

# A PEEK INSIDE BRAINSTATION-23

**NONY KHONDAKER**

Founded in 2006 by a group of BUET graduates, Brain Station-23 is now one of the most prominent names in the IT sector of Bangladesh. We recently interviewed the trio running the show – Mr. Raisul Kabir, Mr. Mizanur Rahman and Mr. MJ Ferdous.

**What inspired you to open up a software development firm?**

While we were in university, we used to do some freelancing work, which helped

us gain some experience. Right after graduation, we started doing it professionally, beginning with a Canadian client.

**What were the main challenges that you had to face throughout your journey?**

The main challenge we faced was trying to make it in the industry all by ourselves. It is quite difficult to survive in the IT industry without having a dedicated team as well as building long-term relationships with the customers and other tech companies.

**Which of your projects are you the most proud of?**

We are probably the most proud of City Touch, the online banking solution for City Bank Limited. City Bank were very ambitious and initially partnered with a foreign company to develop their online banking. However, that company failed to deliver what City Bank had envisioned and ultimately it was us who delivered.

**What things do you wish to achieve moving forward?**

We hope to serve our society and country even better. We are focusing on achieving great things with Industry 4.0

technologies such as AI and ML while also delivering on the traditional market demands.

**What factors do you think will help you go even further?**

We believe our four core values - transparency, excellence, passion and ownership for the services we offer has helped us come this far and will help us grow even further. An IT firm like us also needs a lot of help from the Government and the current Government is doing a great job of it.

**What do you think about the current state of the IT Sector of Bangladesh?**

We are truly amazed and grateful for the various initiatives taken by the Government such as LICT, BCG and BASIS. These initiatives are giving us a fighting chance in the global IT market.

**What suggestions do you have for the IT firms that are just starting out?**

Our suggestion would be to overcome the mental blocks and to be focused while solving problems. Each company should understand its strengths and capitalise on that.



# BJIT: Towards a bigger and brighter tomorrow

**SYEDA ADIBA ARIF**

**How did you start your venture?**

BJIT started its journey on 1 July 2001 in Dhaka, Bangladesh with a team of 10 engineers. Later BJIT Inc was founded in Japan as a group company of BJIT Group.

**What sort of hurdles did you face?**

BJIT was one of the pioneers in creating a business liaison between Bangladesh and Japan IT industry. When BJIT entered the Japanese market, no other Bangladeshi IT software companies existed. The biggest issue became the hurdle of getting the first contract where engineers of a relatively unknown country for IT were to be used. Eventually, it spoke through quality of the Bangladeshi engineers and ever since never to look back.

**What would you say has been your best achievement?**

BJIT started its operation with a team of 10 employees. Today, it stands proud with an astonishing number of 600 employees. We have helped arise interest for global powerhouses like SONY, NTT Docomo, SourceNext, Metso, Valmet, Nokia, KONO, Dassault Systèmes, etc. More over honourable State Minister of Economic and Fiscal Policy of Japan Mr. Toshimitsu Motegi also visited BJIT and shared his valuable experience. Of course, the government has greatly supported BJIT and the entire IT

sector to create an environment where we can grow and take such great leaps forward.

**What do you think of the IT industry of BD? What are the scopes?**

The people of Bangladesh are exceptionally talented, evident in almost every field we have explored. Just like the garment manufacturing industry, the IT industry has now matured enough to exponentially expand. We are now skilled enough to compete with IT service providing giants like India, China, and Sri Lanka. With increasing cost of IT solutions, the tech hub for offshore services will soon shift towards the Bangladesh IT sector. The IT sector has the potential and the scope for becoming the New Silicon Valley of the East.

**What are your expectations in the future?**

Currently BJIT stands at being an SMB with 600 employees. With our current growth rate of 200% since last year, and our attrition rate of 9%, we hope to expand to a company of more than 1000 employees by the end of 2020. By the end of 2025 BJIT aspires to become a company of more than 5000 engineers.

**What do you think will help you to grow your business?**

BJIT is currently operating in Japan, USA, Finland, Singapore, Sweden and



Bangladesh. The Bangladesh government has provided support through subsidised export tax compensation. The infrastructure which we will require to become leaders in the global market is already being developed by the government through the development of Kalia Kaur IT park, faster intercity travels through metro rail, 1700 GBPS of internet bandwidth and subsidized free training for the freshers under the companies that hire them. If we continue to receive the strong support we are being provided by the government, we will continue to grow at the pace which we have acquired. BJIT's group founder Mr. JM Akbar's goal plans to move to Hi-Tech Park, Kaliakair, Gazipur, Dhaka Division with a setup of 5000 Engineers

within 2024 across a land of 8093 square metre.

**What are some of your best projects?**

BJIT is the proudest of its "BJET" (<http://bjet.org/>) program in coalition with Bangladesh ICT ministry and JAICA. The project was initially designed by BJIT to provide onsite engineers to Japanese companies by training them in Japanese Language, Business Etiquette, and Japan-accepted coding quality convention. Moreover, BJIT software development team researched and developed the two-way voice translation technology for Pocketalk device which currently supports 74 languages and works in 109 countries and is the product of SourceNext as the #1 software publisher and distributor in Japan.