SLT Broadband to Help Education

Sri Lanka Telecom (SLT} signed an agreement with the Secondary Education Modernization Project (SEMP}, an ADB funded project of the Ministry of Education, to provide broadband internet access to 1,100 schools island wide. Shuhei Anan, CEO SLT, and Anura Dissanayake, Director SEMP/Ministry of Education, signed the agreement. “Education is of extreme importance to the country’s next generation. SLT’s partnership will bring the necessary facilities to improve and enhance the methods of learning and teaching further,’ Anan said. SLT will act as the telecommunications backbone providing high-speed access to data, video, and voice communications in schools and libraries that are working in collaboration with SEMP. The first goal of the project is to upgrade the quality of mathematics and science subjects for students studying for their 0/Levels. The second goal is to provide Internet connections for principals and teachers in these schools to access teacher training and course materials. The SEMP project has significantly helped students who are performing below the national average in these major subject areas. “Two million children will have access to databases and we are proud to be a partner with SLT, which is known for reliability and trustworthiness;’ Dissanayake stated. By the end of this year, SLT hopes to expand the CDMA network island-wide and provide Wimax, which is an emerging technology using radio frequencies, to give broadband wireless access to customers. The project will deliver a set of pathways for poor, rural high school students to close the performance gap between themselves and those in the bigger urban towns. SEMP hopes to increase the number of schools to 5,000, which is 60 percent of the student population by 2010.