



Seminar on '*New business opportunities after opening of digital payments*'

Address of **Dr. Atiur Rahman**, Governor, Bangladesh Bank

Organized by:

**Bangladesh Association of Software and
Information Services (BASIS)**

10 February, 2010

Chief Guest

Mr. President and office bearers of BASIS, distinguished guests including ICT professionals and ICT using decision makers; assalamu alaikum and a very good afternoon to you all.

I am happy to be with you here in this BASIS seminar on new business opportunities opened up by the go ahead for e-payments given recently by Bangladesh Bank as the country's payment systems regulator. Even with the limited urban centered ICT infrastructure now available in Bangladesh, opening up of e-payments or digital payments should significantly enhance the ease of concluding payment transactions within and between businesses, individuals and public institutions. I see this as a crucially important step forward in realizing the government's overarching vision of 'digital Bangladesh' with extensive use of ICT in all spheres of social life, public and private. Automated clearing of cheques and electronic fund transfers soon to commence in BACH under BB supervision will further facilitate digital payments.

Besides countrywide extension of the ICT connectivity backbone, the e-governance agenda under the digital Bangladesh vision will entail explosive growth in requirements of diverse range of software and data management services; you will be deliberating upon this issue in detail in this seminar. I am no technology geek to fully comprehend the nature and extent of all these requirements, but I can see that the opportunities ahead for ICT professionals are immense. The challenges facing you in rapid capacity building are clearly just as immense, because we won't wish to see Bangladesh rendered heavily dependent on external expertise in installing and running the vast ICT infrastructure for e-payments and e-governance. We look forward to substantive engagement of the bright young crop of local ICT professionals alongside external experts in installation and commissioning of various components of the ICT

infrastructure; in the process acquiring know how and skills for running, maintaining and customizing the systems installed. The expertise and skills thus acquired by local ICT professionals will hopefully make possible major breakthroughs in export of ICT services from Bangladesh, which has remained small thus far.

ICT sector entrepreneurs are welcome to financing support by way of equity participation from the government's EEF, and challenge fund grants under the DFID supported RPP project of BB in developing and implementing ICT projects and innovative payment service solutions. We at BB will remain open to ideas and suggestions about further policy support options for development of e-payments and the broader ICT sector.

Let me conclude here with thanks for your patient attention, wishing the best success for this seminar and the BASIS SoftExpo 2010.
