

# "As we move forward, we bring you closer"

## Grameenphone and Bangladesh Post Office



بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ



President  
People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Dhaka  
17 Agrahayan 1415  
01 December 2008

### Message

I am delighted to learn that Bangladesh Post Office is going to launch mobile phone based commercial services in collaboration with Grameenphone Limited for providing services to the rural people.

Postal Department is one of the oldest service-oriented institutions in the country. I believe the introduction of commercial services for rural people would ventilate new and diverse momentum in the activities of Bangladesh Post Office.

I wish the continued success of Bangladesh Post Office.

Allah Hafez, Bangladesh Zindabad.

Professor Dr. Iajuddin Ahmed



Chairman  
Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC)

### Message

It is indeed an outstanding event for our post and telecommunication sector that Bangladesh Post Office has taken the initiative for increasing the income of extra-departmental employees in an alternative way through Telecommunication. Bangladesh Post Office is the first and the oldest centers of communication that connected 85,000 villages. The network of this organization is extended up to grassroots level of the country with a view to providing postal services to the people at an affordable price. The extra-departmental employees of rural post offices have been serving the people at the grassroots level relentlessly for quite a long time in exchange of a fixed honorarium.

BTRC strives on the expansion of the telecommunication sector across the country efficiently and cost-effectively. So the common goal of these two organizations leads to the ultimate development of the country. I thank this creative initiative of Bangladesh Post Office and wish a grand success of this programme.

Major General Manzurul Alam, ndc, psc (Retd.)



CEO  
Grameenphone Ltd.

### Message

I am extremely pleased to see how far the agreement we signed with the Bangladesh Post Office only a couple of months ago has progressed in such a short time.

As this is not the first private-public initiative undertaken by Grameenphone, we have seen from our experience that such initiatives work – not only to bring a new dimension to the public services, but in ways that benefit the general people of this country.

I am confident that the 24,000 special SIM Cards that we are supplying to the employees of the post office will usher in another new dimension to the services provided by the Bangladesh Post Office, particularly in the rural areas.

This partnership will enable revenue generating source for the rural post-office employees as well as the central BPO, and will in turn enable the rural people access to modern telecommunication solutions.

The foresight of the authorities of the BPO should be acknowledged and applauded for initiating this project and keeping one of the oldest forms of communications that the world has ever known alive and even more relevant in the modern world.

I am confident that the partnership will bear testament to the reaches of technology and what we can do collectively to reduce the digital divide in Bangladesh.

Currently the SIMs we have provided to the BPO blends Flexiload facilities with our voice and data products and services along with HealthLine. We are looking forward to introduce our upcoming innovative features, which the postmen can then extend to their customers in the rural areas – providing a win-win situation for all.

May this project meet and exceed all expectations!

Oddvar Hesjedal

### Mobile Phones in Rural Post Offices: New Horizon of Opportunities

Bangladesh Post Office (BPO) is an attached department of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications. This department is serving the people with its 9887 outlets throughout the country. The main objective of Bangladesh Post Office is to provide regular and speedy postal service with minimum cost. Bangladesh Post Office has been operating its services for quite a long period of time with public confidence in spite of its limited resources. Besides providing postal services, Bangladesh Post Office is trying to create a level playing field between the people of urban and rural areas by creating free and continuous flow of money, information, education and culture.

Majority of the postal network of Bangladesh Post Office comprises of post offices situated at distant rural areas in Bangladesh. In those rural areas, Bangladesh Post Office has been conducting its operations through over twenty four thousand employees in over eight thousand Extra Departmental Post Offices. The lion's share of the manpower of Bangladesh Post Office is employed in those post offices. In those post offices, there are 1 Postmaster (departmentally known as Extra Departmental Agent or EDA/ Extra Departmental Sub-Post Master or EDSPM), 1 Postman (departmentally known as Extra Departmental Delivery Agent or EDDA) and 1 Runner (departmentally known as Extra Departmental Mail Carrier or EDMC). At present, those 3 kinds of employees are receiving an average of BDT 700.00 (Bangladeshi Taka Seven Hundred) only per mansem as a fixed honorarium. In these days of price hike, it is next to impossible to lead a decent life with this poor amount of honorarium. For this reason, those employees have ceased to work earnestly and sincerely, which is lowering the quality of postal services throughout the country. Government of Bangladesh has been seriously thinking of increasing their monthly income. However, due to resource constraints, this increase could not be brought about from the own fund of the Government.

Against the above backdrop, the Government has decided to provide SIM Cards to all the extra departmental employees of the Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices (EDBOs) and Extra Departmental Sub-Post Offices (EDSOs) of Bangladesh Post Office. This decision has been taken keeping in view the following things: (a) It will be an alternative income source for them, (b) It will involve them in the most effective method of generating income as is recognized in the present world (c) It will pave the way for spreading the telecommunications services in the rural areas of the country that will minimize the digital divide that lie between the concepts of the haves and have-nots, urban and rural, developed and underdeveloped etc.

In order to implement the above decision of the Government, Bangladesh Post Office published notices for Expression of Interests (EOI) from the mobile phone operators in the country following the prevalent rules and regulations. A total of 3 companies responded to the EOI. The evaluation of EOI found Grameenphone Limited as the most responsive and compliant to the terms and conditions as well as other modalities set in the EOI notice. Consequently, an agreement was signed in this regard between Grameenphone Limited and Bangladesh Post Office on September 24, 2008 A.D.

Today, this service is going to be inaugurated by deploying a total of 2188 SIM Cards in the first phase under the agreement among the Postmasters of Dhaka Postal Circle and Barisal Administrative Division.

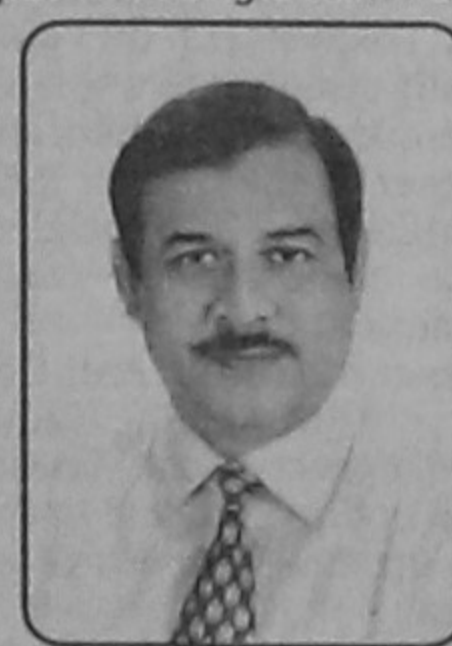
Future Areas of Prospects Hovering around the Service under Consideration:

Bangladesh Post Office thinks that this service has a far reaching prospect. Some of the prospective areas of applications are delineated below:

- > Delivering the traditional postal services by converting them into 'Value Added' services with the help of mobile phones. For example, introduction of mobile money orders, banking and insurance related transactions through mobile phones, collection and dissemination of information, tracking and tracing of postal mail articles through mobile phones.
- > Helping to reach the services of other companies in the doorsteps of the people by using the extensive network of Bangladesh Post Office and mobile phone based services.
- > Redesigning the 'Service Portfolio' of Bangladesh Post Office keeping in view the new mobile phone based services.
- > Involving itself in dispensing various services in the distant rural areas for the sake of spreading the use of information technology in those areas.
- > Performing various important tasks of the Government speedily with the help of information and communications technology, which require sufficient and regular manpower and logistic set-up to carry them out and for which Government needs manpower at the grassroots level.
- > Conducting operations for ensuring the participation and involvement of rural people in the employments relating to that arise out of the economic order hovering around mobile phones in the future.
- > Working relentlessly for spreading information and communications technology in the rural areas.
- > Playing roles in introducing the rural communities with information and communication technology, modernizing them and getting them into the main stream of national development in terms of socio-economic activities.
- > Facilitating the accomplishment of activities regarding important aspects of our national life like education, health, culture and other socio-político-economic activities.
- > Last but not the least, playing strong role in achieving Millenium Development Goals and reducing national poverty by combining the strengths and opportunities physical communications with those of electronic communications.

Post Office is one of the oldest organization of the country, in other words of the world. It has a long and glorious tradition of serving the society. However, the scope of operations of post offices has drastically shrunk for the amazing development in information and communication technology. Under these circumstances, the post offices around the world are passing through a crucial stage. Post offices around the world are being equipped with new services with newer dimensions in their works. To convert those services into 'Value Added' services, postal administrations around the world have embraced modern information and communication technologies. Bangladesh Post Office is not an exception. Despite having resource constraints, Bangladesh Post Office has undertaken new programmes for its modernization. In addition to this, Bangladesh Post Office is on the constant pursuit to introduce new services based on information and communication technologies. Through the introduction of this new service, a new milestone is added in the path of Bangladesh Post Office. We firmly believe that Bangladesh Post Office will move forward with this service and will play a strong role in the development of socio-economic conditions of the people of this country by providing new services with the help of this service.

We thank Grameenphone Limited for extending their all-out cooperation in implementing this unique plan of Bangladesh Post Office. At the same time, we express our sincere congratulations to over twenty four thousand employees of post offices who are the leading players of this service.



A.K.M. Shafiur Rahman  
Additional Director General (Planning)  
Postal Directorate, Dhaka



Special Assistant to Chief Adviser  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Ministry of Posts & Telecommunications  
and Social Welfare Ministry  
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka

### Message

I am pleased to know that Bangladesh Post Offices, in collaboration with Grameenphone Limited, is going to distribute special Grameenphone SIM free of cost to the Postmasters of Extra-departmental Branch Offices (Grameen Post Office) of the country to facilitate the rural people to contact their dear ones at a reasonable expense. This initiative through modern communication will also bring about a positive change in the socio-economic life of the rural people. It will also help the lowest paid extra-departmental employees as well.

On the eve of launching of this programme, I congratulate everyone concerned with this programme.

I wish every success of this programme.

Brigadier General M. A. Malek (Retd.)



DIRECTOR GENERAL  
BANGLADESH POST OFFICE  
DHAKA - 1000  
BANGLADESH

### Message

Today is a day of big-leap-forward for Bangladesh Post Office. 24,000 extra departmental employees of 8,800 village post offices are going to get a mobile phone. With this phone, they will provide necessary communication facility to the rural people. Postmaster will get the financial benefit. They can also sell Flexiload through this phone.

The income estimated for each postmaster is about Tk. 1000 per month. Adding this amount with his monthly allowance of Tk. 750 will ease his family life. On the other hand, this also saves the Government of enhancing their salary, an extra load of about Taka 30 crore per year.

Our project will not stop here. Very soon these mobile sets will start playing key roles for the villagers. Electronic and mobile based services will be expanded to rural post offices. Our Postmasters and staff are eagerly waiting to prove their worth. In fact, it is only post office department who has the capacity and ability to serve the rural mass with electronic services centering our 8,800 rural post offices.

I am thankful to the non-party caretaker Government for helping us with this speedy decision and congratulate Grameenphone for their offer and partnership with us. Thanks to those who worked hard and are working relentlessly to make this partnership a success.

Mobasherur Rahman

Grameenphone has always strived to take communication solutions to the masses, bringing communities and families closer. From that perspective, this partnership with the Bangladesh Post Office is a natural progression.

This agreement between Grameenphone and the Bangladesh Post Office is an example of the great benefits that can be brought to the masses through an effective public-private partnership.

This partnership will not only provide a new revenue stream for the rural post-offices and its employees but in turn will take modern telecommunication solutions to the rural community.

This partnership will positively affect employees in over 8,000 rural Post Offices across the country.

Using these special packages, the rural post office employees will be able to enhance their income by providing Flexiload facilities to the rural communities, specifically in the post office premises. These rural post office employees will also be able to provide basic voice and data services to the deep rural community, effectively changing the role of the post office employees to a mobile communications center.

This will effectively help reduce the digital divide in Bangladesh by taking technology down to the grassroots.

The project will grow over time to incorporate even more services; services that will not only provide the rural people with better communication options, but offer better access to information related to health, education and commerce eventually.



Rubaba Dowla  
Director, Marketing  
Grameenphone Ltd.