



APNIC Director General Jia Rong Low

Bangladesh's internet growth 'just the beginning', says APNIC chief

APNIC Director General discusses IPv6 adoption, policy engagement and internet growth in Bangladesh

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MOHAMMA KAWSAR UDDIN

Jia Rong Low, the newly appointed Director General of the Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC), believes Bangladesh is on the cusp of significant digital transformation. Speaking during the APRICOT 2025 & APNIC 59 conference in Malaysia, Low outlined the country's progress and challenges in areas ranging from IPv6 deployment to policy participation and internet community engagement.

In an exclusive interview, he shared his thoughts on how Bangladesh can sustain its internet development momentum.

Q: How do you view the current state of Bangladesh's internet infrastructure and its operational community?

Bangladesh ranks second among APNIC's direct membership economies and is also the fastest growing. This reflects a robust increase in local internet operator activity. Over the past four years, APNIC has conducted 27 training workshops in Bangladesh—a significant figure that highlights both demand and engagement. This growth contributes not only to the country's digital ecosystem but also to broader economic development. I see this as just the beginning.

Q: What is your view on participation from non-technical actors—such as policymakers and journalists—in technical events like APNIC and APRICOT?

The landscape is shifting. At ICANN, we've seen increasing engagement from policymakers. APNIC has followed a similar trajectory—transitioning from purely technical conversations to a more inclusive environment where community members with policy

interests are contributing. A notable example is Shaila Sharmin from Bangladesh, co-chair of the Policy SIG. We're also seeing greater interest from regional regulators and journalists, though participation often depends on the relevance of the topic. For instance, a discussion on WHOIS policy might seem dry, but when privacy and legal frameworks enter the debate, it becomes widely engaging.

Q: With significant membership in Bangladesh, what are APNIC's regular activities for local members? How might this support evolve?

We've focused heavily on training—those 27 workshops I mentioned are part of a broader strategy. We also work with local Network Operator Groups (NOGs), providing a platform for ongoing engagement. I recently updated our strategic plan with three main pillars, one of which is creating a knowledge exchange space. This means unifying various platforms—our blog, podcast, mailing lists, and conferences—to foster more cohesive dialogue.

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IPv6 deployment has risen from 2% to 19%, largely driven by big players. But smaller operators lag behind. The challenge is to identify whether more training is the answer, or if other incentives or interventions are needed. We're committed to working with the community to find out.

Q: Bangladeshi members currently benefit from a discounted fee as an LDC. With graduation forecast for 2027, what's APNIC's

plan regarding membership fees?

APNIC's policy grants a 50% discount for members from least developed countries (LDCs). If Bangladesh graduates from LDC status, the discount would no longer apply. This policy isn't determined by us—it's tied to UN classifications. Graduation would reflect Bangladesh's economic progress, which should be celebrated. However, we recognise that some smaller members may face challenges. In such cases, we're open to working with them on adjusted payment schedules.

Q: Are you satisfied with Bangladesh's IPv6 progress? What more can APNIC do?

The growth is encouraging, but there's a long way to go. Different economies adopt IPv6 in different ways. In India, Reliance Jio's decision to move to IPv6 created a ripple effect. In other cases, government policy plays a major role. We're ready to support in whichever way helps—be it more training, awareness for C-level executives, or policy engagement. The key is identifying which levers will move the adoption needle.

Q: Is APNIC currently engaging with the Bangladeshi government on IPv6 deployment within public organisations?

I'm planning to visit Bangladesh, hopefully during bdNOG in May, and I look forward to meeting with government officials. This engagement will help us align resources with national priorities. Governments across the region are generally supportive of IPv6, and with global adoption crossing the 50% mark this year, we have compelling data to support our advocacy. We hope to collaborate more closely with the government and other stakeholders in Bangladesh during this visit.

E-commerce marketing 101: Turning browsers into buyers

K.M. IFTESHAM ISLAM

Imagine waking up to find your favourite online store offering the exact product you've been searching for—at a discounted price. Ever wondered how that happens? That's the magic of e-commerce marketing, where businesses use innovative strategies to reach customers at the right time.

In today's digital age, simply having an online store isn't enough. Understanding how to market products effectively is the key to standing out in the crowded e-commerce world. Whether you're a beginner stepping into this field or a business owner aiming to boost sales, mastering e-commerce marketing can open doors to endless opportunities.

Understanding e-commerce marketing for beginners

Dr Md. Iftekharul Amin, an academician and professor at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), University of Dhaka, explains the term: "E-commerce stands for electronic commerce, which is all about driving people to an online store and converting them into customers by promoting an online store to increase sales. It involves various tactics to attract visitors and convert them into customers."

M M Rizvi Khan, Founder & CEO of the digital marketing firm Rocket Rocker, says, "The first and foremost criterion for success in e-commerce marketing is having basic IT skills. Entrepreneurs should develop skills like website development and SEO

and even data analytics. These tools empower beginners to navigate the digital landscape effectively."

Required key skills

A successful e-commerce marketer must first and foremost understand their target audience. It's about more than just demographics; it's about grasping customer needs, challenges, and expectations. Understanding the

marketing, as they are crucial for establishing a strong foundation." Rizvi continues, "Another essential skill is market and product research. Identifying reliable sources for products and analysing market demand is vital for success in e-commerce marketing."

Combining social media marketing and SEO

like blogs and product guides, helps drive organic traffic while social media amplifies reach and engagement. Data-driven insights from both channels help refine strategies based on user behaviour. Beginners who focus on meaningful engagement, clear communication, and continuous learning will see steady growth," he adds.

Md. Ashaduzzaman Nour, Digital Marketing & SEO Expert at Daffodil Family, says, "When a customer searches for something online, the first website that appears is likely the one they'll visit. There's a 95% chance they will purchase from that site. The primary goal of an e-commerce site should be to sell products using SEO and social media marketing."

Preparing for the future

The e-commerce landscape is rapidly evolving. Trends like AI, machine learning, personalisation, and voice search are shaping the future. New entrepreneurs need to stay ahead of the curve.

Dr Iftekharul advises, "New entrepreneurs should prioritise customer centric innovation, leverage scalable tools, and build authentic relationships. Staying agile and data-informed will be critical in navigating the dynamic e-commerce landscape."

E-commerce marketing is an exciting and ever-changing field. By mastering its fundamentals, gaining hands-on experience, and staying informed about new trends, beginners can find success in this thriving industry."

right product for the right customer is key to satisfaction. Sajedur adds, "E-commerce marketers must focus on learning to make data driven decisions and conduct result-oriented experiments to optimise their strategies."

M M Rizvi Khan, Founder & CEO of the digital marketing firm Rocket Rocker, says, "The first and foremost criterion for success in e-commerce marketing is having basic IT skills. Entrepreneurs should develop skills like website development and SEO



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

What to expect at the Bangladesh Investment Summit

MD. ZAHIDUR RABBI

The Bangladesh Investment Summit, set to take place from 7 to 10 April at Hotel InterContinental Dhaka, aims to strengthen investment opportunities in the country.

Who's attending?

Over 550 foreign investors from 50 countries have registered to participate, alongside more than 2,300 Bangladeshi investors, according to BIDA.

The event will focus on networking and direct engagement between investors and key government bodies, including the NBR and the Ministry of Commerce. Representatives from political parties will also have the opportunity to interact with investors separately.

Top officials of Meta, Uber, Zara Group, DP World, Giordano, Telenor, Excelerate Energy, and Samsung are scheduled to participate in the investment summit, among others.

Additionally, leading venture capital firms such as B Capital, Gobi, Conjunction, Marubeni, and GFR will take part, focusing on startup investments and the expansion of the

digital economy.

What's in the plans?

As part of the summit's activities, foreign investors will visit key industrial zones, including the Japanese Economic Zone in Narayanganj and the Korean EPZ in Chattogram. The programme will also feature sessions on renewable energy, agriculture, and healthcare, with support from organisations such as the UNDP, HSBC, and the World Bank.

The Chief Advisor to the Government of Bangladesh will officially inaugurate the summit on 9 April, joined by diplomats, policymakers, and business leaders.

Is Starlink coming?

Starlink, the satellite internet service operated by Elon Musk's SpaceX, will conduct a demonstration of its connectivity services on 9 April at the Bangladesh Investment Summit, according to the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA).

However, this will not mark the commercial launch of Starlink in the country, as further regulatory and logistical steps are required before its official rollout.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

Optimizely

Senior Staff Software Engineer (Frontend)



Deadline: N/A

Eligibility:

• Bachelor's degree in computer science or a related field, or equivalent experience, with prior experience in React and TypeScript.

Minimum experience: 3-8 years

University of Asia Pacific

Deputy Registrar



Deadline: April 10

Eligibility:

• Master's degree in any discipline with a good academic background, and progressively relevant experience in academic administration or university governance.

Minimum experience: 7 years

Akij Venture Limited



Manager Export, Sales & Marketing (Malaysia & UAE)

Deadline: April 20

Eligibility:

• Masters'/MBA in any discipline from a reputed university. Major in Marketing is preferable.

Minimum experience: 5-10 years

WaterAid Bangladesh



Hygiene Behaviour Change Communication Expert

Deadline: April 5

Eligibility:

• Master's in social science or relevant field, with prior experience in a development organisation, preferably in an international organisation and in the Health, Hygiene, and Gender fields.

Minimum experience: 5 years

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"Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far they can go."



T.S. Eliot