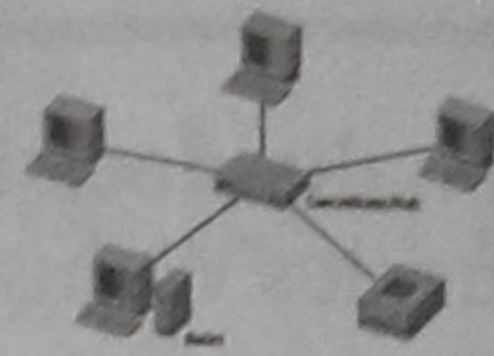


Local area network

A local-area network (LAN) is a computer network covering a small geographic area, like a home, office, or group of buildings. The defining characteristics of LANs, in contrast to wide-area networks (WANs), include their much higher data-transfer rates, smaller geographic range, and lack of a need for leased telecommunication lines. The first LAN put into service occurred in 1964 at the Livermore Laboratory to support atomic weapons research. LANs spread to the public sector in the late 1970s and were used to create high-speed links between several large central computers at one site. Of many competing systems created at this time, Ethernet and ARCNET were the most popular.



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TECH FOCUS

BCS IT Expo 2008

Gadgets galore woo many

EDWARD APURBA SINGHA

THE Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS) organised a weeklong mega exposition of IT accessories, BCS IT Expo 2008, at ECS Computer City in Dhaka. The fair began March 30 and will continue through April 5.

This year BCS has selected a different venue, ECS Computer City, in order to make the event more accessible to the people, especially for the students and mid-income people. The IT Expo 2008 is occupying a space of about 1,00,000 square feet and 276 companies are displaying their products from 300 outlets.

BCS said they have dedicated this year's fair to the students. The organisers have arranged transports for students from 20 select academic institutions. Mustafa Jabbar, president of BCS, told StarTech that this year "we plan to pick up near about 3,000 students and we're showing them the fair with special care so that they can be familiar with technology and become attracted to IT innovations".

"After this fair, we're also planning to organise ICT shows in different parts of the country where university students will get the opportunity to showcase their innovative projects", Jabbar said.

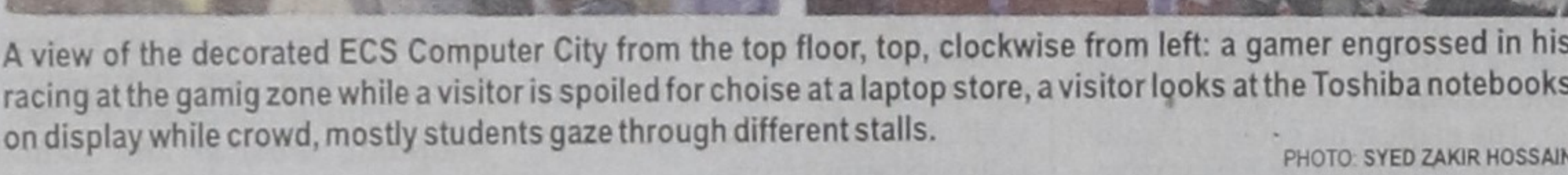
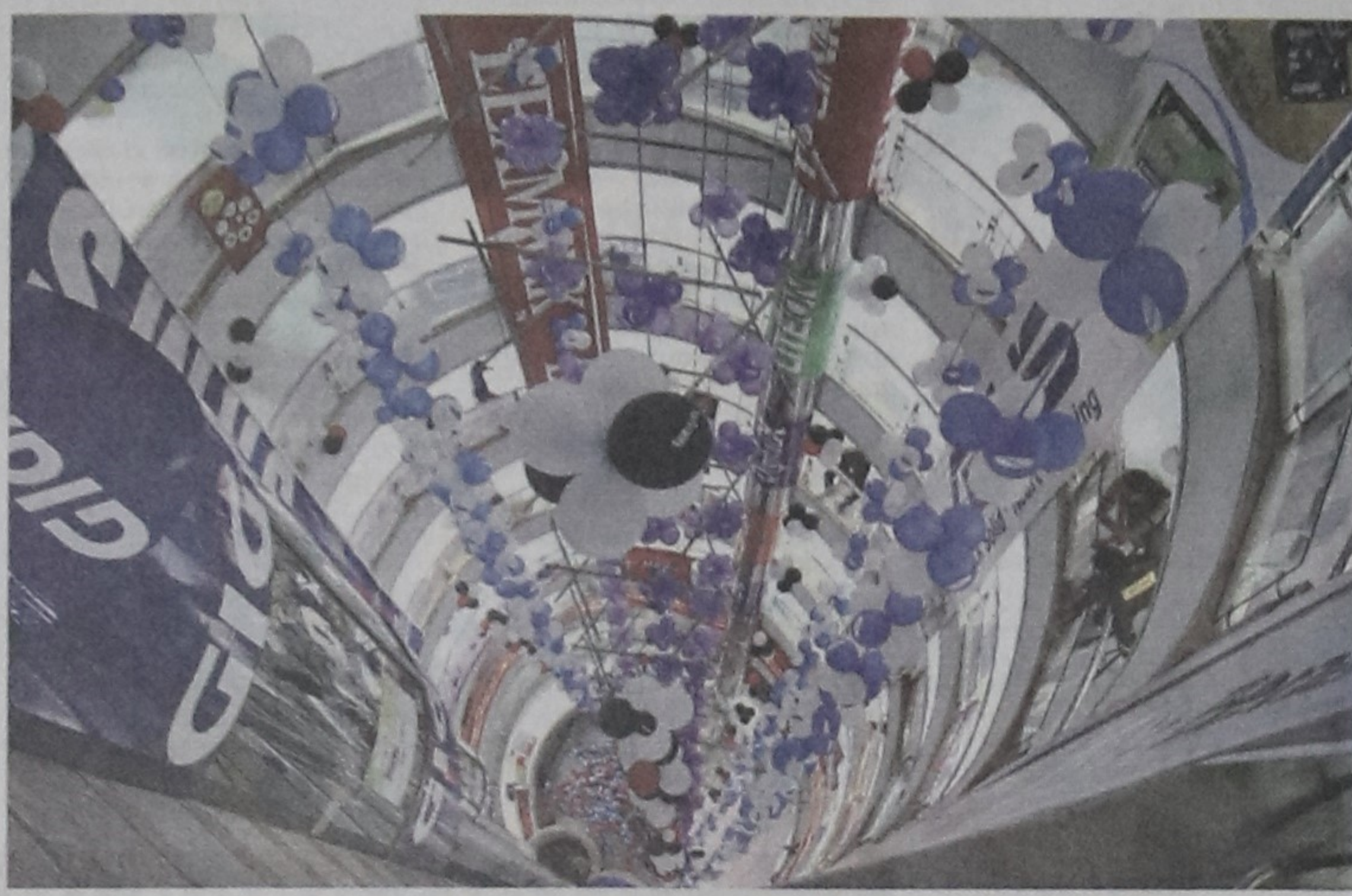
Different IT vendors are offering discount prices, gifts and other facilities to the visitors at the fair. People are also streaming into the expo in order to buy products at reasonable prices. Some show up just to get familiar with new gadgets or to hang around there.

Notebook craze

This year people are showing interest in laptops, stylish monitors, high-resolution printers and cheap PC packages.

Acer has come up with laptops with attractive prices. Acer Aspire 4715ZNXMi features Intel dual-core mobile processor, Linpus Linux basic edition, wide screen TFT LCD, 512 MB DDR2 RAM, 120 GB SATA HDD, and DVD writer and is priced at Tk 54,800.

International Office Machine Ltd (IOM) has brought different Toshiba laptops. The price for a Toshiba satellite laptop ranges from Tk 47,900 to Tk 81,000. Global Brand Pvt Ltd is offering Asus Eee laptop with free pen drive. The Eee laptop features



A view of the decorated ECS Computer City from the top floor, top, clockwise from left: a gamer engrossed in his racing at the gamig zone while a visitor is spoiled for choice at a laptop store, a visitor looks at the Toshiba notebooks on display while crowd, mostly students gaze through different stalls.

PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Intel Mobile CPU and Chipset, 512 MB (DDR2), 4GB solid-state disk, card reader, hi-definition audio stereo speaker microphone, mid-range battery etc. This small laptop weighs 0.92 kg and is capable of running on both Linux and Windows platforms.

Printers and Digital Cameras

IT vendor Computer Source Ltd has come up with different Lexmark printers. Lexmark inkjet photo printer models

Z1320 and Z1420 (wireless photo printer) are selling between Tk 5,000 and Tk 7,200. The prices of Lexmark all-in-all printers such as Lexmark X1290, X4270 and X8350 range between Tk 6,000 and Tk 18,000. Lexmark high-end colour laser printers are offered at Tk 2,50,000. J.A.N. Associates Ltd has come up with Canon printers and scanners for home and corporate users. Canon printers on offer include large format printer, inkjet etc. J.A.N. is also displaying different

Canon brand digital cameras.

Apple magic

Satcom Computers Limited is exhibiting different Apple products from their outlets. Among them, iPod, MacBook, iMac, Mac Mini, Apple Cinema Display, Mac Pro and MacBook Air have got huge responses from the visitors. iPod variations include iPod classic (silver/black-80GB/160GB), iPod Shuffle (silver/blue/green/black-1GB),

iPod touch (black-8GB/16B) and iPod nano (silver/blue/green/black-4GB/8GB).

Display technology sets new trend

Due to smart designs and affordable prices, LCD monitors have become the first choice of the technology lovers. Benq has brought LCD monitors of different models such as T51WA (Tk 12,500), G700 (Tk 14,500), E700 (Tk 15,500), E900W (Tk 17,500), T201W (Tk 21,000) and FP222W (Tk 26,000). Prices for Asus monitors range between Tk 16,000 to Tk 48,000.

PC packages

PCs have become an important component in our daily life. So people have rushed to the fair in order to buy PCs at affordable prices. Akij Computer Ltd is offering complete PC packages between Tk 16,000 to Tk 28,600. Intirex Trade has come up with PC solutions that range from Tk 18,200 to Tk 42,900 in price.

Gaming and Internet Zones

Children, however, rush to the game zone of the fair. The game zone remains open from 10:30am to 6:30pm. The internet zone, sponsored by Akij Online, is also drawing people, especially teenagers, in large numbers.

A university student, Sabbir, said, "The fair does not showcase any new technologies. All the gadgets are not new to me. We must distinguish between a computer market and a computer fair."

A software engineer said, "Every year I participate in this kind of event. I like it because the fair gives me update information about new IT accessories. I hope more telecom technologies will be exhibited at the fair in the near future".

Abdullah H Kafi, managing director of J.A.N. Associates Ltd, told StarTech that "computer fair usually turns into a place for selling products. But it is not the ultimate goal of an IT exposition. An IT fair can be a platform for introducing new age technologies. At this moment we need solution-oriented approach in order to make this event more valuable to the general people. If we get concrete output, we can put pressure on the government to increase contributions to the ICT sector".

TECH VIEWS

National ICT Roadmap

Another light at the end of the tunnel

NAFID IMRAN AHMED

IN October 2002, a national ICT policy was approved with the aim of building an ICT-driven nation, comprising a knowledge-based society, by the year 2006. Even after two years, we have not been able to achieve the goals and very little has been done.

So far, only a few government ministries and offices have attained limited e-government capability and adopted ICT in their work processes.

Keeping this in mind, Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) is developing a national ICT roadmap/action plan for the first time in Bangladesh, with the help of the World Bank's 'Support for Development of Public Sector Use of ICT under EM/ITAP' project.

Government for the Third Millennium (gov3), a global strategic consultancy company that helps governments to accelerate the benefits of IT-enabled change and has experience in working with over 30 countries, is acting as project consultant for the roadmap.

Their main objective is to build a short, medium and long-term national ICT action plan or road map for Bangladesh on the basis of National ICT Policy 2002 that provides detailed action plan for the use of ICT in Bangladesh's development efforts and development of the local ICT sector as a whole and in particular spheres.

Based on the synopsis of the action plan, a discussion was held at the BCC premises on April 1. Members of the local business community and civil society were present at the session.

Chris Parker, managing partner of gov3 limited, identified several problems that hindered the ability to transform the 2002 ICT policy into action, which includes unclear and un-coordinated governance structures and pro-

cesses, lack of effective cross government programme management, lack of skills and capabilities.

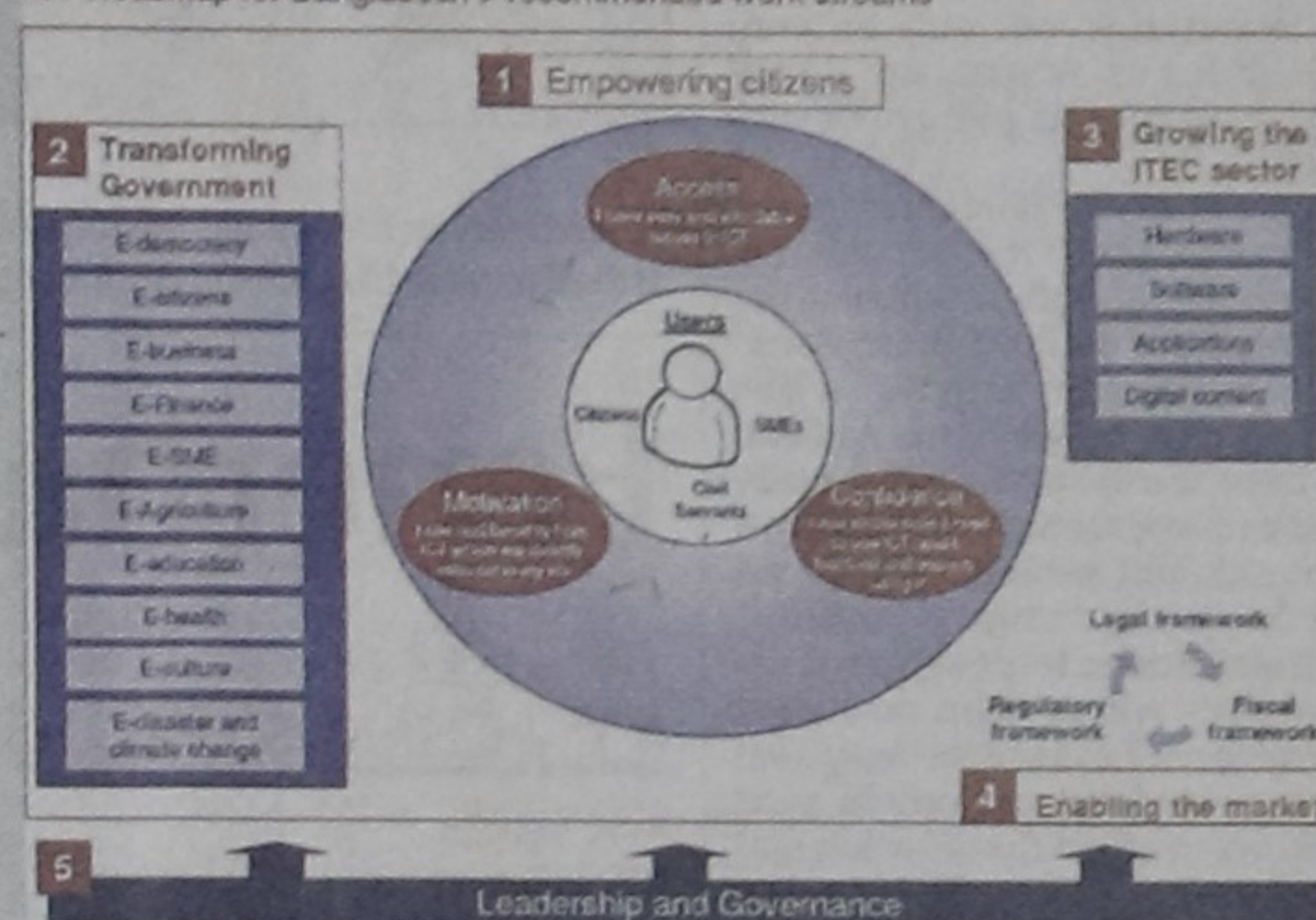
"It was an implementation approach which has ended to be focused on government delivery rather than facilitation and enablement of private and voluntary sector solutions," he said.

He mentioned that the recently published e-government Horizon report, while setting out an excellent analysis of Bangladesh's prob-

lems, applications and digital content development, enabling the market with legal, fiscal and regulatory framework, and working on leadership and governance.

Elizabeth Muller, director of Emerging Markets, were also present at the session and presented an introductory paper on the project where she mentioned that Bangladesh is falling behind compared to other countries in the region on key Information Society indicators except for the

ICT Roadmap for Bangladesh - recommended work streams



lems and recommending many sensible actions to address them, suffered like previous government reports in not giving a clear sense of priorities amongst the actions or a plan for implementing them.

Parker also presented a set of recommendations for the ICT roadmap. They include empowering users by providing easy and affordable access to ICT, motivating them so that they see real benefits from ICT which are directly relevant to their livelihood, making them feel confident in ICT skills and making them feel trusted and secured, transforming the government by implementing portal-based services for different segments, growing the ITEC sector in hardware, soft-

ware, applications and digital content development, enabling the market with legal, fiscal and regulatory framework, and working on leadership and governance.

Elizabeth Muller, director of Emerging Markets, were also present at the session and presented an introductory paper on the project where she mentioned that Bangladesh is falling behind compared to other countries in the region on key Information Society indicators except for the

mobile phone use, which has exploded since 2001. She also mentioned that the slow progress is not because Bangladesh lacks major strengths to build on or due to lack of attention, rather the problems lie in institutional and governance constraints in taking effective government action.

Forkan Bin Quasem, CEO, Spectrum Engineers and Consortium Limited, said "In order to implement the plan, the partnership of the private sector with the government is mandatory".

Almas Kabir, CEO, MetroNet said, "The price of broadband internet should be slashed down." Project Director Dr Kamal Uddin Ahmed was also present.

Kaspersky antivirus launched

STARTECH DESK

OFFICE Extract, local distributor of Kaspersky, a renowned antivirus product, announced the availability of the product in the local market at a kick-off event on April 2 at Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre.

Alexander Nathusin, business development manager of Kaspersky, Russia, officially inaugurated the product, says a press release.

"Although the antivirus



market in Bangladesh is very small, we would be able to increase the number of users soon by offering the product at a lower rate than other existing

products in the market," said Prabir Sarkar, CEO of Office Extracts.

"We believe through this the practice of purchasing legal as well licensed software would increase in the country, he added mentioning that they have kept the buying capacity of the people in mind while pricing the product.

Roy also elaborated the business prospects and technical aspects of the Kaspersky.

The price of the anti-virus has been fixed at Taka 699 for home users.

PHOTO TECH



MEET APRI-POKO

Researcher for Japanese electronics giant Toshiba, Daisuke Yamamoto, displays the prototype model for the new desktop-sized robot called the "Apri-Poko", which can recognize human voices and operate electronic devices such as televisions and air conditioners, at the company's laboratory in Kawasaki, Kanagawa prefecture on March 31. The company claims the 27-cm tall robot can learn human languages, like infant speech development.

PHOTO: AFP

TECH NEWS

ADC Krone unveils TrueNet network products in local market

STARTECH DESK

ADC Krone, a global leader in connectivity and cabling infrastructure solutions, unveiled their latest range of TrueNet network products and services in Bangladesh at an event 'Strategies for implementing reliable Data Centre' on March 31 at a local hotel.

ADC Krone offers structured cabling solutions, complete network and Data Centre solutions. Computer Services Limited is the local distributor for ADC Krone products in Bangladesh.

"The business landscape of Bangladesh is changing. There is a robust growth in the economy with a noticeable increase in telecoms sector, ISPs, banks and financial institutions," said Navin Mathew, sales director, Enterprise Networks, ADC Krone, India and SAARC.

IP adoption in Bangladesh is on the rise, so is the broadband/internet penetration, and there are almost one lac PC owners adding in every year, Navin informed.

Navin also mentioned how network infrastructure is unquestionably a key element that will drive and sustain this momentum of growth. His company has been in the networking business for 75 years and provides products and services that enable the profitable delivery of high-speed internet, video, data, and voice services to residential, business and mobile subscribers worldwide.

At present Grameen Phone is one of ADC Krone's customers in Bangladesh and the company wishes to expand their business here through Computer Services Limited.

Neeraj Lijhara, national channel manager, Enterprise Network, India demonstrated different products and solutions of ADC Krone which included, TrueNet Category 5e, 6, Copper Ten and Fiber Cabling solutions, Physical Layer Management and Data



Navin Mathew speaks at the event

Centre Infrastructure Design.

He also highlighted some of the features of LSA Plus contact technology, glide cable management and highlighted on several topics such as building a robust LAN cabling infrastructure, how Data Centre cabling is different from LAN cabling, networking standards.

IT Managers, CTO/CIO, Systems Integrators, Network Consultants, Network Designers and channel partners in the IT hardware/Networking sector participated at the event.