

Slash call tariff

NBR rebuffs cellphone operators

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) yesterday rejected the private cellphone operators' plea for withdrawal of the newly imposed tax on SIM (subscriber identity module) card and suggested slashing their call tariff.

"If you have sympathy for the subscribers, lower the call tariff and subscription rates, and give each subscriber two free SIM cards that will help enhance your business and the government's revenue," NBR

Chairman Khairuzzaman Chowdhury told the top executives of all the four private cellphone operators when they called on him. GrameenPhone Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Erik Aas, AKTEL Managing Director M Nasir Baharom, Banglalink CEO Lars P Reichelt and CityCell Vice President Faisal Morshed Khan attended the meeting with the NBR chairman.

The finance minister in the proposed budget for FY06 imposed a Tk 1,200 tax on every SIM card while slashed the import duty on mobile

handsets to Tk300 from Tk1,500.

"The government has not imposed any extra tax on the mobile phone subscribers, it has rather diverted the tax on mobile phone set to new connection (SIM or RUM card)," Khairuzzaman told The Daily Star when contacted.

The NBR chairman said the government had reduced the duty on mobile phone sets from Tk 4,000 to Tk 1,500 last year but failed to collect expected revenue from handsets.

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Prime Minister Khaleda Zia addresses the opening session of the two-day second summit of the Group of 77 and China in Doha yesterday.



PHOTO: PID

ATTACK ON AHMADIYYAS

Int'l HR body warns of Pak fate for Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human Rights Watch (HRW), a New York-based organisation, yesterday warned that Bangladesh would face a situation similar to Pakistan's if the discrimination against the Ahmadiyya community is allowed to continue.

"Bangladesh might face the same situation like Pakistan where

many people belonging to the Ahmadiyya community had to flee the country as they are subjected to state-sponsored discrimination," said Ali Hassan, an official of the HRW, while speaking at a discussion on "Human Rights Challenges Facing Bangladesh" at National Press Club.

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SHAMSUR RAHMAN MURDER

Charge framed against 16 including 5 journos

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

An additional sessions judge yesterday framed charges against all the 16 chargesheeted accused, including five journalists, in the sensational journalist Shamsur Rahman murder case.

The five journalists are Jessore Bureau Chief of Inqilab Mizanur Rahman Tota, Staff Reporter of

Ittefaq Farazi Azmal Hossain, Fakir Shawkat of the Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha, and freelancers Nova Khandokar and Benjin Khan.

Unidentified assailants gunned down Shamsur Rahman, a special correspondent of the Bangla daily Janakantha, on the night of July 16, 2000, when he was busy in his office.

An FIR (first report information) was lodged the next day with the Jessore Kotwali Police Station without mentioning any name.

In the course of the investigation, the police accused 16 persons, including four journalists of Jessore and two top criminals of Khulna—Asaduzzaman Litu and Mushfiqur

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StanChart acquires American Express

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Standard Chartered Bank has signed an agreement to acquire businesses of American Express Bank Limited in Bangladesh.

"The purchase is conditional on regulatory approval, and should be completed within the next few weeks," it said in a release yesterday.

"The acquisition further consolidates our position as the oldest and largest foreign bank in Bangladesh and we look forward to serving

American Express Bank's customers with our wide range of products and services," Osman Morad, Chief Executive Officer of Standard Chartered Bank, Bangladesh said following signing of the deal.

"This year Standard Chartered proudly celebrates 100 years in Bangladesh, and this significant investment underscores our continued and increasing commitment to the country," he added.

"We are pleased to have reached

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Outlaw killed in 'crossfire'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

A cadre of underground Purba Banglar Communist Party's Janajuddha faction was killed in

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Prayer Timing		
June 16		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-50	6-55
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Anti-govt lawyers ignore ban

Agitate on SC premises

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of anti-government lawyers yesterday formed a human chain on the Supreme Court (SC) Bar Association building premises despite a High Court ban on all types of agitation on the court premises.

Sammilita Ainjibi Samannay Parishad organised the half-an-hour programme in the afternoon,

attended by more than 200 lawyers, demanding that the constitution be upheld, High Court's verdict regarding separation of the judiciary from executive implemented, the judiciary freed from corruption, the rule of law established, and extra-judicial killing be stopped.

The agitating lawyers chanted slogans such as, "We do not comply

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First ODI today

AFP, London

England batsman Marcus Trescothick stressed yesterday England would not be disregarding Bangladesh, who they twice beat by an innings in their 2-0 Test series win earlier this season, ahead of their NatWest tri-nation Series clash at The Oval today.

us to remain focused on the job in hand," said 29-year-old Trescothick, who is set to become only the 10th Englishman to appear in 100 one-day internationals when the hosts open the series against Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Television will telecast live the match live that starts at

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