

# Star BUSINESS

DHAKA THURSDAY OCTOBER 18, 2012, e-mail:business@thedailystar.net



Bobbi Silten

## GAP official to arrive in Dhaka on Saturday

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

US clothing retail giant GAP is coming to the country in a bigger way to increase its garment purchase from Bangladesh at competitive prices, said a leading apparel supplier to the company yesterday.

Bobbi Silten, a senior vice-president of GAP, is scheduled to come to Bangladesh on Saturday to meet with its suppliers as the company plans to increase its garment purchase at least by 30 percent year-on-year, said AK Azad, managing director of Ha-Meem Group.

READ MORE ON B3

## BSTI cancels fruit drinks licences of seven companies

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) has cancelled the licences to make fruit-flavoured drinks of seven companies, including the popular Pran brand, for not using the minimum 10 percent fruit pulp in the drinks.

"We collected samples of fruit drinks from the markets and found zero pulp in the drinks made by these firms," said Md Nurul Islam, BSTI's deputy director for certification.

The beverages not meeting BSTI standards are: Pran's mango, orange, lemon, strawberry, litchi, apple, pineapple and fruit cocktail drinks; Prome's litchi and orange drinks; Safa Consumer's Rockstar mixed fruit drink; Nutri Agro Foods' orange-flavoured drink; fruit drinks of Modern Food Products Ltd, RMP Manufacturer and Ara Foods.

The BSTI earlier gave the companies a timeframe to increase the quantity of fruit pulp in their drinks, Islam said.

"But the companies did not comply

with the deadline."

The licence, however, is not mandatory to sell the drinks, according to Islam; the companies will just not be able to use the BSTI logo in their packaging.

"If any of the companies use our logo in the labels of these fruit drinks, it will be an offence as per our law," said Islam.

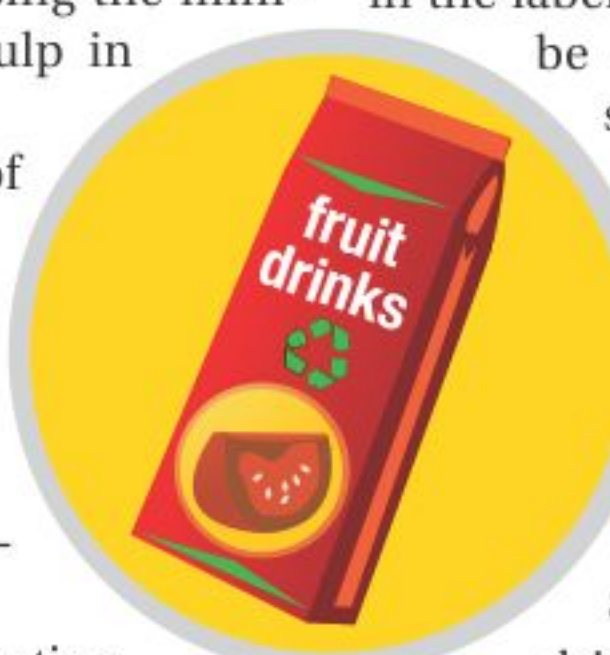
But the licence, and therefore the BSTI logo, is compulsory for the beverages that are marketed as fruit juice, as opposed to fruit drinks.

Fruit juice must contain 88 percent pulp, while fruit drink has to contain a minimum of 10 percent fruit pulp.

When asked, Kamruzzaman Kamal, Pran-RFL Group's director of marketing, said the BSTI changed their standards for fruit-flavoured drinks last year and requested all the manufactures to change their product formulation and labelling, and to take fresh approvals.

Accordingly, the BSTI has cancelled the previous licence it issued for the fruit-flavoured drinks.

READ MORE ON B3



## Furniture exports rise 27pc

SUMAN SAHA

Furniture exports grew by 27.09 percent to around Tk 52 crore in the first quarter of the current fiscal year due to an increase in demand in the US, Japan and Europe, industry people said.

The figure comes on the back of impressive performances in recent years by the sector in the export markets.

In fiscal 2011-12, the sector raked in around Tk 220 crore from exports, up by 26 percent from previous year's Tk 174 crore, according to data from Export Promotion Bureau.

"The main reason behind the export growth is that we can offer high-quality products at competitive prices," said KM Akhteruzzaman, chairman of Bangladesh Furniture Exporters Association (BFEA).

The sector's product quality and designs have improved significantly thanks to adoption of latest machineries and technologies, which has been attracting foreign buyers, he said.

Another reason behind the export growth has been the aggressive marketing campaign, said Akhteruzzaman.

Furniture makers are regularly participating in the international fairs to explore new markets and organising shows locally to attract international buyers, he added.

"There is an increasing demand for wooden furniture in the US, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. They prefer furniture designs that follow Victorian style, i.e. hand-carved and heavy, which happens to be the dominant production style of carpenters in Bangladesh."

"Our local carpenters have excelled in carving on wood, especially teak."

Furniture is one of the rapidly growing sectors in Bangladesh, constituting of around 85,000 enterprises and carpentry households across the country, with annual growth in terms of turnover being around 19 percent a year.

At present, the size of local furniture market stands at



FOCUS BANGLA

Visitors take a look at a sofa set displayed at a recent furniture fair in the capital.

Tk 11,000 crore a year, according to BFEA.

The industry currently employs about 30 lakh people directly.

Moreover, it is one of the most labour-intensive industries in Bangladesh, and hence can absorb even unskilled labourers.

Previously, Bangladesh only exported wooden furniture to neighbouring countries such as India and Nepal -- and volumes to those destinations, too, increased notably in the last three years.

READ MORE ON B3

## BTCL to cut night-time call rates, hike line rent

ABDULLAH MAMUN

The state-run Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Ltd (BTCL) has decided to reduce its call rate at night to other landline numbers by 33 percent and increase its line rentals in all areas.

"The decisions were taken in the last board meeting on October 15," said Sunil Kanti Bose, the telecom secretary.

The BTCL charges Tk 0.30 per minute to other BTCL numbers round-the-clock, but that has now been slashed to Tk 0.10 per minute from 8pm to 8am, said Bose.

The line rental has been increased: from Tk 80 per month to Tk 160 in Dhaka, Khulna and Chittagong; from Tk 70 to Tk 120 in district level; and from Tk 50 to Tk 80 in the upazilas.

The new rates would take effect shortly, added Bose.



## Tk 1cr illegal VoIP equipment seized

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The telecom regulator with the help of law enforcement agency has seized telecom equipment worth Tk 1 crore -- used for illegal international call transmission.

Zakir Hossain Khan, assistant director of the media wing of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, said the equipments were seized yesterday in Hathazari, Chittagong.

He said the BTRC officials and Rab 7 confiscated equipments such as two routers, a rudder antenna, batteries and 500 mobile SIMs of different operators, used for illegal voice over internet protocol (VoIP) calls.

The officials also found a V-SAT modem, which was used to get internet bandwidth, almost 1.5 kilometres away from the site. The valuation of the equipments would be around Tk 1 crore, added Khan.

## Bangladesh seeks Kuwait's help to set up oil refinery

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni requested the Kuwaiti government to provide assistance for Bangladesh to set up an oil refinery.

She also requested the Kuwait authorities to consider deferred payment by Bangladesh for the

import of petroleum products from that country.

The minister spoke when she called on Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Tuesday.

Dipu Moni is now in Kuwait accompanying President Zillur Rahman to attend the First Asian

Cooperation Dialogue Summit.

She explained the investor-friendly policies and legal regime of Bangladesh, and sought personal intervention of the Kuwaiti prime minister to encourage Kuwait investors to explore Bangladesh for their investment.

READ MORE ON B3

My bank understands my happiness, does Yours?

**MYMTB & MF**

- Cash Back Bonus
- Gift Vouchers
- Air Tickets
- Reduced Annual Fees

For details: 16219 or +88 096040 16219

মিউচুয়াল ট্রাস্ট ব্যাংক লিমিটেড  
**Mutual Trust Bank Ltd.**  
 you can bank on us

www.mutualtrustbank.com

## Intel profits slow

AFP, San Francisco

US chip giant Intel Corp. on Tuesday reported a decline in profits, reflecting the shift by consumers to newer mobile devices, but managed to beat lowered expectations.

The California semiconductor maker said third quarter profits fell 14 percent from the same period a year ago to \$2.97 billion on revenues of \$13.5 billion, down five percent.

www.singerbd.com

**T20 Fever** **UNBEATABLE PRICE**

- 0% Interest up to 180 Days
- 15% Down Payment & Easy Installment

**SINGER LED TV**  
 Now Number 1

Elevate your lifestyle with the top selling SINGER LED TV

Screen Size: 42", 40", 32", 24" & 19"

9884113  
 01755550047  
 01552205160-2

SINGER Mega THE BIG EXPERIENCE  
 SINGER Plus MORE BRANDS - MORE CHOICE  
 SINGER Pro

**Inspiring Best Practices in RMG & TEXTILE INDUSTRIES**

**SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE AWARD 2012**

Call for entries  
 Eligibility: Factories, Institutions and Organizations working in the RMG and Textile Sectors  
 Last date of Entry **23rd October, 2012**  
 Nomination form available at [www.bangladeshbrandforum.com](http://www.bangladeshbrandforum.com)  
 For any query Email: [see2012@bangladeshbrandforum.com](mailto:see2012@bangladeshbrandforum.com)  
 Call **+88 0175 5594 960**

**Award Categories**  
 One enterprise may apply for more than one category

<b>Social Compliance</b>	<b>Environmental Performance</b>	<b>Innovative Ideas</b>
1. Health & Safety	1. Resource Use Efficiency	Improvement of working and living conditions for the workers
2. Best Worker & Management Relationship	2. Waste Management	
3. Special Benefits/Benefits beyond Labor Law	3. Green Innovation	
	4. Factory of the Year for Environmental Sustainability	

Organized By **Bangladesh BRAND FORUM** Supported By **giz**

In Partnership With **BGCCI**, **IIFC**, **UKaid**, **Norad**