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Star BUSINESS

DHAKA TUESDAY APRIL 12, 2005 E-mail: business@thedailystar.net

Whirlpool
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Microwave Oven

TRANSCOM ELECTRONICS

GP reaches 3m subscribers

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

GrameenPhone has reached three million subscribers, the country's leading cellphone operator announced yesterday.

"This is extremely exciting, and we are very happy that as many as three million users until now have made GrameenPhone their preferred mobile phone service provider," said Erik Aas, CEO of GrameenPhone Ltd, in a statement issued by Telenor, which owns 55.5 percent share of the company.

GP has been facing severe competition after Egyptian telecoms giant Orascom Telecoms acquired Sheba Telecom and state-owned Teletalk rolled out its services. Both the companies offered competitive call tariffs. Teletalk created a huge buzz in the sector with its free incoming facility from fixed-line phones of Bangladesh Telegraph

and Telephone Board (BTB), analysts said.

Telecom Malaysia International Bangladesh, the operator of Aktel, also emerged as an aggressive operator following the changing scenario from its "conservatively aggressive" image.

GrameenPhone, which started operations in Bangladesh in 1997, took six years to reach the one million subscribers' mark in August 2003, about one more year to reach two million in September 2004 and just about six months to attain the present three million subscribers' mark.

GP will celebrate its three million subscribers' base through a function tomorrow.

The country's mobile telephone penetration rate, which is still one of the lowest in the world with less than four telephones per 100 people, remained such low due to high call tariffs. Mobile phone tariff in India is one of the lowest in the world and

around 50 percent cheaper than tariffs in neighbouring countries such as Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh, according to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai).

India's low rates owe much to its strong growth of mobile phone services. Mobile phone calls cost US\$ 0.03-0.04 per minute in India against US\$ 0.084 per minute in Pakistan, US\$ 0.11 per minute in Sri Lanka and over US\$ 0.14 per minute in the Maldives. In Nepal and Bangladesh, mobile phone calls cost US\$ 0.065 per minute.

Bangladesh is an attractive market for mobile phone services due to its large population of around 140 million but still the mobile phone penetration rate here is very low, according to Swedish telecoms equipment manufacturer Ericsson. "The potential of adding new subscribers in Bangladesh is enormous. It is estimated that the number of

mobile phone subscribers in Bangladesh will reach around 15 million by the end of 2007," said Kristian Tear, president of Ericsson's South East Asia, recently.

GP with the widest coverage in Bangladesh, is planning to increase the network coverage to 80 percent of the population from the current 55 percent within this year. The company has also recently started to install 1800 MHz frequency base stations in addition to the GSM 900 MHz stations now in use.

"This will greatly improve the quality and call-handling capacity of the base stations and will further improve the overall customer experience," said Erik Aas.

The internationally acclaimed Village Phone Program of GrameenPhone is another unique initiative, which provides telephone services in remote rural areas where no such facilities existed before.

Dhaka Telephone, Huawei sign deal

Dhaka Telephone Company Limited, a local PSTN (public switched telephone network) operator, has signed an agreement with Huawei Technologies of China to procure CDMA network.

Dhaka Telephone will launch voice, data and video services through CDMA WLL telecommunication solution by the end of this year.

Huawei Asia Pacific President Wang Sheng Li, and Dhaka Telephone Managing Director and CEO Quamrul Islam Siddique signed the deal on behalf of their companies in Dhaka on Saturday, says a press release.

Islami Bank, Royal Denim sign agreement

Islami Bank Bangladesh Ltd signed a deed of agreement with Royal Denim Ltd in Dhaka Monday.

Under the agreement, Islami Bank will invest Tk 777.88 million in Denim Textile Project of Royal Denim.

Mir Hasan Ali, chairman of Royal Denim Ltd, and Mohammad Abdul Mannan, executive vice president of Islami Bank Ltd, signed the deal on behalf of their organisations.

Huawei to work for Square Informatix

Huawei Technologies will provide Square Informatix Ltd, a concern of Square Group, with telecommunication network solutions with third generation network facilities.

An agreement to this effect was signed between Square Group and Huawei Technologies on Saturday in Dhaka, says a press release.

Samson H Chowdhury, chairman of Square Group, and Wang Shengli, president of Huawei Technologies, signed the deal on behalf of their companies.

Garment workers urge govt to raise wage

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Leaders of Bangladesh Garment Workers' Union Council (BGWUC) have asked the government to increase garment workers' monthly wage to Tk1800 from existing Tk930.

They have also urged the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) to keep all garment units closed on May 1 to observe the international workers' solidarity day.

Addressing a press conference in Dhaka yesterday, Towhidur Rahman, coordinator of BGWUC, said the government fixed the workers' wages at Tk930 including medical allowance and house rent in 1994.

"Ten years have passed since then and the government is yet to declare a new wage structure for us," he said.

The BGWUC leader further urged the BGMEA, the apex body in RMG sector, to implement the bilateral agreements that were signed between the two sides on several issues.

"Starting from 1997, the BGWUC signed several bilateral agreements with the BGMEA on issues such as providing identity cards for the workers, declaring weekly holiday and arranging maternal leave with full salary," Rahman told the press.

"But, the fact is that most of the garment factories are not complying with these agreements," To grasp their demands, the

council also declared a movement that includes holding rally at Muktangan on April 15, forming human chain in front of the BGMEA office on April 23 and a grand rally on May 1.

"If the government and the BGMEA do not take immediate initiatives on our demands, we will go for a tougher movement and it will be declared on May 1," Rahman added.

Among other members of the BGWUC, Amirul Haque Amin, Salauddin Saupon, M Delwar Hossain, Sirajul Islam Rony, Quazi Mohammad Ali, Zahanara Begum, Rokeya Sultana Anzu, BM Abul Hossain and Mohammad Rafique were also present at the meeting.

Transcom, Holcim sign corporate deal

Transcom Electronics Limited and Holcim Bangladesh Ltd signed a corporate agreement in Dhaka Sunday.

The agreement titled 'EzeeBuy' will enable the Holcim employees to buy Philips, Whirlpool, Changhong & Transec electronics products from Transcom through a special easy purchase scheme.

Habibur Rahman Mollah, GM (Finance and Accounts) of Transcom, and Niaz Uddin Mahmood, GM (HRD) of Holcim, signed the deal.

Among others, Shahir A Chowdhury, GM (HR and Admin), Arshad Huq, GM (Sales and Marketing), Yeamin Sharif Chowdhury, marketing manager, Jafrul Alam Khan, national sales manager (Retail), Rawnak F Khan, manager (Brand Communications) of Transcom, and MA Bashir, GM (Admin) and company secretary of Holcim, were present.

Liberalised services sector to spell ruin for economy

Roundtable told

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The economy will face a serious threat if the country's services sector is opened up under General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), speakers told a roundtable yesterday.

The services sector contributes 49.37 percent to national growth. Under the GATS, the sector related organisations will lose control over price and standardisation of their products as the multi-national companies will be dominant in these areas, they feared.

The roundtable on 'Service Sector Liberalisation and Bangladesh: GATS Perspective' organised by Alliance of Food

Sovereignty Campaigns (AFSC), Bangladesh, in co-operation with Jagrata Juba Shangstha, Karmajibi Nari and ActionAid Bangladesh was held in Dhaka. Mahfuz Ullah, secretary general of Centre for Sustainable Development (CSD), a local NGO, chaired the roundtable.

Besides, multinational companies will replace the local employees with foreign ones under the GATS if the government goes for it, they observed.

Before opening up the sector for GATS, speakers observed, the government should make all proposals public and take all decisions on the basis of a national consensus.

Speaking at the roundtable, former commerce minister Toifal

Ahmed said Bangladesh has a huge export potential in the global market. "But we have to do more home-work and consult with private sector experts," he added.

"Although we are now enjoying some special facilities as a least developed country (LDC), Bangladesh will not get such benefit after graduating to a developing country," said President of Bangladesh Economic Association Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad.

Presenting the keynote paper, Ziaul Hoque Mukta, executive of ActionAid (Bangladesh) said Bangladesh did not make any request to any country but received more than 50 requests from nine countries to liberalise its services sector.

Indian govt for allowing FDI in retail sector

REUTERS, New Delhi

Indian Finance Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram said Sunday that foreign direct investment must be allowed in the country's retail sector and that the government was trying to develop a political consensus on the issue.

India has allowed foreign investment in several sectors but political pressures have prevented the coalition government from opening up retailing.

"FDI in retail must be allowed," Chidambaram told an agricultural conference, where he also suggested a greater role for the private sector in rural farm markets.

The communist-backed federal coalition has been planning to liberalise India's retail sector to allow access to foreign investors.

The plan includes allowing high-end branded retail names to invest directly in India as long as they do not displace India's "mom and pop" stores.

Only 4 percent of India's retail industry is in the organised sector.

In October, India launched a panel to promote foreign and domestic investment in Asia's fourth-largest economy.

The Investment Commission will attempt to improve on India's dismal performance in attracting foreign capital.

It currently gets just \$3 billion to \$4 billion a year, while Asian rival China attracts more than \$50 billion per year.

The Congress-led coalition, headed by Manmohan Singh, the architect of India's economic reforms, has raised foreign investment limits in the key telecoms sector despite stiff opposition from its communist allies.

Parties on the left oppose selling off profitable state-run firms and do not want foreign investors to own controlling stakes in the private sector.

Finance Minister Chidambaram said there were several fundamental issues in which there were differences in the policy. "It will be government's efforts to overcome these reservations."

Malaysia's illegal labour solution backfires again

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

An acute labour crunch threatening Malaysia's economy after the government expelled hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants highlights a failure to plan for long-term manpower needs, analysts and industry experts say.

"There is no medium to long-term approach to address the twin problem of illegal immigrants and a labour shortage," said Abdul Razak Baginda of the Malaysian Strategic Research Centre.

"Malaysia is firefighting on a daily basis, and it appears to be haphazard. We put bricks and mortar at the centre of our economic development but pay little attention to developing human resources."

The repatriation of some 400,000 illegal immigrants, mainly low-wage Indonesian workers, during a four-month amnesty that ended in March has left a yawning labour gap in Malaysia's agricultural, construction, manufacturing and services sectors.

It has led to industry losses running into hundreds of millions of dollars and sparked fears it may exacerbate a slowdown in economic growth, which is seen at between five and six percent this year, down from 7.1 percent in 2004, analysts say.

The government, which is now pursuing some 500,000 illegal immigrants believed to be still in the country, announced last week it would immediately begin recruiting workers from Pakistan, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Vietnam to plug the vacuum.

But industry experts say what Malaysia really needs to do is change its tactics. Such an ad hoc response will not end illegal employment nor meet the country's long-term need for guest workers, they say.

"Foreign workers are here to stay but we have been flip-flop in our policy. The government must formulate a long-term strategy on manpower and immigration," said Paul Low, vice-president of the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers.

Low said the government should give incentives for companies to upgrade productivity and modernise, and issue a clear deadline for them to begin gradually reducing their dependence on foreigners.

Foreign workers have long been entrenched in Malaysia's economy. In the early 20th century, before independence in 1957, British colonialists brought in Chinese migrants to develop tin mining and Indians to work in rubber and palm oil plantations.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
PWD Division, B'baria

Invitation for Tender

Sealed tenders are hereby invited as per "The Public Procurement Regulation-2003" for the undermentioned work as per items & condition stated below:

1.	Project name (if applicable)	Implementation of project of police department under four year development programme.
2.	Source of fund	Government of Bangladesh.
3.	Tender No.	38/2004-2005
4.	Invitation for tenders Ref. & date	This office Memo No-684 Date-03-04-2005.
5.	Name of the work:-	Construction of 1000sq Ft. Sarail, Nasimagar & Bancharampur (one unit for each thana) with 4-storied foundation, 800sq Ft. for Ashuganj, Bancharampur & Nasimagar thana (two unit for each thana) with 6-storied foundation, 600sq Ft. with 6-storied foundation, four unit for sadar thana and two unit for Bancharampur thana, including sanitary, water supply, gas connection, site improvement, electrification, approach road and other related works. During the year 2004-2005.
6.	Time for completion of the work	365 (three hundred sixty-five) days from the date of issue of work order.
7.	Eligibility of tenderers	a) PWD enlisted special class & class-I (combined) contractor/firms. b) (i) A physical or juridical or body of individual or company association or any combination of them under agreement in the form of intended of existing joint venture, consortium or association (JVCA), who have/has satisfactorily completed building construction work including civil, sanitary & electrical work valued not less than Tk. 90 lac (ninety lac) for the last 5 years in a single tender (certificates in this respects to be furnished in the prescribe form enclosed in the tender schedule). Certificate must be obtained from officer ranking not below Executive Engineer. For other department except PWD certificate must be certified by the local PWD Executive Engineer. (ii) Except PWD enlisted contractor/firms must have valid ABC license issued from the Electricity Licensing Board from Bangladesh. c) The intending tenderers must have VAT & TIN certificates and attested copy of VAT & TIN certificates & original copy of money receipt are to be enclosed along with the tender.
8.	Price of tender document	Tk. 1500/- (one thousand five hundred) only (non-refundable) for the notice inviting tenders, schedule of items special terms & conditions etc. (fixed).
9.	Amount of tender security	Tk. 7,30,000 (seven lac thirty thousand) only.
10.	Name & address of the offices where tender document will be sold	: Office of the Divisional Commissioner, Chittagong, office of the undersigned. : Including all working division of PWD under Chittagong PWD Zone. : Executive Engineer, PWD Division-I, Dhaka. Executive Engineer, PWD Division-I, Khulna, Executive Engineer, PWD Division-I, Rajshahi, Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Barisal & Sylhet. : Office of the Deputy Commissioner, B'baria & SP's office, B'baria.
11.	Name & address of the offices where tenders will be received	Office of the undersigned and Office of the Deputy Commissioner & Office of the Superintending of Police (SP), B'baria.
12.	Name & address of the offices for opening tenders	Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, B'baria.
13.	Last date and time for selling tender document	During office hours upto 09/05/2005.
14.	Last date and time of submission of tender document	Upto 12:00 Noon on 10/05/2005.
15.	Date and time for opening of tenders	10/05/05 at 3:00PM in the office of the undersigned in presence of tender opening committee (TOC) & intending tenderers who may like to remain present.
16.	Special instruction	1. Section 1. Instruction to tenderers (ITT) and Section-3 general conditions of contract (GCC) of standard tender document (STD) PWD published by CPTU, IMED, Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Can be seen from the office of the undersigned during the office hour ITT and GCC is binding upon the successful tenderer as part of contract agreement. 2. Rate must be quoted both in figures & in words for each items of works in attached schedule up to two digits beyond the decimal point. Total amount should be quoted in the schedule. 3. The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason whatsoever.
17.	Brief description of works and related service	Bricks works, RCC works, wood works, steel works, water supply & sanitary works, gas, electrification, site improvement, approach road & earth work etc.
18.		This tender has been sent to PWD's web sites (www.pwd.gov.bd) for wide circulation.

DDP-8992-7/4/05
G-396

Executive Engineer
B'baria PWD Division



Samson H Chowdhury, chairman of Square Group, and Wang Shengli, president of Huawei Technologies, sign an agreement on Saturday in Dhaka. Under the deal, Huawei will act as telecommunication network solutions provider with third generation network facilities for Square's telecommunication company Square Informatix Ltd.

DHAKA BANK LIMITED
Biman Bhawan, 100 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka 1000

ENHANCEMENT OF AUTHORISED CAPITAL AND RIGHTS ISSUE INFORMATION

This is for information of all concerned that the Shareholders of the Bank in the 2nd Extra-Ordinary General Meeting held on Monday April 11, 2005 at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel, Ball Room, 107, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka unanimously approved enhancement of Authorised Capital from Tk.100,00,00,000.00 (Taka one hundred crore) only to Tk.265,00,00,000.00 (Taka two hundred sixty five crore) only as per Bangladesh Bank consent letter no-BRPD(R)717/2005-199 dated March 24, 2005 and issuance of 1:2 Rights Shares at Par i.e. one rights share for every two shares held to the shareholders whose names were recorded in the Register of Members of the Bank on March 17, 2005 for raising Paid up Capital by Tk. 331,918,100.00. Share subscription date will be intimated through Rights Share Offer Document in due course after having clearance from Securities and Exchange Commission.

April 12, 2005

Arham Masudul Huq
Executive Vice President & Company Secretary

EXCELLENCE IN BANKING www.dhakabanktd.com

care

We seek a world of hope, tolerance, and social justice, where poverty has been overcome and people live in dignity and security

General Manager, Human Resources

CARE-Bangladesh invites applications for the above position, based in Dhaka. A qualified woman for this position is preferred; however, the position is open to all.

Major Responsibilities:

- HR Policy review, update, interpretation and communication;
- Human Resources Development and Management services;
- Oversee staff recruitment, staff welfare functions, HR information system and staff transition;
- Oversee staff development and career planning initiatives for staff;
- Ensure legal compliance of policies and procedures, disciplinary actions, etc.;
- Contribute to organizational review, strategic change processes and mission initiatives;
- Effectively deal with gender issues from organizational strategic perspectives;
- Implementation and monitoring of a dialogue-based performance management system.

Essential Qualifications:

- Masters in Social Science in any discipline.
- 8 years professional experience on HR issues.
- Sound knowledge and strong skills in Performance Management and staff development.
- Team Management skills including managing diversity.
- Able to coordinate with and represent the organization to the appropriate stakeholders.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.

Compensation: The monthly gross salary is approximately 65,000.00-plus other benefits. Salary may be negotiated for highly qualified & competent candidates.

Interested candidates who fulfill the above requirements are requested to drop their CVs (with cover letter, recent passport size photograph, and names/addresses of two non-relative referees) in the application box placed at the ground floor of CARE-Bangladesh, 20-21, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka or mail/post to:

Section Manager, Recruitment, HRD&M Department, CARE-Bangladesh, Pragati RPR Centre, 20-21, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka, on or before April 23, 2005.

Notes: [1] Women are particularly encouraged to apply. [2] Any person will disqualify the candidates. [3] Internal and external applicants shall be treated equally in the entire selection process. [4] Applicants who have relatives in CARE are discouraged from applying. [5] Only short listed candidates shall be invited for the interview. [6] Please write the position applied for at the top right hand corner of the envelope.

Visit CARE web-site on: www.carebd.org