

# SoftExpo running strong



PHOTO: RASHED SUNON

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I knew I was in big 'trouble' when I was assigned to cover 2011 edition of BASIS SoftExpo, the flagship software exposition in Bangladesh!

Sounds weird, doesn't it? If anyone follows SoftExpo since its inception back in 2003, he or she would find that it has not only matured as the largest showcase for software products, IT enabled services and ICT system solutions in the country, but also became the platform of learning what technologies and products are forthcoming, to rock us, especially the business world.

In my experience, this year's exposition has grown bigger and better than ever before. With the current background of national level strategic initiatives for 'Digital Bangladesh', BASIS (Bangladesh Association for Software and Information Services) has put its highest efforts to host a spectacular and grand event to showcase the strength of the ICT industry.

About 110 local and 10 European companies are participating at the five-day event that began on February 1 at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital.

So, what can be found in the exposition?

The fair has been designed keeping the focus on the potential enterprise clients and their necessities in mind, said Rafiqul Islam Rubel, assistant director of the IT department of Daffodil Group, a participant of the event.

Their featured products include enterprise resource planning (ERP) solutions ERP v.10 and JTS v.20, an employees' task management software that manages company's human resources, job tracking system and attendance.

Leads Corporation, one of the largest software solutions providers in the country, mostly focused on two of their products this year, which have been developed for the capital market-related organisations. mBank is a portfolio management solution while the other is a broker back office solution called BlueChip.

"mBank has been developed for the merchant banks operating in the stockmarket to manage portfolio of the margin loan takers from the institutions. On the other hand, BlueChip has been developed for the brokerage houses to manage their investors' portfolio", said Nasr Ullah Md Dilir Khan, a marketing executive of the company.

Grameen Solutions, a sister concern of Grameen family, is participating in the fair

mainly with solutions such as business consultancy, skill enhancing programme, business process outsourcing and job placement portal.

"We have launched a new job portal [gjobs4u.com](http://gjobs4u.com) ahead of the fair and we are mainly focusing on skill development and job placements in the fair", said Nasir Zishan, a sales executive of Grameen Solutions.

Apart from the showcasing of products, services and solutions, SoftExpo also hosts a range of sideline events including seminars and roundtables on policy and strategic issues, technical workshops, product presentations, contests for young talent search, IT job fair, business match making with foreign clients and many more.

Reve Systems, a renowned VoIP products and solutions company, held a seminar on February 3 where speakers discussed on the great potential that lies for Bangladesh to embark on the billion dollar VoIP outsourcing business.

"Bangladesh has been listed as one of the top 30 global outsourcing destinations by Gartner. The country has the right skilled manpower in the IT/ Telecom domains and is very well placed to tap this opportunity", said Habibullah N Karim, former president of Basis at the seminar.

Bangladesh Women in Technology (BWIT) organised a seminar on 'Leveraging the Potential of Women in Information Technology - inclusiveness under Digital Bangladesh and RTI Framework' was also held on the same day.

State minister for Science and ICT Yeafesh Osman was the chief guest while Dr Suraiya Pervin, chairperson of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, University of Dhaka and vice president of BWIT was the keynote speaker.

Luna Shamsuddoha, president of BWIT spoke about the importance of women in the technology industry while Sonia Bashir Kabir BWIT vice president moderated the session.

The most attracting sideline event of the SoftExpo, 'BASIS Freelancer of the year 2011' will be held today at the fair. From a total of 140 competitors, Basis will award 12 freelancers for their contribution to upholding Bangladesh's image in the global IT outsourcing arena.