

Nortel subsidiary in bid to expand wireless business

Netas chief tells *The Daily Star*

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

Nortel Networks Netas is considering strengthening its presence in Bangladesh's wireless market, a key official of the company said.

"We are really keen to operate in Bangladesh with the best technology," M Sait Gozum, president of Turkey-based Netas, a subsidiary of Canadian Nortel Networks, told *The Daily Star* in a recent interview.

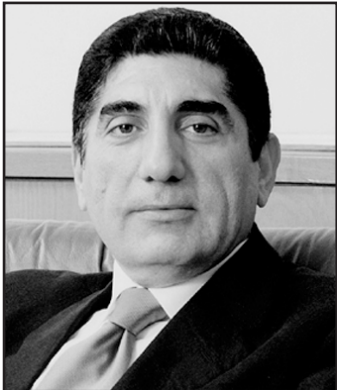
He said Bangladesh is on the right track and that the government has the necessary political will and determination to make telecommunication available to its people.

Gozum predicts that Bangladesh telephone connections will grow tenfold within the next five years.

He said there is a substantial demand for telephones in the country of 129-million population.

"Telecom sector is the essence of all sectors including education, business and defence. So this sector has to grow in line with development in other sectors," he said.

Gozum said his company is well



M Sait Gozum

aware of the problems that exist in Bangladesh from its experiences in Turkey.

He said Nortel has a number of technologies including voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) solution, switches for global system of mobile communications (GSM), code division multiple access (CDMA) and universal mobile telecommuni-

cations system (UMTS).

He said his company has completed a US\$19.5 million project of 139,000 digital phones for the state-owned Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB). The project has been completed nine months ahead of schedule with the support of Bangladeshi engineers.

Gozum said Nortel Networks Netas has signed an estimated US\$2.3 million contract with the Association of Telecom Operators of Bangladesh (ATOB) to establish links between the networks of the four Bangladeshi wireless operators and BTTB's fixed Public Switched Telephone Network.

ATOB plans to deploy Nortel Networks' DMS-100 Switching System and OPTera Metro 4000 Multi-service Platform, a fibre-optic transmission system, to enhance the existing interconnection between BTTB's 650,000 fixed lines and wireless operators.

The project also aims at increasing the bandwidth of the four ATOB

wireless operators and improving the quality of service to its subscribers. The deployment is expected to be completed within six months.

"We are proud of our international achievements and our position in the Bangladeshi market has significantly improved with this new contract," said Gozum.

"It was our first project with the private mobile operators and we look forward to working with Bangladeshi wireless operators," he added.

Nortel Networks Netas have been active in Bangladesh since 1998, and it deployed a national optical transmission network in 2000, he said.

"In 2002 we entered the Bangladeshi fixed line voice market with 116,000 lines for BTTB's digital voice network, and our track record has helped us enter the wireless market in Bangladesh as well," president of Turkey-based Netas said.

Call money rate eases

UNB, Dhaka

The interbank call money rate yesterday eased up to some extent, ending an upswing since the beginning of the week.

Taka also remained almost unchanged against US dollar for the second consecutive day after a marginal rise on Monday since the week began with a newly floated currency.

Bangladesh Bank governor Fakhruddin Ahmed said the central bank now considers measures to make the money market cheaper and more flexible.

"We may introduce secondary REPO market (inter bank REPO) within 4-6 months," he told newsmen following a seminar here yesterday.

Mercantile Bank observes 4th anniversary

Mercantile Bank Limited arranged a customer gathering at a local hotel in Dhaka on Monday to mark its 4th anniversary, says a press release.

At the function, eight eminent personalities were awarded Mercantile Bank Prize-2003 for outstanding contributions in their fields.

The awardees are Rehman Sobhan for economics and economic related research, Kabir Chowdhury for Bengali language and literature, Ali Asgar for science and technology, Zillur Rahman Siddiqui for education and culture, Santosh Gupta for journalism, Saber Hossain Chowdhury for sports, Muntasir Mamun for research on liberation war and Samson H Chowdhury for industry and commerce.

The function was presided over by Md Abdul Jalil MP, chairman of the bank.

MCCI welcomes LDCs' Dhaka Declaration

Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dhaka (MCCI) has welcomed the Dhaka Declaration of the Second LDC Trade Minister's meeting held in Dhaka from May 31 to June 2, says a press release.

The chamber termed the meeting timely as it took note of the growing marginalisation of the least developed countries in world trade and the Dhaka Declaration urged the developed countries to extend greater access to all LDC products.

Faithful implementation of the proposals will help developing countries, particularly LDCs, to achieve the Millenium Developing Goal of halving poverty by 2015, MCCI said.

The chamber hopes the world community would adequately implement the proposals contained in the declaration, which will enable a meaningful integration of LDCs into the multilateral trading system and the global economy.

HSBC launches new deposit scheme

The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited in Bangladesh has launched a new deposit scheme recently, says a press release.

The new banking product, Monthly Interest Bearing Time Deposit Scheme, offers monthly returns on the deposit.

Any individual or joint account holders of HSBC can participate in the scheme with a minimum balance of Tk 500,000.

The monthly interest on the deposit is automatically transferred to an account nominated by the individual or joint account holders.

CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank								
Selling		Currency		Buying				
TT/OD	BC			TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	OD Transfer		
58.9300	58.9800		USD	58.0000	57.8295	57.7604		
69.8321	69.8913		EUR	67.3090	67.1113	67.0310		
96.7925	96.8747		GBP	93.8440	93.5684	93.4564		
39.5244	39.5579		AUD	37.7116	37.6008	37.5558		
0.5000	0.5004		JPY	0.4841	0.4827	0.4821		
45.2542	45.2926		CHF	43.8829	43.7540	43.7016		
7.5809	7.5873		SEK	7.4421	7.4202	7.4114		
43.6195	43.6566		CAD	42.3358	42.2114	42.1609		
7.5641	7.5706		HKD	7.4300	7.4082	7.3993		
34.2875	34.3166		SGD	33.4467	33.3485	33.3086		
16.1762	16.1900		AED	15.6647	15.6187	15.6000		
15.8397	15.8531		SAR	15.3439	15.2988	15.2805		
Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar								
Indian Rupee	Pak Rupee	Lankan Rupee	Thai Baht	Nor Kroner	NZ Dollar	Malaysian Ringit		
46.91	57.75	97.255	41.650	6.8595	0.6305	3.80		

SHIPPING

Chittagong port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 4/6/03.

Berth No	Name of vessels	Cargo	L Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/1	Bright Moon	TSP (P)	Beihat	Unique	25/5	8/6	210
J/2	Ocean Pride	GI (R Log)	Yang Kaki	VSAL	30/5	8/6	1168
J/3	Al Muztuba	Rice/WT(P)		KLA	25/5	8/6	X

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Cargo	Loading port
Sailor-I	3/6	Indo	Litmond	Clink	
Banga Bonik	4/6	Sing	Bdship	Cont	Sing
Arcadian-1	4/6	-	PSAL	For Scraping	
Ruhunupura	5/6	Hald	PSSL	Cont	Yang
Christiane Oldendorff	4/6	Sing	ASCL	Wheat	
Sea Breeze	5/6	--	Seacom	GI	
Banga Barta	7/6	Chinnai	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Maritime Faith	5/6	Taiw	NWSL	Clink	
Feng Shun Shan (Liner)	5/6	Osaka	Bdship	GI	

Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels ready

Myeik	Rice	Yang	Total	26/5
Asimont	Cont	P Kel	Seaborne	31/5
Banga Borti	Cont	P Kel	Bdship	31/5
Bude Teguh	Cont	Sing	Pil (BD)	31/5
Qc Dignity	Cont	P Kel	Bdship	1/6
Hpa An	Rice	Yang	Total	1/6
Zang San	Rice	Kaki	Able	1/6
Dae Gak Bong	Rice	Kaki	Able	2/6

STOCK