approach. By engaging in them, our youth are also developing their skills and capacity as global citizens. Soon we will reach every Union with our training programmes and modify each of our Union Information Centre as Outsourcing Centres."

Union Information and Service Centre (UISC) is also a significant milestone for the government's goal to achieve digital Bangladesh. These UISCs are one stop service outlets operating in 4547 Union Parishads, the lowest tier of local government. At these centres, a citizen can get most government services like public exam results, downloading government forms, online application and university admission, population census data, livelihood or employment information and also photo and mobile phone services.

The efficacy of such automated services is a significant step towards achieving e-governance. After offering several online and automated services, the government is planning to bring the whole governance system under one public network called Bangla Govnet. The primary objective of the project is to ensure internet connectivity in all the districts of Bangladesh by 2014. A National Data Centre is also going to be established to host all the government websites and administrative offices and to connect the offices with each other.

A National Data Centre is also going to be established.

# Leading the Digital Revolution

*The Star* talks to Zunaid Ahmed Palak, State Minister, Ministry of Posts, Telecommunication and Information Technology, about the growth of the ICT sector in Bangladesh



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Zunaid Ahmed Palak

**What were your dreams and visions when you took charge of the ICT division?**

As a young politician I felt very motivated when the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina pledged to build a digital Bangladesh on December 12, 2008. After being elected as the youngest parliamentarian, I was appointed by the Premier as a member of the parliamentary standing committee of the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunication and Information Technology. So I got the opportunity to be involved closely with the initiatives taken during the last five years to develop the ICT sector. After taking charge of the ICT division of the ministry, I am able to effectively continue all the ongoing projects. My vision is to utilise our country's experts of the ICT sector to give people a knowledge and technology based Bangladesh.

**E- governance is an essential part of achieving digital Bangladesh. What are your steps in this regard?**

Establishing e-governance is one of our top most priorities. We have launched a project to include all our government offices and services into one virtual infrastructure called Bangla Govnet. To establish e-governance, we will ensure