

Telecom moving onward

MD. SAIFUR RAHMAN

MUCH of the world has, at best, inadequate access to basic telephone service.

The formal introduction of state-run BTTB mobile phone is seen as a milestone in our telecom account.

cellular mobile operators namely GrameenPhone, ATEL, CityCell and Banglalink.

investment, as the telecom watchdog has finalised the frequency distribution to all 19 private licensees.

The telecom watchdog, Bangladesh Telecom Regulatory Commission (BTRC), which was set up in January 2002, has divided the country into five zones.

Of the 23 approved applications, Dhaka Telecom Limited, has been selected to have licenses for all the four zones.

Of the remaining two, Westec Limited, a project of an internet service provider and QC Telecom Ltd will launch service in South-East Zone.

According to a decision by the BTRC, the 19 private companies will get frequencies in 1800 and 1900 Mega Hertz.

Telecom Limited (JTL), Banglaphone, Westec Telecom Limited, Dominix Limited, GEP Telecom and Dhaka Telephone Co Ltd.

Since almost all the private operators will offer connections through WLL (Wireless in Local Loop) technology which is the cheapest technology being used in Public Switched Telecom Network (PSTN).

RanksTel and Telebarta have made preparations for investment in all four regions. OneTel Communications Ltd (OneTel) signed a contract to purchase all-IP CDMA network technology from UTStarcom, a global leader in IP access networking and services.

The formal introduction of state-run BTTB mobile phone was on 28 December 2004 which is seen as a milestone in our telecom account.

Besides This the Voice over IP

(VoIP) has been legalised and the submarine cable connection to the global information super highway (SEA-ME-WE-4) will be ready for service soon with 1.28 terabits per second. It will link 14 countries from Singapore to France via Malaysia, Thailand, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and Italy with 16 landing points.

Over the last few years there has been a growth in companies dealing with VSAT communication primarily using SCPC technology. SCPC point-to-point connectivity is a trustworthy solution that can be afforded by a few multinational companies and ISPs operating in Bangladesh primarily due to monetary strength, but is not a cost-effective solution that can be afforded by most of the market.

Established in November 2001 to provide nationwide connectivity SatCom, sister concern of DNS group established the Earth Station in Gazipur. In November 2002 SatCom received nationwide licence from BTRC, being the first operator to be issued such a license by the telecom watchdog in Bangladesh.

To make this development more smooth telecom vendors like Ericsson AB, Siemens, Motorola, NOKIA Networks Limited, Huawei Technologies, ZTE Corporation, ALCATEL, UTStarcom are working to provide technical solutions to these wireline and wireless telecom carriers.

From the above review it is vivid that the telecommunications market in Bangladesh is moving onwards which is a very good sign for our telecommunications infrastructure.

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SAARC, MDGs and Bangladesh

UMMEE SAILA

SOUTH Asia is a densely populated region with 1.4 billion people. Majority of them are poor and illiterate. Their living standard and per capita income are very low. Poverty, illiteracy, gender inequality, lack of awareness about health, sanitation and pure water are almost typical of this part of the world.

HIV/AIDS is classified as the deadliest epidemic of our time. Over 22 million people have lost their lives for and almost double are currently living with HIV/AIDS. As South Asia is densely populated and most of the people of this region are poor and illiterate, there is a great chance for AIDS to spread in this region and cause social and economic disaster.

However, according to WHO/JUNAIDS report, an estimated 2500-15000 HIV infected people were there in Bangladesh at the end of 2003.

To free the world from the curse of poverty, illiteracy, HIV/AIDS, in 2000, 189 member countries of United Nations had set eight goals to achieve in the millennium summit. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are: 1) eradication of poverty by 50% by the year 2015; 2) ensuring universal primary education by the year 2015; 3) eliminating gender disparity from all level of education by 2015; 4) child mortality should be reduced to two third by the year 2015; 5) maternal mortality should be decreased to three-quarter by the year 2015; 6) ensuring sustainable environment and increasing the assurance of safe drinking water and basic sanitation by

50 percent; 7) halting HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other major diseases by 2015; 8) developing a global partnership for development.

Four years have past after the MDGs were submitted and no one can say that it is a very short time to make the 189 member countries get aware of MDGs. But we have to say with great regret that MDGs are limited only in the seminar paper. Mass media have failed to ensure participation of mass people in MDGs.

It is natural that the destination of development of developing and under developed countries will be different from economically advanced countries. So, the developing, least developed and under developed countries should identify their own goals. The government of the countries of South Asia must be aware of MDGs because these goals reflect the need of the mass people in this region.

The 13th SAARC summit will take place in Bangladesh next month. As the concept of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation was first introduced by Bangladesh, it can play a leading role in making a strategy to achieve the MDGs in South Asian countries. Developing countries should extend their cooperation to achieve the goals. Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) was signed in Islamabad during the 12th Summit. After implementation (January, 2006) of SAFTA, it is expected that it will increase the trade in this region from 4 percent to 60 percent. We hope the 13th SAARC summit will also present us with something special to help MDGs to be achieved in this region.

Ummee Saila is a freelance writer.

The Oriental Bank Ltd

Head Office, T.K. Bhaban 13, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawranbazar, Dhaka.

BANK'S PROPERTY SALE The Oriental Bank Limited intends to sale its property measuring 220 katas (approx) of land along with structure thereon at Plot No.182, 183, 184 and 185 at BSCIC Industries Estate, Tongi Industrial Area, Gazipur (Known as Tobacco Industries Limited).

Interested buyers are requested to submit their offer addressed to the Company Secretary on or before 26th January 2005, during office hours.

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BCIC-478-8/1/05 Emdad Imam Jahangir General Manager (Purchase) For Sr General Manager (Purchase)

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