Estonia's digital society has also had a significant impact on its economy. The country has attracted a range of tech companies and startups, and its government has made it easy to start and run a business in Estonia. The country's digital infrastructure has also made it easier for businesses to operate, reducing bureaucracy and cutting costs.

However, Estonia's success in building a digital society has not been without its challenges. The country's digital infrastructure has been the target of cyberattacks, with a major attack in 2007 bringing down

many of the country's digital services. Estonia has responded by investing in cybersecurity, and the country now has one of the most advanced cybersecurity systems in the world.

Despite these challenges, Estonia's digital society continues to thrive. The country's innovative solutions have been recognized globally, and many other countries are looking to Estonia for inspiration in building their own digital societies.

In a world where technology is becoming increasingly important, Estonia's success in building a digital society serves as an inspiration to others. The country has shown that with the right investment and innovation, it is possible to create a society where almost everything can be done online.

