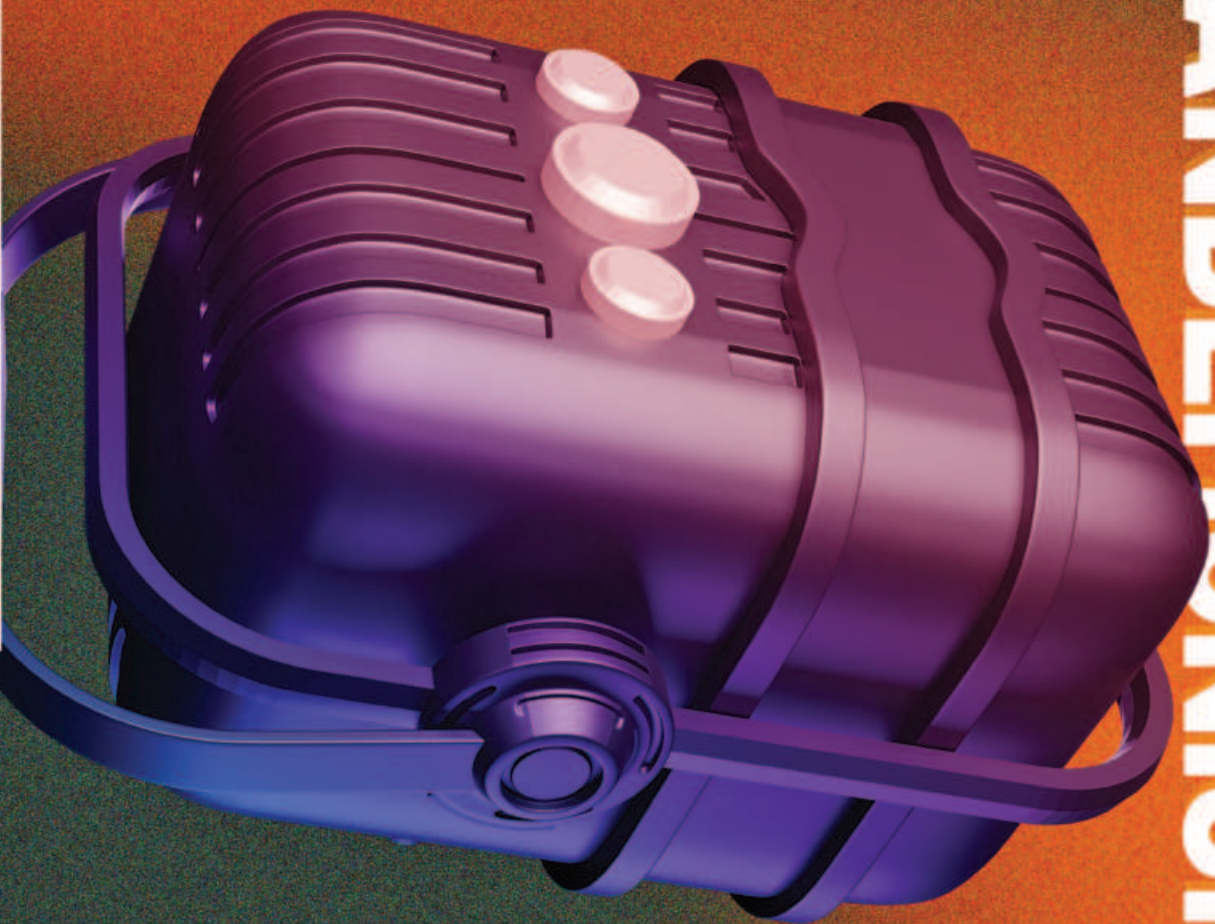# TOGGLE

WEEKEND LIVING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

A publication of *The Daily Star*

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COVER: ZARIF FAIAZ

Evercare Hospital launches first comprehensive cancer care centre in Chattogram

Evercare Hospital recently launched the first comprehensive cancer care centre in Chattogram.

According to a press release, the patients will get medical oncology, radiation oncology, surgical oncology, bone marrow transplant, haematology, pain-palliative care, etc. services at the newly introduced comprehensive cancer care centre.

Professor Dr. Md. Ismail Khan,

Vice-Chancellor of Chittagong Medical University, Br. J. Md. Shamim Ahsan, Director of CMCH, Dr. Ratnadeep Chaskar, MD and CEO of Evercare Hospitals Bangladesh and other dignitaries were present during the launch of the comprehensive cancer care centre in Chattogram..

For appointments and emergency services, the readers are requested to contact the Hotline 10663.
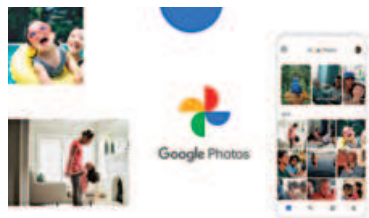
How to protect your private photos on Google Photos

PALASH DAS

Many people use Google Photos to store and share their photos and videos online. It's a popular app for Android phones. One way to keep your favorite photos safe is by setting a password. There's also a feature called the "locked folder" that provides extra security. You can use a password, a screen lock, or your fingerprint to access the locked folder and view the photos stored inside.

The Google Photos app is free and can be downloaded on Android phones, iPhones, iPads, Macs, and Windows PCs.

To create a locked folder in Google Photos and protect your personal photos, follow these steps:

*Make sure your Google Photos app is up to date.

*Open the app and go to the Library section.

*In the Library, find and select the "Utilities" option.

*Look for the "Set up locked folder" feature and learn how it works.

*Tap on "Get Started" to see the guideline page.

*Click on "Set up" to begin the setup process.

*Choose the type of lock you prefer, such as a password or fingerprint.

*To add photos and videos to the locked folder, select "Move Items."

*You'll see your photo gallery, so choose the photos and videos you want to move.

*Once you've selected the items, tap on "Move."

Keep in mind that if you delete the Google Photos app, all the photos and videos stored in the locked folder will be deleted as well. So be careful and think twice before deleting the app.

Reddit communities go private to protest the company's recent decisions

Over 7,000 Reddit communities, known as subreddits, have been set to private to protest recent decisions by Reddit regarding forced pricing on API data collection.

When trying to access any of these locked subreddits, the message that pops up says that this community has been set to private "to protest recent admin decisions about API fees that harm users". It also adds that only approved members can view and take part in the locked subreddit's discussions.

In April this year, Reddit announced their plans to charge AI developers for API (Application Programming Interface) access to the website, which is necessary to train large-language models (LLMs) of AI chatbots like ChatGPT and certain AI-based apps.

Under Reddit's new ruling, which is planned to come into effect from July 1, every 1,000 API calls will cost Reddit users $0.24. To note, one API call is made for each new data request by the AI app. Reddit added that any app making less than 100 calls per minute will be able to access the API for zero cost.

While the pricing might not

seem a lot at first, this $0.24 per 1,000 calls can easily pile up, especially for developers dependent on collecting vast amounts of data to run their AI app. Third-party apps such as Reddit is Fun and Apollo, which are dependent on API data collection to provide a better Reddit experience for users, are estimated to be required to pay millions of dollars a year once the ruling goes live.

According to many of these locked subreddits, this forced fee on app developers directly harms users, from bigger companies like OpenAI to smaller, independent developers.

According to Downdetector. com, Reddit faced an outage of about 2 hours on June 12, presumably due to thousands of these subreddits going down at once. Downdetector.com, at the current time of writing, states that "user reports indicate possible problems at Reddit", though the main website - aside from the aforementioned locked subreddits - is up and running.

According to a recent company letter sent by Reddit CEO and co-founder, Steve Huffman, the company is also planning to fire 5% of their total workforce.

Twitter plans to launch a video app

Twitter plans to launch a video app for smart TVs, as per a recent tweet by Twitter owner Elon Musk. This plan falls in line with the social media giant's new plans to focus more on video content.

As reported by Reuters, new CEO Linda Yaccarino and Musk had an investor presentation on June 15, where the company discussed their plans to focus on video, creator and commerce partnerships. These plans, as per the report, aim to

revitalise Twitter's business beyond digital advertising.

The report also adds that according to a slide of the presentation, vertical video accounted for more than 10% of time spent on Twitter. In the presentation, Yaccarino also told Twitter investors that the company is further planning to potentially partner with political and entertainment figures, as well as news and media publishers, to further boost business.

Xiaomi introduces Redmi Note 12 in Bangladesh

Xiaomi has recently launched their latest Redmi Note series smartphone in Bangladesh, the Redmi Note 12.

Redmi Note 12 is equipped with a 2.8GHz octa-core Snapdragon 685 processor, a Qualcomm Adreno 610 GPU with 4GB RAM and 128GB storage.

It comes with a 6.67″ AMOLED DotDisplay with FHD+ resolution, while the 120Hz refresh rate enables smooth transitions for day-to-day activities.

The device has a triple rear camera setup, with a 50MP primary camera accompanied by an 8MP ultra-wide camera and a 2MP macro camera.

Redmi Note 12 is available in three colours - Onyx Gray, Ice Blue and Mint Green. It is priced at Tk. 19,999/-.

Inside the country's first Data Science degree

HASAN MAHMUD ABDULLAH
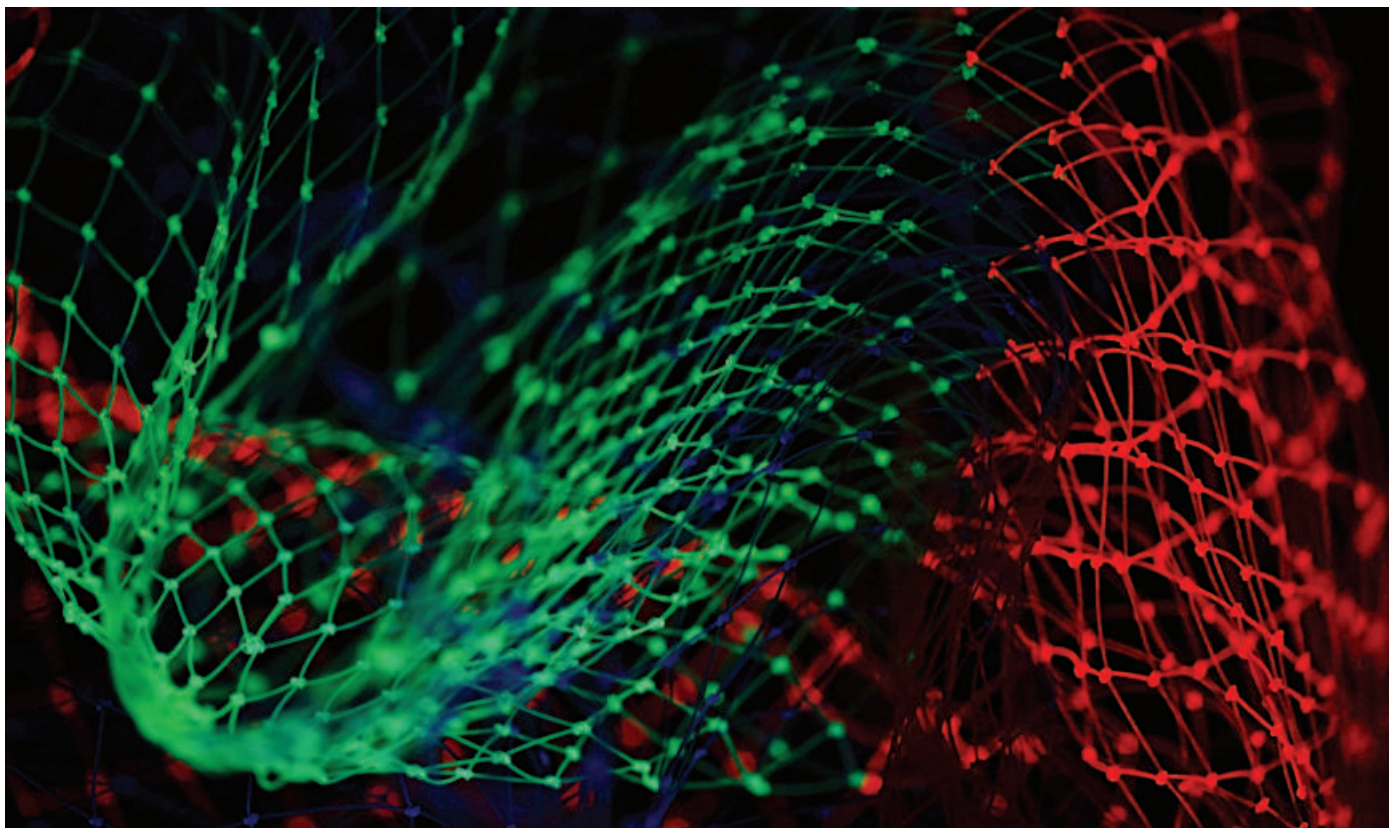
Data Science—how many times have we heard of this term in the last few years? Certainly enough to know that it is having its moment right now, with no signs of slowing down anytime soon. With the advent of the artificial generation of anything from creative audiovisual work to graduate-level thesis work, the potential of the operations enabled by AI is currently on full display. The backbone of AI and many of its sibling technologies is Data Science, a world filled with statistics, data mining, modelling and of course, the titular element of data itself.

Data science is on its way to getting inducted into the Bangladeshi undergraduate academia, courtesy of United International University. The 138-credit honours program is set to launch in full swing in the upcoming Fall session. For aspiring enthusiasts who wanted to tailor their career towards the field but had no outlet for doing so other than online courses, this is almost a godsend. But the obvious question remains, why would someone want to go into the field of Data Science when there's the ever-popular Computer Science always available? What's the point of Data Science anyway? Read on to find out about what a degree in Data Science entails, and what UIU's new program consists of.

What is Data Science?
The Data Science umbrella has expanded large enough to cover almost every single field that we can think of. Who would not want to improve their business's performance and meet the customers' needs better? Which society would decline better medical care, economic flourishment and advancement in technology that makes life easier? We, as humans, naturally seek the path with the least resistance, to make our tasks more efficient and less error-prone.

That is the exact goal of data science as well: to collect data about certain recurring phenomena or events, unearth the pattern, and optimise our decision-making to achieve an outcome as close as possible to the ideal scenario. This is achieved through the use of a dedicated subset of software, algorithms and computer science finesse. A lot of these tasks often require a lot of computational power and high-end hardware, unlike some other computer science pathways.

However, while the world of terminology has made its fair share of progress, Data Science degrees were seldom offered by universities in popular destinations, such as the US and Canada, let alone Bangladesh, at least on the undergrad level. Now, you can choose to specialise in Data Science in the final year of a Computer Science Degree, but considering the complexity of the field, that leaves out a lot to learn and master. The general narrative has been to pursue a Master's degree in Data Science or a related field, but for many, a Master's simply isn't an option for a variety of reasons. That is the exact gap that UIU is capitalising on with their much-anticipated program.

UIU's Data Science program
While talking to the program coordinator Professor Swakkhar Shatabda, it was revealed that the program excludes the conventional engineering aspect seen in most IT degrees offered in Southeast Asia. Students often find these mandatory engineering courses in computer science degrees troublesome, as they occupy time that could have otherwise been spent mastering a skill related to their desired job. This, however, will be a program strictly concentrated on data science, and for existing students of computer science, some overlapping credits will be waived.

UIU has already made preparations for dedicated labs with workstations equipped with high-configuration GPUs solely for data science operations. But what edge does one get with this degree as opposed to computer science, and what about securing a job? Professor Shatabda explained, "A data scientist can shine in situations where a software developer might be obsolete. With the rise in data collection and optimisation, both national and international firms need data scientists. For the purposes of higher studies or jobs related to AI, a data scientist degree holder will undoubtedly have an edge."

There seems to be some truth to this, as – due to the advent of generative models like ChatGPT – intermediate-level tasks like building a website or implementing a niche-specific chatbot can be accomplished in minutes if not seconds!

Anticipating the upcoming tectonic shift towards data science in the industry, UIU's new program promises to leave no stone unturned, and venture into anything from advanced statistics to deep learning. The course curriculum along with the finalised program details is set to be released within a few weeks on UIU's website.

Local esports events to keep an eye on

HASAN MAHMUD ABDULLAH & FARHAN MUSFIQUE

Gaming, an indispensable part of the lives of many, is chosen by countless young adults around the globe as their primary source of a dopamine rush. To fuel that fire, we have competitive esports gaming, a world abuzz with adrenaline and passion.

Something about the word 'competitive' always sparks a drive in people to outdo, be it a staring contest or a major sporting event. Sports are not the only medium to pitch one player against another, the virtual gaming world has long made large-scale competition its home. Since Atari's first-ever major esports tournament back in 1978, a plethora of games has ridden the wave of esports, including classics like Doom and Quake to household names like Counter-Strike and Valorant.

Much like the outside world, Bangladesh equally shares a love for gaming and competition. Since the early 2000s, Counter-Strike 1.6 and DOTA have been taking centre stage in Bangladesh as the lone titles in any e-sporting event, but over the last decade, that catalogue has appended titles like FIFA, Rainbow Six Siege, and Call of Duty. But surprisingly, what has gained an unprecedented level of traction is the mobile gaming scenario. Thanks to the advent of powerful handheld devices, competitive mobile gaming is now a fully-fleshed branch of esports. The last few years have seen the titanic rise of games like PUBG, Free Fire and Call of Duty Mobile.

With such an unprecedented rise in gaming and player bases growing almost exponentially, skill ceilings for each game are at an all-time high, which only means one thing: more competition. Thanks to this rising phenomenon, esports is gradually being taken more seriously. Each event boasts a higher prize pool than the last, making this the perfect time to utilise those lightning-speed reaction times and jump in on the action yourself, whether it be desktop or mobile. If you want to dab your feet into the wild world of competitive gaming, here are some upcoming local esports events to keep a close eye on.

BESL Episode V by Discovery One

Prize pool: BDT 6 lac
Games: VALORANT, COD Mobile
Discovery One recently made headlines by hosting some of the biggest esports LAN events in Bangladesh, among which are FIFA Royale and the D1 Cup boasting a more-than-generous prize pool of BDT 15 lacs, with an astonishing 9 lacs reserved for the champion. Discovery One has now returned with yet another iteration of their online competition series, Bangladesh Esports League Episode

V, an event that has featured titles like CSGO and Mobile Legends. Last month's Episode IV garnered over 1.5 million views across all platforms. Keep your eyes glued to their Facebook page for BESL's LAN event counterpart D1 Cup Season 2 announcement, which has an even higher prize pool. This time around, BESL is featuring Valorant and COD Mobile. The register closed on June 14.

For future events, keep an eye on their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/discoveryonebd

IGE Community Series Valorant 2023
Prize pool: BDT 50,000
Games: VALORANT
InGame Esports is a company that is trying to bring esports gaming to the forefront not only in Bangladesh but in the whole South-Asian subcontinent as a whole, with very frequent international tournaments being hosted online. Their tournaments have featured all the fan favourites starting from PUBG to DOTA 2. This time around, it's on LAN and it's more joy for the fans of Valorant, with more and more events to compete in. With 119 registered teams competing for a prize pool of BDT 50,000, the tournament will take place from June 17 to 24.

Keep an eye on their website for future events: https://ingame.gg/events

SMART BANGLADESH GAMING FAIR 2023
Prize pool: BDT 49,000
Games: FIFA, VALORANT
For the people assuming only gamers in Dhaka can band together and compete, you have been proved wrong. The three-day offline event 'SMART Bangladesh Gaming Fair' gave gamers of Chattogram the chance to show off their skills in Valorant and FIFA. Moreover, it doubled as a PC peripherals showcase event, which is all the more pleasant for tech lovers and gamers alike. The prize pool for FIFA was BDT 9000 and for Valorant, it was BDT 40,000. The Gaming Fair took place at the GEC Convention Center in Chattogram from June 14 to 16.

For future gaming tournaments in Chattogram, keep an eye on: www.facebook.com/TeamECO.bd

Inter-University LAN Tournament by Mobile Legends Bangladesh
Prize pool: BDT 4 lac
Games: Mobile Legends
Mobile Legends Bangladesh, the leading mobile esports organiser in Bangladesh, is set to host major esports events in the coming months. One of the events, the Inter-University LAN tournament, will be an offline tournament featuring the Mobile Legends (MLBB) game. As many people worldwide are choosing esports gaming as their career path, Mobile Legends Bangladesh hopes that tournaments

like this will inspire university students to give serious thought to choosing esports gaming as their future career. The tournament has a big prize pool including in-game rewards worth BDT 4 lac and they're planning to include more than 20 universities through their LAN tournament. The tournament will be open to all university students in Bangladesh and the registration will be opening soon on their official page. Link to the official group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/235030881883343/

Esports Tournament at Dhaka Summer Con
Prize pool: BDT 50,000
Games: Mobile Legends: Bang Bang (MLBB)
Similar to the esports segment of the Anime Convention, Dhaka Summer Convention also has a segment for the esports players of Bangladesh. There will be squad vs squad and solo 1v1 games to compete against each other for mobile games like Mobile Legends, with a lucrative amount of prize pool. In the Anime Convention, the Champion of the Mobile Legends tournament was Red Viperz Gaming who recently became the first Bangladeshi team to get the chance to play in the World Esports Championship Regional Qualifier. The success of our teams is inspiring the esports organisers to bring more tournaments and opportunities for our community players. Keep an eye on their event page for team registration and updates. Link to their event page: https://www.facebook.com/dhakasummercon

GPxAOV Community Cup 2023
Prize pool: BDT 3 lac
Games: Arena of Valor (AOV)
GPxAOV is back with its second season of the highly anticipated Arena of Valor tournament. Season 1, which happened last year, was a great success with hundreds of participants from around the country competing for the grand prize. With the success of the first season, fans of the game can't wait to see what Season 2 has in store. GPxAOV is known for its well-organised tournaments and has built a reputation as one of the best organisers in the Arena of Valor community. The tournament is open to players regardless of their gaming experience. This diversity adds to the excitement of the tournament as players from different districts and different playstyles go head-to-head. Season 2 promises to be even bigger and better than the first. There are more prizes up for grabs, including cash prizes, and new rules have been put in place to ensure a level playing field for all participants. GPxAOV has also made sure to address any issues that came up during Season 1, making the second season even smoother and more enjoyable.

Are we ready to listen?
Exploring the prospect of a podcast platform in Bangladesh

MEHNAZ IRTIKA

In a world progressively leaning towards digital content, podcasts have been capturing the imaginations of millions worldwide with their diverse and immersive experiences. As this trend sweeps across continents, it raises an essential question for countries like our nation which are burgeoning with digital potential: Is Bangladesh ready for a podcast platform?

According to recent statistics, podcast listenership has witnessed an astounding surge, with over 155 million people tuning in regularly in the United States alone. Moreover, countries like the United Kingdom, Australia, and India have witnessed a remarkable surge in podcast popularity, with millions of avid listeners engaging with diverse topics and narratives.

Inspired by this global wave, Bangladesh stands poised to explore the realm of podcasting. Let's venture into the nascent podcasting landscape of Bangladesh, and discover the local take on this flourishing medium waiting to be heard by the world.

CHARTING A NEW ERA: JOURNEY INTO THE PODCASTING LANDSCAPE
As of 2023, there are approximately 464.7 million podcast listeners globally. This number is projected to reach 504.9 million by 2024, creating a broad spectrum of opportunities for local content creators. In Bangladesh, podcasting is gradually gaining momentum, offering a unique platform for local voices and stories. It's fair to assert that our nation is now ready to dip its toes into the waters of the audio landscape.

Paving the way for podcasting
Podcasts are a steady mix of entertainment and education - they're not just fun; they're fuel for thought. And with our favourite celebrities and influencers lending their voices to the medium, it's hard not to be swept up in the excitement. Trailblazers are emerging to pave the way for the growth of a podcast platform in Bangladesh in the ever-evolving realm of podcasting alongside enthusiastic listeners. These individuals are instrumental in establishing a thriving community that embraces the captivating medium of podcasts.

Enayet Chowdhury from the Trinomial podcast delves deeper into the reasons behind the growing interest among listeners and emphasises the importance of creating personalised content. According to him, the future of podcasting in Bangladesh looks

promising. "I believe that the podcasting landscape in Bangladesh will likely see a diversification of content across various genres and subjects," he states. Sameer Ahmed, the face of SameerScane, who is also experienced in behind-the-scenes work for podcasts like '2 Cents', says, "Bangladesh is completely ready for a podcast platform, with an array of digestible, authentic content from creators."

Evidently, podcasts provide an escape, a moment of reflection, or a spark of inspiration, whenever and wherever we choose. But they're more than just background noise. Podcasts connect us - to ideas, to stories, and each other.

Navigating the challenges and opportunities
In the ever-changing world of podcasting, navigating the challenges and seizing the opportunities has become paramount. Yahia Amin, a psychologist and podcaster, acknowledges the momentum of podcasting but also emphasises the existing challenges. He further highlights the role language and content preferences play in the popularity of podcasts in Bangladesh.

As creators and listeners embrace this dynamic medium, it's crucial to understand what people are looking for; quality content, use of local language, and resonating relativity. Sameer argues that podcasts are convenient and offer a more genuine medium for creators. "With podcasts, you can tell stories, foster collaboration, and delve into the nitty-gritty of helping people gain knowledge," he says.

To facilitate the growth of podcasting, creating a network or community of podcasters and listeners, organising meetups and workshops, and exploring various revenue streams will heighten the

chances of audio content taking off in our nation.

Ascent of monetisation in podcasts
As more individuals seek engaging audio content on various topics, the rise of podcasts creates an immersive experience. The prospect of earning hundreds of dollars per podcast adds an intriguing financial angle to the equation. According to a report by the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) and PwC, podcast ad revenue in the United States in 2023 is expected to total $2.3 billion, marking a substantial increase from previous years. This indicates the growing interest of advertisers in reaching engaged podcast audiences.

The Trinomial Podcast earned about Tk. 53,000 (with 3,67,900 views, 92,200 watch hours, and 2,900 subscribers) only from YouTube monetisation in April without any sponsors, making monetary prospects open for exploration. Enayet highlights, "Advertisers and brands will recognise the potential of reaching engaged and niche audiences through podcast advertising" – which presents monetary offers for creators.

The current scenario suggests that the expanding podcasting landscape and increasing listenership provides amazing opportunities for content creators to monetise their podcasts. Yahia Amin outlines, "As Bangladeshi podcast networks and platforms continue to grow, they may introduce new monetisation features like premium subscription"–suggesting that the future of podcasting in Bangladesh could pave the way for lucrative financial feasibility.

Insights from within
The promising rise of podcasting in Bangladesh isn't merely catching the attention of entrepreneurs and content creators but also has sparked

excitement among the audience, particularly the youth. To capture this, we turn our spotlight to Labiba, a Brac University student, and Anjum, a local entrepreneur.

Labiba argues, "Will people be willing to shift from visual to audio?" She states that the beauty of video content is "the completeness of sensory experience it offers". However, she believes that the podcast format can bring an unmatched personalisation, and this unique charm could be its winning edge. On the other side of the coin, Anjum sees the budding podcast platform as a potential gold mine. "The growth in listenership worldwide shows the immense potential for monetisation," he exclaims.

We're at the cusp of a major shift in content consumption, as there are advertising opportunities, sponsorships, and even direct listener support options. Podcasts allow for a deeper connection with the audience, which can translate into a stronger willingness to support content creators.

Future of podcasting
Imagine the bustling streets of Dhaka to the serenity of the countryside, brought to life by the vivid narratives of homegrown podcasters, their voices weaving a rich tapestry of Bangladeshi culture and experience. Picture the intimate conversations unfolding in millions of ears, building personal connections and breaking down barriers of understanding.

A future illuminated by the glow of potential, the hum of anticipation, and the undeniable charm of the spoken word can be seen over the horizon. Podcasting in Bangladesh is finally ready to cast off its underdog status and step confidently into the limelight.

From airwaves to earbuds: We're ready
Given the current state of podcast adoption and the potential solutions at hand, it appears Bangladesh is on the cusp of a podcast boom. By fostering a spirit of collaboration, embracing innovation, and nurturing a culture of experimentation, the seeds for podcast growth are planted.

With proactive initiatives such as local content growth and strategic planning like forging partnerships for infrastructure improvement, podcasts are the next big fish in the pond of digital content. As Bangladesh eagerly tunes in, the whispers of a forthcoming podcast revolution resonate through the air, promising a transformative wave of audio storytelling and knowledge sharing.

PHOTO: **SHAHRIAR RAHMAN**
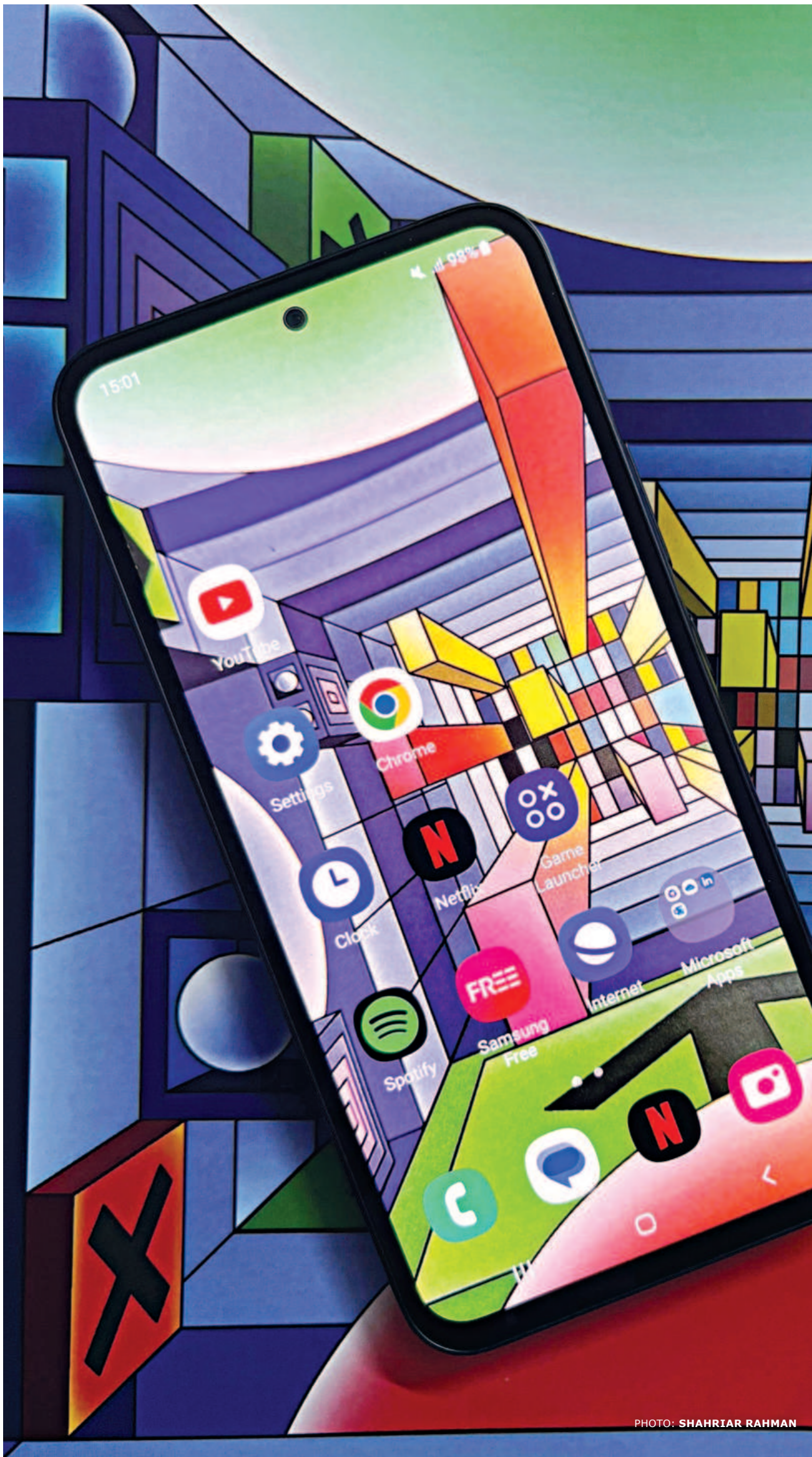
HANDS-ON REVIEW

Samsung Galaxy A54
The newest A Game in town

SHAHRIAR RAHMAN

The Samsung Galaxy A54 stands tall as a formidable mid-range smartphone that strikes a balance between elegant design, reliable performance, and exceptional camera capabilities. Priced at Tk 59,999/- in Bangladesh, this review delves into the device's hardware, camera performance, and overall value proposition, providing an in-depth analysis of its features and benefits.

The Galaxy A54 showcases a sleek and elegant design that immediately captures attention. Its 6.4-inch FHD+ display takes centre stage, offering a captivating visual experience with its Full HD+ resolution and slim bezels. The immersive display allows for an unparalleled viewing experience, ideal for enjoying multimedia content with vivid colours and sharp details. The glossy plastic back adds a touch of sophistication to the device, although it is prone to smudges and fingerprints. However, for the price tag that the phone comes with, one might expect the body and back to be made of Aluminium. Also, did I mention the phone is a bit on the thicker side? Well, it is- at least if you take into consideration the competition. One plus side of the phone is it comes with IP67 protection, so the regular spills and dips would not be pestering with your daily usage.

Under the hood, the Galaxy A54 houses the powerful Exynos 1380 (5 nm) chipset, ensuring smooth and responsive performance. Unlike the top devices of Samsung, the brand here resorted to their in-house chipset brand. With 8GB of RAM, multitasking becomes a breeze, enabling seamless app switching and effortless navigation through the user interface. Furthermore, the device provides a generous 128GB of internal storage, allowing users to store a vast library of apps, photos, and videos. For those with additional storage needs, the microSD card slot offers expandability options.

The Galaxy A54 features a robust 5,000mAh battery, providing reliable all-work-day usage. Whether engaging in extensive multimedia consumption

or running demanding apps, the device offers longevity without the need for frequent recharging. The inclusion of a USB-C port facilitates convenient charging and data transfer, ensuring a hassle-free user experience. Additionally, the device's support for 5G connectivity future-proofs it, allowing users to leverage faster network speeds when available.

The Galaxy A54 truly shines in the camera department, presenting a versatile triple-camera setup that enables users to capture stunning photographs. At the heart of the camera system lies a primary 50 MP, f/1.8 sensor capturing images with fine detail, vibrant colours, and above-average dynamic range. Whether it's a breathtaking landscape or a close-up shot, the primary sensor delivers above-average quality across slightly brighter lighting conditions.

Complementing the primary sensor is a 123-degree 12 MP ultra-wide-angle lens, expanding the field of view to capture more expansive scenes with ease. This lens is particularly useful for landscape and group photography. The ultra-wide-angle lens also performs admirably in well-lit environments, delivering punchy images and minimal distortion.

For those who appreciate the finer details, the Galaxy A54 offers a dedicated 5 MP, f/2.4 macro lens, enabling close-up photography that reveals intricate

textures and nuances. While macro photography may face challenges in low-lighting situations, it excels in well-lit environments, capturing good snaps with precision and clarity.

Like most pricey Samsung devices, the camera system is further enhanced by Night Mode, the feature solely designed to elevate low-light photography. Night Mode's software combines multiple exposures, reduces noise, and enhances image clarity, resulting in not-terribly balanced and usable images even in challenging lighting conditions. While it may not match the performance of

flagship devices, the Galaxy A54 offers a commendable low-light photography experience for a pricey mid-range smartphone.

On the front, the 32-megapixel f/2.2, 26mm (wide) lensed selfie camera takes centre stage, capturing striking self-portraits with details and accurate skin tones. Equipped with smart algorithms, the front camera ensures that your selfies look their best, highlighting your natural beauty and enabling you to capture memorable moments with friends and family. Of course, with a challenging lighting environment, it is expected to see degraded quality selfies.

With a price tag of Tk 59,999/- in Bangladesh, the Galaxy A54 may seem a bit higher priced within the mid-

PHOTO: **SHAHRIAR RAHMAN**

range smartphone segment. However, it can be argued that the device offers value for money when its features and capabilities are considered. The processor & GPU delivers reliable and

smooth performance, allowing users to effortlessly navigate through apps, play graphics-intensive games, and multitask with ease. The generous 128GB internal storage provides ample space for apps, media, and personal files, ensuring users have the flexibility to store their digital lives. In terms of battery life, the Galaxy A54 excels, thanks to its robust 5,000mAh battery. Users can enjoy prolonged usage without constantly worrying about running out of power. The inclusion of a USB-C port not only simplifies charging but also facilitates faster data transfer, enabling seamless connectivity with other devices. When compared to its competitors in the mid-range segment, the Galaxy A54 presents itself as a strong contender, offering a good combination of market-tested design, reliable performance, and above-average camera capabilities. While the price may be slightly higher, the device compensates with its features, delivering a smartphone experience that rivals higher-priced alternatives.

For consumers seeking a mid-range smartphone that excels in design, performance, and camera capabilities, the Samsung Galaxy A54 stands as a solid choice. It provides an immersive and feature-packed smartphone experience, justifying its slightly steeper price through its impressive capabilities and exceptional value.

Two local startups win BDT 1 Crore of Govt's startup grant

Top 52 local startups received BDT 7 crore in the 3rd iteration of the Bangabandhu Innovation Grant (BIG) 2023, organised by the Innovation Design and Entrepreneurship Academy (iDEA) Project of Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) under the ICT Division.

A total of 6846 startups and innovators applied to participate in this contest at the initial stage after the nationwide campaign of BIG 2023, organised with the slogan "Dare to Stand Big". Finally, "Fabric Lagbe Ltd." and

"Markopolo.ai" were joint winners as the Best Startups of the BIG 2023 and were awarded a grant of BDT 1 Crore each.

In addition, each of the top 50 startups will receive a grant of BDT 10 lakh for a total of BDT 5 crore. In other words, the organiser provides a total grant of BDT 7 crore to the 52 best startups. The grand finale of BIG 2023 was held on Saturday, June 17, 2023 in the morning at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital, Dhaka.

This year's session of "Bangabandhu

Innovation Grant (BIG) 2023" concluded with an award distribution ceremony of about three hours of the exclusive program. Mr. Salman F Rahman MP, Private Industry and Investment Adviser to the Prime Minister was present as the chief guest of the program. The program was presided over by Mr Zunaid Ahmed Palak, MP, State Minister, ICT Division.

Salman F Rahman said that ID cards have been arranged for freelancers, through which they can avail themselves of various opportunities, including

bank loan facilities. The program chair, Zunaid Ahmed Palak, said that ICT Division has funded nearly 400 startups from iDEA projects in 10 years from the beginning of 2015. About 30 percent of these startups are still alive and struggling. About 10 percent of these startups have advanced to the pre-seed and growth stages. Palak also said that the aim is to establish another 5-billion-dollar company by 2025 and create employment for three million young women in the startup sector.

14-year old Bangladeshi-American boy joins SpaceX as youngest employee

Elon Musk's SpaceX has welcomed its youngest-ever employee, Kairan Quazi, a 14-year-old software engineer of Bangladeshi-American descent.

Taking to LinkedIn to share his accomplishment, Quazi exuded excitement at the prospect of joining the Starlink engineering team, which he proudly hailed as the "coolest company on the planet." Starlink represents SpaceX's cutting-edge satellite internet service.

In his LinkedIn post, Quazi shared, "I am overjoyed to embark on this journey as a software engineer with the revered Starlink engineering team at the world's coolest company. SpaceX's refusal to assess my worth based on age, unlike many others, is truly remarkable."

Born to Bangladeshi parents, Mustahid and Julia Quazi, Kairan Quazi astounded those around him by speaking in full sentences at the age of two—an early indication of his exceptional intellect, as reported by the LA Times.

By the time Quazi reached the third grade at nine years old, he reportedly found the standard school curriculum to be a "lackluster challenge" for his advanced capabilities. Just a few months later, he secured an internship as an AI research co-op fellow at Intel Labs. At

the age of 11, Quazi embarked on his formal studies in computer science and engineering.

In 2022, Quazi's talents were put to use during a four-month stint as a machine learning intern at the cyber intelligence firm Blackbird.AI. His contributions

included designing an "anomaly detection statistical learning pipeline" to identify instances of social media content manipulation, according to his LinkedIn profile.

As he prepares to graduate from Santa Clara University's School of Engineering, Quazi is poised to make history as the institution's youngest-ever graduate.

Earlier this year, the 14-year-old took to Instagram, documenting his preparations for a significant job interview. Weeks later, he proudly shared a screenshot of the job acceptance letter he received from SpaceX.

Julia Chowdhury Quazi, Kairan's mother, is a Wall Street executive. She, along with her son Kairan, resides in the Bay area of San Francisco, USA. Mustahid Quazi, Kairan's father, originally hails from Manikganj and currently works as an engineer.

Reports indicate that the teenager plans to relocate with his mother from Pleasanton, California, to Redmond, Washington, to begin his work at SpaceX.