

Digitisation gets a boost

Public offices in Dhaka connected with district headquarters by fibre optic links

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government has moved a step closer to its Digital Bangladesh vision by connecting public offices in Dhaka with district and upazila headquarters through a high-speed fibre optic network.

The information and communication technology ministry has also built a network of internet protocol telephony for public offices to ensure better communication.

The services under a project — National Backbone Network of Bangladesh Government or BanglaGovNet — were launched at a programme at Sonargaon Hotel in Dhaka yesterday.

The project connects 58 ministries and 227 government directorates in Dhaka with the district headquarters and 64 upazila-level offices.

The government set up an optical fibre network stretching 43 kilometres within the capital. State-owned Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Ltd and a private firm Fiber@Home will provide backup support for the district and upazila-

level connectivity, said Mahbubur Rahman, project director of BanglaGovNet. The project cost Tk 307 crore, of which Tk 245 crore came from Korea as soft loans.

Ismat Ara Sadique, state minister for public administration, said there is no alternative to e-governance to ensure people's access to information.

Zunaid Ahmed Palak, state minister for ICT division, said they have another ongoing project — Infosarkar 2 — that will connect the rest of the 487 upazilas with the capital, and the services will be available from September.

Through this connectivity, the government takes its services to people's doorsteps, which will bring transparency and reduce corruption, Palak said.

Once the Infosarkar 2 project takes off, all the offices, even at the grassroots levels, will come under monitoring as digital signatures and e-filing systems have been introduced, officials said.

Shyam Sunder Sikder, ICT division secretary, Lee Yun-young, Korean ambassador, and SM Ashraful Islam, executive director of Bangladesh Computer Council, also spoke at the programme.

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