



Motorola wants to boost business in Bangladesh

Star Business Report

Regional Manager of Motorola Asia Pacific Ltd John J Jones is now in the city to explore potentials for boosting business in the country's telecommunication sector.

At a press briefing yesterday Jones said that Bangladeshi should be careful while adopting telecom technology and should go for the ones which have the potentials to be developed into third generation technology. He mentioned that CDMA and GSM are those types of technologies which can be easily upgraded to meet the changes.

Subhendu Mohanty, Director (Operation) of Motorola India Ltd, Sabbir Ahmed Khan, Project Manager of Motorola Bangladesh branch office and local Motorola official Taimur Rahman also spoke on the occasion.

Jones also said that Bangladesh's future in software development and its need for telephonic infrastructure with broadband capability would also depend on the choice of the right technology.

Motorola officials said that the company has been doing business in Bangladesh for the last 27 years and is confident about the future growth of this sector.

Regional Head of Corporate Banking of StanChart arrives today



Zahid Rahim, Regional Head of Corporate Banking, South Asia Region of Standard Chartered Bank, will arrive in Dhaka today on a two-day visit. During his visit, he will meet the regulators, corporate customers and executives of the bank, says a press release.

Zahid, who is also the Chief Executive, Levant Region (Lebanon, Jordan/Palestine Group of countries) of Standard Chartered Bank, joined the bank in 1969. He worked in various capacities in Europe before being transferred to Pakistan in 1974. In 1983, he went to Bahrain as Deputy Manager of the Offshore Banking Unit and returned to Pakistan in 1987 as Manager, Karachi. Prior to his appointment as Chief Executive, Pakistan in 1996, he worked in Kenya, as Executive Director of the Corporate & Institutional Banking Division for East Africa covering Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

S'pore mobile operator partners Nokia in 3G network readiness

SINGAPORE, Nov 20: Singapore mobile operator MobileOne Asia (M1) announced Monday a partnership with Norwegian phonemaker Nokia to prepare for the rollout of third-generation (3G) telecommunications services, reports AFP.

The arrangement includes the development of a GSM network by the end of next year as well as the development of products and services for telecommunication systems of the future, M1 said in a statement.

M1 is to invest 500 million Singapore dollars (289 million US\$) over the next five years, covering equipment and services.

"The investment in broadband capacity will enable M1 to satisfy growing demand for non-voice mobile applications such as messaging, mobile commerce, wireless Internet access and imaging," the statement said.

Japanese trade surplus falls 40.8pc in Oct

TOKYO, Nov 20: Japan's trade surplus in October fell 40.8 percent from the previous year to 692.6 billion yen (6.4 billion dollars), the finance ministry said Monday, reports AFP.

Exports in the month rose 8.3 percent to 4,475.3 billion yen and imports jumped 27.6 percent to 3,782.7 billion yen, the ministry said.

## BATEXPO 2000 starts today to boost RMG export

A 3-day apparel and textile show begins here today expecting a further boost to the country's main export products in the world markets, says UNB.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) is organizing the 11th Bangladesh Apparel and Textile Exposition (BATEXPO) 2000, the biggest in Asia Pacific region, at Hotel Sonargaon.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the fair where BGMEA members, local and foreign fabric and accessories companies, computer and engineering firms and service organisations will display their products and services in 79 stalls.

This is a unique opportunity for our buyers to secure the best-quality apparel products at most competitive prices," BGMEA President Anisur Rahman Sinha told a press conference at the BATEXPO 2000.

As of previous years, the organizers will also hold seminars on each of the fair days to share experiences and ideas on issues related to mutual benefit in the international textile and clothing arena. A fashion show will also be staged on the concluding day.

He said while visiting BATEXPO 2000, an annual event since 1989, the buyers could take the opportunity of taking a first-hand view of attractive investment incentives offered by the country.

"We earnestly hope that investors in the backward-linkage industry will evaluate the overall investment climate and take positive decision," Sinha said.

The fair will remain open from 9 am to 9 pm everyday until November 23 to show visitors the range, diversity, quality, fashion, style and price of locally made apparel under a single roof.

Special arrangements have been made to exhibit the ready-stock apparel for direct sale during the fair at the same venue.

Replies to a question, Sinha said despite post-2005

challenges, entrepreneurs are coming up with new units and expansion of their existing units considering the export growth of the sector.

Some 3,100 garment factories are now in operation in the country, up from over 2,000 three years back. Average RMG export growth is over 15 per cent per year, which the BGMEA president predicted to grow at a rate of 10 per cent up to 2005 despite recession and tough competition in the world market.

The growth would continue even after the year 2005 if the infrastructure problem is solved.

"We need a permanent fair venue with large space," Sinha said, adding that the work of BGMEA complex starts January next. As per plan, the complex would have an exhibition centre.

Buyers, buying houses and their representatives from USA, Canada, UK, Germany, Italy, Austria, Finland, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Japan, China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Syria and UAE visited the clothing bazaar in 1999.

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**Organizer**  
Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA)



BGMEA President Anisur Rahman Sinha yesterday speaking at a press conference arranged to mark the BATEXPO 2000 that begins today.

--Star photo



Subhendu Mohanty of Motorola India Ltd makes a point at a press briefing in the city yesterday. Also seen in the picture are John J Jones (2nd from left), Regional Manager of Motorola Asia Pacific Ltd, Sabbir A Khan (extreme right), and local Motorola official Taimur Rahman.

-- Star Photo

## Global child labour report damns West, Asia

NEW DELHI, Nov 20: There are an estimated 250 million child workers globally and although the scourge is rampant in Asia, Western countries too witness the worst forms of child exploitation, a survey said Monday, reports AFP.

Noted Indian anti-child labour activist Kailash Satyarthi, chairman of the international committee of the Global March Against Child Labour, told a news conference here that the physical, emotional and sexual exploitation of the young was a worldwide phenomenon.

Satyarthi confessed to "mixed feelings" while releasing the report, which tabulates child labour, child prostitution and pornography, slavery and children forced to take up arms.

"On the one hand, we live in,

the age of the information technology revolution, globalisation and overwhelming advances.

But this goes side by side with slavery, prostitution, children being bought and sold like animals ... and creating wealth under appalling conditions not for themselves but for others,"

Satyarthi said India, with about 120 million child labourers was the world's worst-affected country, followed by Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Brazil.

"But its existence has been widely noted in Europe, the United States and Canada," he said.

Satyarthi cited the report to prove his claim.

"Of the 25 prostitutes known to be plying their trade in Sudbury, a town in Canada,

half are under 15 and some as young as 11," he said.

The report says the estimated average age of girls who enter street prostitution in San Francisco is 14.

Satyarthi said an estimated 400,000 children under 15 were working as full-time domestic servants in the Indonesian capital Jakarta, while in Uganda, some 4,000 children had been abducted from a single district to fight as child soldiers in the Lord's Resistance Army.

"About 3,000 Albanian children have been trafficked to Italy and Greece for begging and for cleaning windows and cars without pay," he said.

"And 5,000 children were found working in hazardous industries such as fireworks units in Guatemala City."

## Aussie truck drivers protest fuel price rise

MELBOURNE, Nov 20: Truck drivers angry at soaring diesel prices blockaded fuel depots in the southern state of Victoria on Monday, reports AP.

Trucks blocked wharves and all but one of the state's major fuel terminals in the state capital, Melbourne.

"We are not only doing this for ourselves, it is a campaign for everyone who uses petrol," said protest organiser Jerry Brown-Sarre.

"Whether you use it for work, for recreation, for whatever, you are paying too much and this is a chance to let the companies know you are not happy."

Diesel prices have risen from 68 Australian cents per litre (US \$ 1.44 per gallon) a year ago to more than 1 Australian dollar per litre (US \$ 2.12 per gallon).

Brown-Sarre said the blockades would stay in place until the drivers demands for cheaper prices or higher payments for carrying loads were met.

Caltex called police late Sunday to clear the entrance to one of its depots and Shell said it also planned action to ensure fuel could still be distributed.

"We are taking advice and will be taking what action we can to maintain operations," Shell spokesman Vincent Cosgrove said. "Caltex had success last night and we want to resume normal operations."

Victorian motorists' group, the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria, said the state government should step in to preserve fuel supplies.

"Petrol must flow through, the government should invoke emergency legislation if it can't solve this politically by Wednesday," RACV spokesman David Cumming said.

## Rephco opts for GP mobiles

GrameenPhone Limited has recently signed an agreement with Rephco Laboratories Limited under its Corporate Sales Package initiative, says a press release.

Under the agreement Rephco has been provided with GrameenPhone's GP-GP mobile phone connections. Rephco is using the GP mobiles to maintain efficient communication with its factory at Barisal and its countrywide distribution system.

Ferdousur Rahman, Head of Corporate Sales of GrameenPhone, and Didarul Alam, Managing Director of Rephco Laboratories, signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organisations. Senior officials of the two organisations were also present on the occasion.

## RMG exports may cross \$5b this year

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The country is expected to export garments worth more than five billion US dollars this year, said Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) officials.

They said that in the last four months exports from the woven sector alone increased by over 22 per cent from the usual annual seven to eight per cent growth. The knitwear export continued at over 25 per cent.

The BGMEA officials were speaking at a pre-BATEXPO (Bangladesh Apparel and Textile Exposition) press conference.

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Taiwan reports first balance of payments deficit in 2 yrs

TAIPEI, Nov 20: Taiwan reported a balance of payments deficit of 437 million US dollars in its third quarter, marking its first deficit in two years, the central bank said Monday, reports AFP.

The bank attributed the deficit to a sharp surge in demand for US dollars and a fall of foreign equity investment amid a bearish stock market.

The Taiwan Stock Exchange weighted price index has plunged 45.1 percent to 4,845.21 on Monday since President Chen Shui-bian from the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party took office on May 20.

Net outflow of foreign equity investment in the third quarter stood at 131 million US dollars, down from a net inflow of 3.57 billion US dollars year-on-year.

In the meantime, Taiwan posted a current account surplus of 2.87 billion dollars in the third quarter, up from 1.63 billion a year earlier, the bank said.

The current account measures trade in goods and services plus specific financial transfers such as gifts and grants.

The bank recorded a capital account deficit of 42 million dollars in the quarter, narrower than the 58 million deficit a year earlier, on reduced outward remittances by immigrants.

Digital camera sales boost Olympus profit by 146pc

TOKYO, Nov 20: Japan's Olympus Optical Co. Ltd said Monday its group net profit surged 146 percent in the six months to September amid soaring sales of digital cameras at home and abroad, reports AFP.

Olympus said in a statement its interim group net profit stood at 5.3 billion yen (48.6 million dollars), surging 146 percent from a year earlier.

Group revenue rose 5.3 percent to 217.7 billion yen while pre-tax profit rose 11.6 percent to 10.7 billion yen.

"During this first half of fiscal 2000, the Asian economy recovered, led by exports, while the US economy has continued expanding. The European economy has been generally steady," the company said.

Meanwhile, the Japanese economy, mainly manufacturers, has shown signs of gradual recovery, led by IT (information technology)-related investment.

Most analysts say the ringgit peg at 3.8 to the dollar undervalues the local currency. But the currencies of other regional countries have been falling sharply in recent months, making their exports more competitive.

Mohamed Ariff said the slow pace of