

# DHL launches women's network initiative

STAR BUSINESS DESK

International logistics company DHL launched DHL Women's Network initiative, a communications platform to inform, inspire and engage employees, in Dhaka yesterday.

The programme aims to inspire both male and female employees of DHL to enhance their leadership skills and positively impact the company's success in Bangladesh, the company said in a statement.

DHL marked the initiative's launch with an event themed Winning Diversity Together, where Fahima Aziz, vice chancellor of Asian University of Women in Chittagong, and Geetara Safiya Choudhury, chairperson of Adcomm Ltd, shared their personal insights.

"DHL Global Forwarding Bangladesh had set a goal to fill more upper and middle-management vacancies



From left, Nooruddin Chowdhury, country manager of DHL Global Forwarding Bangladesh; Amy Yee, contributor to The New York Times; Fahima Aziz, vice chancellor of Asian University of Women in Chittagong; Geetara Safiya Choudhury, chairperson of Adcomm Ltd; and Desmond Quiah, country manager for DHL Express Bangladesh, pose at the launch of DHL Women's Network in Bangladesh, at a programme in Dhaka yesterday.

with capable women, and has implemented various programmes to enable women to be ready for these positions, through mentoring programmes, adoption of a flexible work

system to help maintain work-life balance and expanding childcare services," said Nooruddin Chowdhury, country manager of DHL Global Forwarding Bangladesh.

Through the efforts, the company has seen an increase in the number of female employees -- 15 percent of the entire employee base; and the number is continually

growing, he said.

"The DHL Women's Network is an excellent platform to support our employees, male and female alike, to unlock their full potential," he said.

"Promoting diversity is in our core strategic interest as it contributes to creating a more connected, engaged workforce," said Desmond Quiah, country manager of DHL Express Bangladesh.

"An inclusive workplace helps tap on employees' strengths and enhance leadership potential. This focus underpins our commitment to becoming an Employer of Choice to our employees," he said.

A panel discussion was also held during the launch moderated by Amy Yee, independent journalist and contributor to The New York Times, with Fahima Aziz, Geetara Safiya Choudhury, Nooruddin Chowdhury and Quiah as participants.



AK Azad Chowdhury, chairman of University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, speaks at the eighth International Conference on Software, Knowledge, Information Management and Applications, organised by United International University on its campus in Dhaka recently.

## Conference spotlights software development, information systems

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The eighth International Conference on Software, Knowledge, Information Management and Applications or SKIMA 2014, organised by United International University (UIU) on its campus, ended in the capital yesterday.

The three-day event included sessions on software development and information systems, and disseminate ideas, experiences and insights, the university said in a statement.

Sessions were also held on Bangla com-

puting, robotics, image recognition, data mining and machine learning, network and wireless communications, embedded systems and smartphone-based systems, it said.

Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, chairman of University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, attended the event's inaugural earlier.

SM Ashrafur Islam, executive director of Bangladesh Computer Council, Prof Alomgir Hossain, co-chair of the conference and Prof Pran Kanai Saha, chair of IEEE Bangladesh Section, also spoke.



Lee Yun-Young, Korean ambassador to Bangladesh, cuts a ribbon to launch Japanese and Korean cuisine--Ichiban--at Hotel Agrabad in Chittagong yesterday. HM Hakim Ali, chief executive of the hotel, was also present.



Moazzem Hossain, managing director of Energyprima Ltd (EPL), attends the company's seventh annual general meeting at EPL's power plant project at Habiganj on Thursday. EPL declared 15 percent cash dividends for the year ended on June 30, 2014.

## Shurwid declares dividends, elects top brass



Tuhin Reza

Mahmudul Hasan

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Shareholders of Shurwid Industries yesterday approved 15 percent stock dividends for the year to June.

The approval was come at the company's 10th annual general meeting and fourth extraordinary general meeting at the company at Konabari in Gazipur.

The company manufactures high barrier blister films for sensitive drugs, food packing industries, tooth brushes, garments accessories, toys and electronics.

During the event, the company's board of five selected Tuhin Reza as a chairman of Shurwid.

The shareholders also selected Mahmudul Hasan as its new managing director for the next five years. He was serving as a director of the company.

Anamul Karim has been elected as an independent director of the company.

## Mastercard appoints business development VP

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Gitanka Debdip Datta has joined Mastercard Bangladesh as its vice president for business development, it said in a statement yesterday.

Datta will lead business operations for MasterCard on the existing accounts, build new relationships and also lead some of the key priorities as MasterCard seeks to grow its business in the country, according to the statement.

Datta joins MasterCard from Standard Chartered Bank Bangladesh. He is an alumnus of the Institute of Business Administration of Dhaka University.

With nearly two decades of experience in the payments and banking industry, Datta was part of the team that launched MasterCard in the country.



## Users hardly benefit from LPG price fall

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They import LPG twice a month, on average, and so there is no chance that importers will miss out on the price fall benefits. Local TK Group buys raw materials from the BPC and makes finished products for selling those in the domestic market.

The importers said they do not stockpile or manipulate prices for more profits as they have to compete with each other. Meanwhile, Omera Petroleum, a subsidiary of MJL Bangladesh, has set everything ready to enter the market in a few months.

"Sub-dealers and retailers deceive consumers to make higher profits," said Islam of Bashundhara.

An official of Totalgaz also echoed the same. "This could have been avoided had we written the prices on the cylinders," the official said, asking not to be named.

The LPG prices fluctuate so frequently that it is hard to stick to a price even for a month, he added.

The Daily Star talked to a number of LPG consumers in Dhaka. None of them was aware that the LPG prices have gone down around 40 percent in the international market during the past several months.

"My vendor charged Tk 1,450 for a 12-kg cylinder last week. I paid the same six months ago," said Jahangir Alam, a resident of Kathalbagan area in the city.

## Myanmar turns to pop-up power stations

BBC NEWS, Myanmar

Nestled on a bed of gravel, an hour's drive from Mandalay, the second largest city in Myanmar, also known as Burma, is the country's newest power station.

There are no cooling towers or huge turbine halls, just neat lines of white shipping containers.

In all there are 67, each housing a gas generator producing 1.5 megawatts (MW) of electricity.

Together - some are always being maintained or rested - they deliver a steady 83 MW. We're told it's enough for the modest demands of about six million people.

But what makes this power plant a bit different is not just the way it looks, but the speed with which it was assembled.

Commissioning, financing and building a conventional power station takes a long time - at best four or five years.

In December 2013 a rental agreement was signed between the US firm APR Energy and the Burmese government, and just three months later Kyaukse was up and running.

This is what APR Energy has become famous for. It is called "fast track" power, and in the last decade its business has expanded rapidly, and it now runs plants in more than 25 countries around the world.

They are in a mixture of locations. Some are in places recover-

ing from disasters, others where there is simply a need of some quick power to boost a power grid.

"Simply put, we import all the equipment, we set it up, we commission it, we get it running, and then our staff operate the power plant through the life of the contract," says Clive Turton, Asia-Pacific managing director of APR Energy.

At the moment the deal with Myanmar is for two years. If and when it comes to an end, the generators will leave the way they came.

They will be packed onto the back of trucks, loaded onto container ships in Yangon, and then returned to one of APR's four depots around the world, ready to be despatched when the next deal is signed.

The gain made in time is offset by some losses in efficiency and economies of scale. Joining together 67 generators cannot be as economical as one modern large gas turbine.

Yet compared to Myanmar's antiquated gas power plants, Kyaukse is still competitive.

"If you wanted to have a 1,000 MW plant then you wouldn't use this equipment," Mr Turton says. "Though these are actually very efficient units, and could stay for longer if needed."

Some 40 staff from APR live on site at Kyaukse, a town best known in Myanmar as the birthplace of the former leader

General Than Shwe.

That official connection led to the development of an industrial zone, and APR was given land alongside a glass and cement factory.

Kyaukse is also conveniently close to the Shwe pipeline, a controversial Chinese project that since the end of 2013 has been delivering natural gas from the western Burmese coast to consumers in southern China.

Almost all of the gas has been pre-sold to the Chinese, but a small amount comes off at Kyaukse and powers the plant through a network of yellow pipes.

Renting power stations like the one at Kyaukse has helped give the Burmese government a little breathing space - but it is a sticking plaster not a permanent solution.

Myanmar's power infrastructure is in a dire state. Only a third of the population, overwhelmingly in urban areas, are connected to the grid and most of them have to put up with intermittent electricity supplies.

At best the national output is 4,000 MW, and that is heavily dependent on hydropower so it is vulnerable to seasonal variations.

With Myanmar's political reforms have come ambitious plans to catch up with its neighbours economically. But that won't happen until there is a cheap and reliable source of electricity.

## Three roadblocks to 8pc growth

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However, statistics show that the GDP-private investment ratio has gradually been shrinking in the last three fiscal years. In the last fiscal year, it decreased by 0.36 percentage point year-on-year to 21.39 percent, according to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

As for development spending, while it is gradually increasing, the slow pace of implementation and the end-centric spending has been failing to ensure quality development expenditure.

For instance, in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, only 9 percent of the total allocation for annual development programme has been spent, which is the lowest in four years.

To bring qualitative changes to the implementation of development projects, regular and meaningful monitoring is required as well as ensuring accountability where necessary, the report said.

However, in this regard, Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal last week admitted that there are various flaws in implementing the ADP and told reporters that they have identified a number of steps which will be fully implemented from the next fiscal year.

About the slow revenue growth, the report said at the beginning of the government's last tenure, 100 percent of the earning target was achieved, but in fiscal 2012-13 92 percent could be reached and in fiscal 2013-14 82 percent.

## Realtors call for faster building permission

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The comments came at a press conference to announce the REHAB Winter Fair 2014, set to begin on Wednesday at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka. The five-day event will be inaugurated by Housing and Public Works Minister Mosharraf Hossain.

A total of 145 real estate companies and building material suppliers as well as five financial institutions will take part in the fair, said Haque, also the chairman of the fair's standing committee.

No member will be allowed to display unauthorised projects at the exhibition, he said, adding that a team comprising officials from city development authority Rajuk and

REHAB will monitor the authenticity of the projects showcased at the premises.

If any illegal project is found, the monitoring cell of Rajuk will remove the stall from the fair venue, said Haque.

The exhibition, which will remain open from 10am to 9pm, will cost Tk 50 for single entry and Tk 100 for multiple entries.

The association also took the opportunity to voice out its demand for low-cost loans and more housing projects under public-private partnership.

Real estate now contributes around 7 percent to the GDP. It employs around one lakh skilled people and another 35 lakh in the backward linkage industries, according to industry people.



Officials of Eastern Bank distribute warm clothes among the cold-hit poor of Char Sharishaban in Dighirpar, Munshiganj recently.