

জীবনে প্রয়োজন আরো বেশি স্বাচ্ছন্দ্য
 সর্বাধুনিক প্রযুক্তি সম্বলিত ব্যাংকিং সেবায় মাসিক আয়ের সাথে বাড়তি আয় যোগ করুন আর জীবন করুন সুসমৃদ্ধ।

সে কোন প্রয়োজনে ০৯৬১২০০১১২২
 ইসলামী শরীআহ'র মূদারাবা নীতির ভিত্তিতে পরিচালিত



Star BUSINESS

DHAKA THURSDAY DECEMBER 18, 2014, e-mail: business@thedailystar.net

Smartphone sales soar on low-cost brands

Symphony, a local vendor, is the leader in mobile handset market

MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

Sales of smartphones more than tripled year-on-year to 1.6 million units in July-September, led by low-cost devices.

The number is a 128.6 percent rise from the April-June quarter when 700,000 units were sold, according to CyberMedia Research (CMR), a market research firm based in India.

Sales of feature phones that lack advanced functionality of a smartphone also rose in the third quarter -- 6.4 million units were sold with 106.5 percent growth over the second quarter.

On average, the country's handset market grew 108 percent in July-September compared to the previous quarter.

About 7.9 million handsets of both types were sold in the third quarter with a 16 percent rise year-on-year.

Bangladesh continues to show consistent growth in both feature and smartphone segments. This is among

very few Southeast Asian markets where growth is seen in both segments, the CMR said in its quarterly mobile handsets market review.

Smartphones account for more than 20 percent of the total handset sales in Bangladesh.

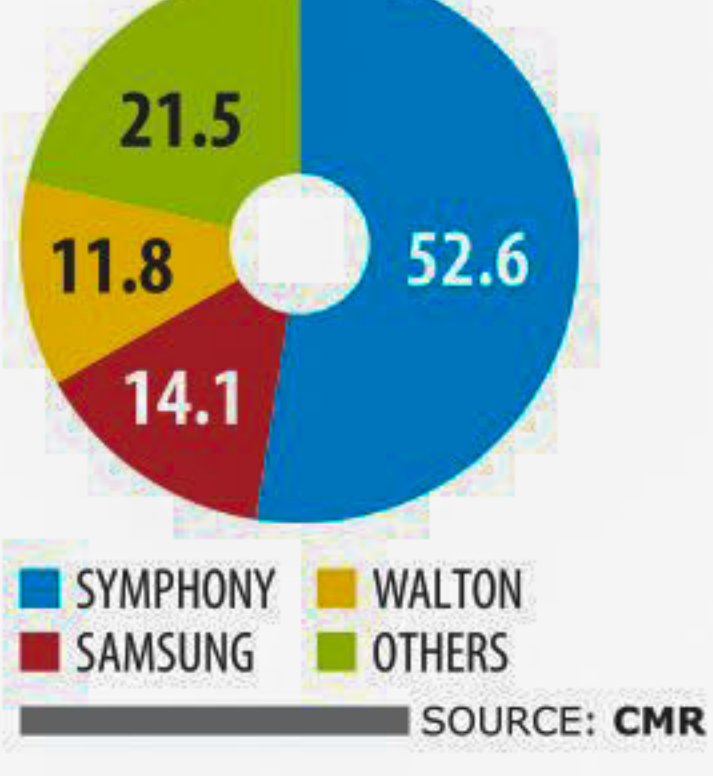
"Comparing the results of 2014 with 2013, the impetus to the market is mainly from the smartphone segment, as compared to feature phones, although the latter has also recorded healthy growth," Tanvi Sharma, an analyst at the CMR, said.

She said the huge growth in sales of smartphones highlights the strong opportunity the market is offering to handset vendors and solution providers.

"It is also an opportune time for local brands such as Symphony and Walton," Sharma said in a report.

Bangladesh's growth in smartphone sales is much higher than the global average. Smartphone sales across the world rose 20.3 percent year-on-year to 301 million units in July-September, market researcher

SMARTPHONE MARKET SHARE IN BANGLADESH



Gartner Inc said on Monday. With a 36 percent share, Symphony Mobile is the leader in the mobile handset market, thanks to its strength in the smartphone segment where it has a 53 percent share. Symphony began to sell smartphones in 2012.

The company that was launched in 2008 became the market leader in the handset segment in 2010, mainly due to its aggressive pricing strategy and a strong distribution network.

In the country's handset market, Symphony, Walton and Maximus -- all local vendors -- are in the leadership positions, while Nokia and Samsung are the top international brands with a significant presence.

However, Symphony might face challenges in retaining its market share.

"Now as the Bangladesh smartphone market continues to show strong growth, it will be increasingly challenging for Symphony Mobile to retain its share," said Faisal Kawoosa, lead telecoms analyst at the CMR.

Bangladesh is one of the fastest growing mobile markets -- mobile phone subscription reached around 119.62 million at the end of November, according to Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission.



Biru Paksha Paul
BB appoints new chief economist

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Biru Paksha Paul has joined Bangladesh Bank as its chief economist, the central bank said in a statement yesterday.

Paul is an associate professor of economics at the State University of New York at Cortland. He completed his master's in economics from Dhaka University in 1987, and later completed MBA in finance from the University of Technology-Sydney, according to the statement.

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Shrimp farmers staring at losses

Slide in Russian currency, euro causes importers to withdraw orders

SOHEL PARVEZ

Shrimp farmers and processors have sunk into hard times after a slump in demand and depreciation of major exporters' currencies.

Industry operators said many buyers have pushed back the shipment of their orders, while a section of them are even seeking discounts. As a result, the stockpiles are rising at the processors' end.

"It is a very bad situation. Prices are falling fast, while sales are down. The business has been dormant for the past two months," said Khan Habibur Rahman, deputy managing director of Lockpur Group, one of the main shrimp processors.

The ample production of vannamei in India and Vietnam has been blamed for the most part for the slump in demand for the locally-grown black tiger shrimps.

"Exporters in these countries are offering very low prices," Rahman said.

A pound of black tiger shrimps is now selling for \$6.5, which was \$9.2 as recently as two months ago, said Shoyeb Mahmud, general manager of Jahanaab Seafood Ltd.

"I doubt if the farmers will be able to break-even, but the small ones will definitely be hit hard."

So dire is the situation that many buyers are renegotiating prices of already placed orders, he said, adding that stocks are piling up in almost every factory.

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Myanmar: Following Bangladesh's blueprint in garment sector

MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

Myanmar has set out an ambitious plan to emulate Bangladesh's runaway success in the garment sector, as it looks to become one of the major apparel suppliers itself, said a minister of the Southeast Asian nation.

"In our country, the garment industry is booming. We hope we will be a hub for sourcing garment items," said Pwint San, deputy commerce minister of Myanmar.

"We are aiming to go after RMG like Bangladesh did," he told The Daily Star in an interview in Dhaka recently.

San was in the capital to attend a conference organised by the International Chamber of Commerce Bangladesh.

Myanmar, which is gradually opening its economy to foreign investors, is a minor player in global apparel trade as of now.

At present, it has 240 textile and apparel companies, with the number growing steadily, according to the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association (MGMA).

Its apparel export basket includes coats, suits, jackets, swimwear, trousers, shirts, dresses and skirts. The employment within the textile and apparel industry is around 220,000.

Apparel exports, which make up 10-12 percent of the country's total exports, raked in \$1.2 billion in 2013, up from \$396 million in 2009, according to the association.

MGMA though has set out an export target of \$10 billion within the



Pwint San

next ten years.

Japan is the prime destination, accounting for 48.8 percent of the country's garment exports, followed by South Korea (33.3 percent), the European Union (14.6 percent), Germany (5.4 percent) and China (2.5 percent).

San said his country sees Bangladesh as a good trading partner, and always encourages people-to-people and government-to-government contact.

The governments and private sectors are always trying to increase the trade volume between Bangladesh and Myanmar, he added. Despite being a neighbour, trade between the two countries has been very low.

Bilateral trade volume between the two countries stood at \$57.24 million in fiscal 2013-14, up 9.32 percent year-on-year. Till August this year, it

stood at \$24.5 million, San said.

Myanmar mainly imports raw materials for construction like iron bar and cement and fertilisers from Bangladesh and exports agricultural and marine products to the country.

While the bilateral trade volume has been on the rise since 2011, San hopes it will increase in a bigger way in future, as Myanmar sees Bangladesh as a lucrative export destination.

"Bangladesh has 160 million people -- the country has a market for agriculture products. We can export food and marine items to Bangladesh."

San said many companies from around the world as well as Bangladesh have already started to explore business opportunities in Myanmar as it is a promising land for investors.

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DSE revises stock trading charges

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Dhaka Stock Exchange yesterday revised its charges on stock trading in the backdrop of a jump in the number of trades following the introduction of a lot-free share transaction system last week.

There will be no 'hawla' charge from today, in line with the modification, but investors will have to pay 'laga' charges at a rate of 0.03 percent on total turnover instead of a 0.02 percent rate.

The 'hawla' charge refers to the fees on the completion of a trade, while the 'laga' charge is the fees on turnover generated from an investor's share trading.

The hawla charge was Tk 4 (Tk 2 at buyer's end and Tk 2 at seller's

end) for each contract as of yesterday.

The premier bourse also set the bond transaction fee at Tk 50 per trade. Previously, only the hawla and laga charges were applicable to bond transactions.

The DSE took the decisions at a meeting with TREC (trading right entitlement certificate) holders on the bourse premises.

The issue of revising the charges came into consideration after the bourse replaced its 16-year-old trading system with a new mechanism, allowing investors to trade single shares instead of lot-based ones.

However, turnover came down to Tk 200 crore as the charges proved costly for investors to trade on the bourse.

Stocks in free fall

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Stocks declined for the fifth day yesterday as investors remained reluctant to inject fresh funds into the market.

DSEX, the benchmark index of Dhaka Stock Exchange, edged 40.73 points down, or 0.83 percent, to finish the day at 4,837.93. DSES, the shariah index of the prime bourse, dropped 9.46 points, or 0.82 percent, to close at 1,137.88.

"The market outlook remained hazy to investors," LankaBangla Securities said.

Among other major updates on the financial sector, the central bank asked bankers on Monday to bring down non-performing loans below 10 percent by the end of this month.

Turnover, the most important indicator of the market, advanced 19.3 percent to Tk 285 crore, compared to that in the previous day.

A total of 0.83 lakh trades were executed with 7.14 crore shares and mutual fund units changing hands on the Dhaka bourse.

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CRESCENT LIGHTING LIMITED
 WINS THE INTERNATIONAL BIZZ AWARD 2014

MR. MIZANUR RAHMAN, Chairman and Managing Director of Crescent Lighting Limited (a concern of Crescent Group Limited) received the BIZZ AWARD 2014 given by the WORLD CONFEDERATION OF BUSINESSES, the esteemed US based organization, at Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi recently. The prestigious award was given for Crescent Lighting's Long contribution over six decades in the lighting sector.

Crescent Lighting Limited is grateful to the valued customers and well wishers for their continuous support.

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