TECHFAIR

Internet Fair 2005

Feel the Net buzz

RIDWAN A KABIR

WHILE most of the country is busy, trying out different technologies that can provide some comfort in this hot weather, Internet Service Provider Association of Bangladesh (Ispab) and the Ministry of Science and ICT is providing the common citizens with an opportunity to be familiar with the heat of a different kind. 'Internet Fair 2005', the second consecutive showcase focusing on latest innovations, products and services kicked off at the Bhasani Novo Theatre on April 27.

Once again, the collaboration between the government and the private sector, to contribute and boost a prospective platform for creating newer models of such endeavors in the near future has been undertaken through the inauguration of the fair.

"It is amazing to see such endeavors from the private sectors of the country," said Science and ICT Minister Moyeen Khan, while referring to Ispab's continuous efforts in developing a better networking environment. Mentioning events of SANOG V programme arranged by Ispab and Metronet Ltd., another local company, who is putting in their threads in creating fiber optic networks throughout the city of Dhaka. "Soon Dhaka will be recognised as one of the unique cities in the world," said Khan in confidence.

"Efforts by local government is shedding on promoting e-governance, which will surely be a presentable model for other countries in the neighborhood," stated Judith Chammas, acting ambassador of United States of America to Bangladesh, shedding her opinion on how the efforts by the government should be absolutely transparent on its efforts. "This approach is sure to pull in international investors on Bangladeshi grounds," she continued, which in turn is definite to create a positive impact on the local economy.

"We may assume that we will soon compete with the rest of the world in ICT terminology once the long awaited submarine cable lands inside the country," cited Akhtaruzzaman Manju, president, Ispab, while highlighting hopes on poverty alleviation through the right manipulation of the ICT industry of the country. "Once the cable is active, we may right on start working towards minimizing the gap in net experience and availability that currently exists in the country," he said. While 70% of the net users are from Dhaka, and 15% from Chittagong, the remaining 5% are from the rest of the country.

"It is time these differences even out," said Yousuf Abdullah Harun, former president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and the current chairman of Insoft Systems Ltd, while addressing the event as special guest, and insisted on the attention of the government on legalizing VoIP without delay, lifting excessive taxes on networking equipment, introducing wire transfer of cash, and giving ICT incentives to the successful ICT exporters.

The fair having the theme, "Feel the net", expects to show the enormous potential and the various use of the internet in our daily lives to the greater mass and create awareness. The event is also holding several series of seminars on different topics related to the internet and its attribution towards creating a more stable ICT platform for the country's economy to stand on. Two seminars, "Broadband everywhere" arranged by Alcatel, and "Opportunities in open source and Red Hat Linux" by Proshika Computers Systems took place on the first day of the fair bore titled. The second day started with a seminar offered by Computer Bichitra on "10 years of Computer Bichitra and our ICT sector", followed by "How the internet can help your business", organised by Computer jagat and ISPAB.

"We now have to continue uplifting our own efforts on creating a hardware and software industry of our own," Manju said in one of the seminars. On this issue, per his advice, focus should be on building UPS technology on local grounds. Manju also mentioned a sum of Tk 422 million was pulled in as profits from exports of local software. "Other than USA, the neighboring countries may also harvest chances for us to export our local ICT products to their markets," he said.

A total of 76 stalls were offered to the participating companies at the fair, most of which had been crowded with curious visitors, including school children accompanied by their parents, for the entire scheduled period per day. The fair will run till May 1.

While the internet is considered to be one of the greatest achievements of man in the 20th century, today it boasts a huge numbers of applications, from sending and receiving mails to checking and spending one's money from his bank account. For a developing country like Bangladesh, the internet should be weighed not only as a gateway of ICT applications, but at the same time as a tool to develop and strengthen the use of ICT among all private and public organizations, as well as to create countless job opportunities for local IT graduates. Such depth of understanding among the potential users of the net is expected to be initialized by efforts such as the Internet Fair 2005, while the countrymen will wait to see the kind of amazing future applications that will come forth from the net.

Moyeen Khan speaks at the inaugural ceremony.

TECHWORKSHOP

Changing concept: the Microsoft way

Microsoft Bangladesh holds 2-day .NET workshop

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

MICROSOFT Bangladesh Ltd. reported immense enthusiasm and interest from faculties of the different CSE and IT departments of the various academic institutions of the country on attending a 2-day '.NET Curriculum' Workshop, that came to an end on April 27.

Held at East West University premises, the workshop was the first of any such educational workshops, by Microsoft Bangladesh Ltd. in Bangladesh, according to sources.

About fifty participants attended the 2-day workshop from the various public and the private sectors universities of Bangladesh.

"At first we did not get much response from the institutions we officially contacted," said Imran Al-Amin, education program manager, Microsoft Bangladesh Ltd., while talking about the response and participants of the workshop.

"We started receiving calls from Monday evening and through out the night with most institutions requesting over 9 to 10 faculties from each of their departments," said Amin.

Feroz Mahmud, country manager of Microsoft Bangladesh formally inaugurated the workshop on April 26. Edmund Quek and Stanley Tan, the .NET and Developers Group, Microsoft Asia Pacific conducted the workshop. K.M. Imran Al-Amin, Education Program Manager, Microsoft Bangladesh Ltd. coordinated the workshop.

"The objective of the workshop was to inform interested faculty members from Computer Science, Computer Engineering and IT-Related departments about .NET," said Edmund Quek while talking to Star-Tech.

"It is also an essential tool to Microsoft for developing applications for the Windows platform for windows desktop applications, ASP.NET Web Applications, Web services or Smart Device based programs such as for SmartPhones or PocketPCs," he said.

Quek also said that through this technology, interested faculties can produce graduates who can meet the demands of industry.

"Through this workshop we shared information, resources and best practices that will enable the teachers to adopt the technology into their own teaching curricula as easily as possible," said Quek.

The 1st day was spent at introductory level discussions about .Net while the 2nd day was used to develop practical training.

"People understand more and are able to remember lessons easier when they get a practical training besides theory and that is we provided a whole day for practical programming," said Quek.

Quek commended the skills and knowledge of the participants at the workshop.

"The Faculties were very interested in learning new concepts and from what I can understand through such personnel, Bangladesh has skilled academic institutions, which if efficiently utilized can prepare Bangladeshi Information and Communicational Technology to the existing global level," he said.

Feedback forms were distributed to the participants and the overall response from the forms will determine potential future workshops.

"We may have a 5 day training workshop within the next 6 to 9 months," said Imran Al-Amin.

Bangladesh is the 10th country to have had the '.Net Curriculum Workshop' after a list of other countries like Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines and Sri Lanka.

"We will have other workshops of this caliber in the future which may just change the teaching methods, curriculum and update concepts in numerous fields of study of our nation," said Al-Amin.

Quek with the participants.

Feroz Mahmud, Country Manager, Microsoft Bangladesh

PHOTOTECH

PHOTO: AFP

Appearing like a winged fairy-tale creature poised on a pedestal, this object is actually a billowing tower of cold gas and dust rising from a stellar nursery called the Eagle Nebula seen in this Nasa Hubble Space Telescope image released on April 25. The soaring tower is 9.5 light-years or about 57 trillion miles high, about twice the distance from our Sun to the next nearest star. Stars in the Eagle Nebula are born in clouds of cold hydrogen gas that reside in chaotic neighborhoods, where energy from young stars sculpts fantasy-like landscapes in the gas. The tower may be a giant incubator for those newborn stars.

Global-Ittefaq Computer Quiz 2005

Knowledge-game winners awarded

THROUGH an interesting program, the Global-Ittefaq Computer Quiz 2005 lived up to the expectations of numerous attendants, ICT journalists and guests present at the event that took place on April 25 at the IDB auditorium, with over 300 participants.

The preliminary rounds of the quiz competition, jointly organised by Global Brand Private Ltd, a renowned computer accessories vendor and The Daily Ittefaq, started in January of this year. Over 1 Lakh winners were selected through the preliminary rounds, who participated in another round.

Only 2000 contestants survived the round and from this long list of survivors, 300 participants were selected through lottery.

Through an extensive quiz session at the event conducted by Jesan Rahman, IT Desk In-charge of The Daily Ittefaq and Kader Khosru, senior executive, Global Brand, 10 winners were selected from these 300 attendants.

Masudur Rahman from Arambagh won a Personal Computer as the first prize with Noor Hossain of Tejgaon winning a Real View External TV card as the second and Faisal Khan being third and winning a Creative Webcam.

The other winners by ranks were Md. Alauddin, Sardar Md. Sohel Rana, Tanzina Ahmed, Sadek Ahmed, Md. Khaled Hossain Bhuiyan and Rahimul Hasan Asif who also won some very attractive prizes.

"Media and computer firms should come forward and organise such events to generate enthusiasm and interest amongst the general public about the computer and information technology field," said Barrister Moinul Hossain, chairman, Board of Editors, The New Nation and The Daily Ittefaq, who chaired the event. Hossain complimented the skills and knowledge of the participants and hoped that concerned authorities will aid such events and occasions more in order to sustain this commendable level of knowledge about ICT.

Special guests, Azimuddin Ahmed, president, BCS Computer City, S. M. Iqbal, president, Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS), Abdul Fattah, chairman and Rafiqul Anwar, managing director of Global Brand also spoke at the event.

Star Tech Desk

TECHNEWS

Bangladesh scores high in South Asian tech market

"BANGLADESH has a promising position, when compared to all the developing countries of world as far as the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector is concerned," said Lee Ki Bong, Vice President South-East Asia, Imaging and Printing Group(IPG), Hewlett Packard (HP). The Vice President of HP was speaking at a press conference on April 17 at a local hotel.

It was also learnt from him, that HP has a great presence in the Bangladeshi economy and the revenue being generated is extremely satisfactory.

"We do have economic and political challenges which we overcome through hard-work and sincerity," said Bob Ang, General Manager, IPG, HP.

The officials from HP also reflected that their global responsibility toward environmental and social responsibilities will not differ in Bangladesh's case.

"We try our best to eliminate the environmental hazards that our products may have during the product's lifetime," said Ang.

Ang also pointed out that a portion of the revenue generated from the sale of each toner cartridge is being donated to UNICEF for the welfare of the poor and needy of the nation.

IPG department of HP spends over US $ 100 crore in research, reducing cost and at improving the quality of photo, graphics and document printing and imaging products, according to the officials at the conference.

Sayeed Ahamed, Corporate Sales Manager, IPG and Shabbir Shafiullah, General Manager, IPG of Hp were also present at the event.

Syed Tashfin Chowdhury

Lee Ki Bong, Vice President South-East Asia (2nd from left) looks as Bob Aung (2nd from right) speaks at the press conference

ROBORIOR

Interior robots called "Roborior" are displayed during a public experiment of Roborior's remote-control system between London and Tokyo using 3G mobile communication technology in Tokyo on April 25. Roborior is equipped with NTT DoCoMo's FOMA mobile phone system to communicate through video phone. Japanese robot maker "tmsuk" plans to introduce the robot onto the Japanese market with an expected price of 280,000 yen (about 2,667 USD).

PHOTO: AFP