

এসআইবিএল ইসলামিক হোম ফাইন্যান্স

গ্র্যাপাটমেন্ট / ফ্ল্যাট ক্রয়, গৃহ নির্মাণ, গৃহ বহিষ্করণ অথবা গৃহ সংস্কারের জন্য সর্বমোট ৫,০০,০০০ টাকা থেকে সর্বোচ্চ ৯,২০,০০,০০০ টাকা পর্যন্ত বিনিয়োগ সুবিধা।

স্বপ্নময় জীবনের চাবি আপনার হাতে

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SIBL ইসলামিক বেন্টিফিকার

River transit fees proposed for India

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON

Different ministries and divisions have proposed transit fees that amount to Tk 347 or \$4.4 per tonne under the inland water transit and trade protocol with India.

The proposal was made at an inter-ministerial meeting chaired by Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan in Dhaka yesterday.

At the meeting, the National Board of Revenue proposed Tk 180 in various fees per tonne.

The tax authority initially proposed charging Tk 580 based on the transit-related core committee estimates prepared in 2012.

But the shipping ministry told the NBR that the rate was too high as the policy of the World Trade Organisation. It asked the tax collector to send a revised proposal.

A shipping ministry official said at yesterday's meeting the NBR was asked to send its proposal regarding the charges to the shipping ministry after taking the finance minister's approval.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority has proposed Tk 10 per tonne as fees for using the river route. Besides, if its warehouse is used, a separate charge will be levied.

The Directorate of Sea Transportation has proposed charging Tk 156 for survey and navigation.

The Road Transport and Highways Division suggested a fee of Tk 1.024

PROPOSED CHARGES AND EARNINGS UNDER RIVER PROTOCOL	
NBR:	Tk 180 per tonne
BIWTA:	Tk 10 per tonne
Directorate of Sea Transportation:	Tk 156 per tonne
Roads:	Tk 1.024 per ton/kilometre
Estimated transit traffic:	15 lakh tonne
Ship owners' earnings:	Tk 823.9 crore a year
BIWTA earnings:	Tk 76.25 crore a year
Additional earnings from transit cargo:	Not yet fixed

per tonne per kilometre for using the roads under the Arrangement of River Protocol.

However, the Bridges Division and the environment ministry did not propose any charge yet.

Mashiur Rahman, the prime minister's economic affairs adviser; Shafiqe Alam Mehdi, shipping secretary; and Nasir Arif Mahmud, head of the technical committee on shipping protocol, were present at the meeting.

The meeting discussed different aspects of the charges, which will be

finalised after further discussions, Mahmud told The Daily Star.

The charges will be finalised on the basis of the decision taken at the higher level of the government, he said.

A shipping ministry official said the transit fees will be finalised in the India-Bangladesh Joint Technical Committee.

The meeting also discussed the NBR's proposal of imposing 100 percent bank guarantee for Indian transit cargo.

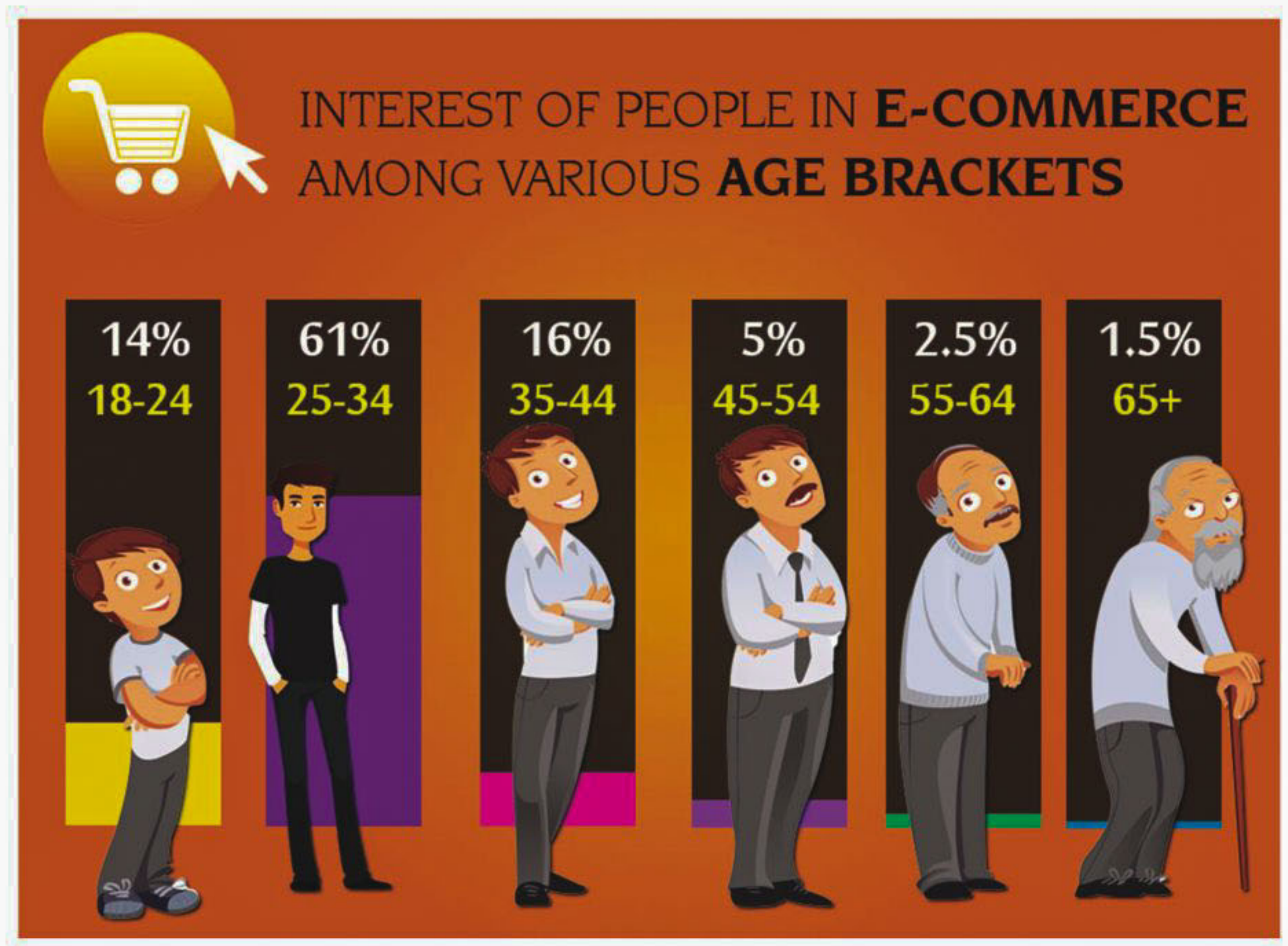
The shipping ministry opposed the imposition of 100 percent bank guarantee in the inter-ministerial meeting and suggested imposing an alternative guarantee which will not add additional costs to Indian operators.

At present, the BIWTA takes Tk 2 lakh as security money.

Earlier in April, during a shipping secretary level meeting in New Delhi, the Indian side too voiced its opposition against the bank guarantee requirement.

At the meeting yesterday, the BIWTA and private ship owners presented a calculation as to how much Bangladesh will earn when transportation of Indian transit cargo starts.

According to their estimate, if the transit is introduced in the river routes, around 15 lakh tonnes of various goods including food grains, fertiliser and industrial raw materials will be transported a year.



Growth of e-commerce driven by youth

25- and 34-year olds dominate online shopping: survey

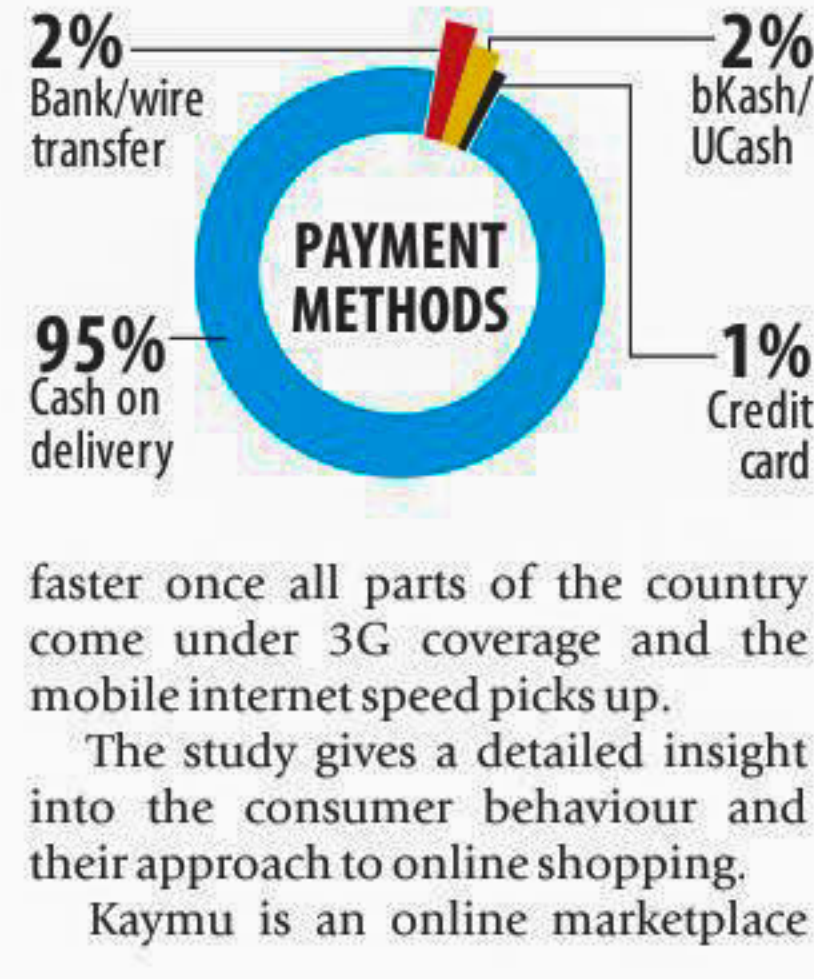
MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

People between 25 and 34 years shop the most from the local e-commerce sites, a recent study found.

The 35-44 and 18-24 age brackets take up the second and third places, according to the study by Kaymu Bangladesh.

"In Bangladesh, e-commerce is growing faster and we hope this market will find a strong position in world perspective also after USA, China and India," said Quazi Zulquarnain, Kaymu Bangladesh's deputy managing director.

This segment of trade will grow



that began operations in Bangladesh in January 2014. It offers an array of products including clothing, footwear, mobile phones, computers, jewellery, watches, electronics, books, and food and beverages. Mobile phones and electronics are clearly the most popular items.

Every day 20,000 to 25,000 users visit the site, with 35 percent of the e-commerce traffic coming from Dhaka, followed by Chittagong at 29 percent and Gazipur 15 percent.

Dhaka is the right place for growing e-commerce because of traffic jam and some other issues, he said.

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Off to a good start: tax fair pulls in crowds

SARWAR A CHOWDHURY and DWAIPAYAN BARUA

Ashis Biswas, a retired official of the Chittagong Port Authority, has been filing his tax returns for the past three years at the annual income tax fair, as he finds it to be the easiest and most hassle-free way of doing so.

When he was in service, a consultant used to prepare his returns and file them. He had to do it all by himself after his retirement, an exercise he found to be complicated.

"So, I came to the fair three years ago and the tax officials helped me prepare them," he said, while filing his returns on the first day of the weeklong income tax fair at Agrabad in Chittagong.

In Dhaka, the fair is taking place at the Officer's Club on Bailey Road, where crowds of taxpayers were seen filing their returns for fiscal 2015-16.

Organised by the National Board of Revenue since 2010, the fair provides tax-related assistance to taxpayers, receives returns and issues acknowledgement receipts on the spot.

Its objective is to motivate people to become taxpayers and widen the tax net.

Of the total population of 16 crore, there are 17 lakh taxpayer identification number (TIN) holders at present.



Taxpayers fill out forms at the tax fair in Chittagong. The annual event also began in Dhaka yesterday.

Of them, 12 lakh submitted returns last year -- a number that upsets policymakers, including Finance Minister AMA Muhith, who has set a target of collecting more than 50 percent of the revenues through income tax by fiscal 2021-22.

Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu echoed the same in his inaugural speech in Dhaka.

The number of people paying income tax is very low, he said, adding that it would be possible to become a middle-income country before the targeted 2041 if all pay their taxes properly.

The industries minister said the government will welcome those who are yet to join the tax net and they will face no harassment.

At the fair, taxpayers can also

deposit their tax money at the booths of Sonali and Janata banks, and register for electronically generated TINs or re-register for e-TINs to replace their old TINs.

"The introduction of online TIN generation is nothing short of a miracle to me as I do not need to take the trouble of moving from table to table at the tax office," Mostafizur Rahman, a taxpayer,

said after filing returns in Dhaka.

Rahman, who has been paying taxes for a decade, stopped going to the tax office in person ever since the fair first began.

The tax fair this year, apart from taking place in divisional cities for a week and districts town for four days each, will also be held in 86 upazilas: for two days in 29 upazilas and one day in 57 upazilas, all between September 16-22, according to the NBR.

The event began yesterday in 13 district towns and six upazilas, along with seven divisional cities, including Dhaka and Chittagong.

Since its introduction, the event has gained much popularity. Now, many taxpayers, like Biswas and Rahman, wait for the annual event to complete their tax-related formalities in a hassle-free environment.

Ayesha Khatun, another retired government employee, is one of them. She had to visit the tax office twice to submit her income and wealth statement once.

"The responsible officer left his seat without signing the acknowledgement receipt. I had to visit again to get that. Later, I started filing the returns here."

Many other visitors had the same opinion: they often miss this friendly and hassle-free environment at the NBR offices at other times.

Govt publishes rules on amended labour law

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government yesterday published the amended labour rules, one of the major conditions for regaining trade privileges from the US.

"We have clarified the amended labour law in the rules," said Mikail Shipar, labour and employment secretary.

After the twin industrial disasters of Tazreen Fashions fire and Rana Plaza building collapse, the government amended the Labour Laws 2006 in parliament in July 2013.

While the US government suspended the generalised system of preferences (GSP) for Bangladesh in June 2013, the Obama administration also gave a set of 16 conditions in Bangladesh Action Plan to be fulfilled by the country to regain the status.

Bangladesh fulfilled almost all the conditions and submitted progress reports on the action plan to the United States Trade Representative twice, but the US government did not reconsider reinstating the trade privilege as the labour laws were not amended.

"We have fulfilled another major condition. We hope to regain the GSP in the next review in November," Shipar told The Daily Star by phone.

In the rules published on Tuesday, the government clarified the option where 0.03 percent from all exports would be deposited in the workers' welfare fund, Shipar added.

"We will use the fund in case of any crisis or insurance coverage for the workers." The rules on outsourcing workers have also been explained. Any contract firm that works as an outsourcing company and wants to supply workers to a factory will need to apply to the inspector general of factories with the required documents, according to the rules.

The factory owners will also have to serve appointment letters to the workers within 15 days of completion of probation. The owners will also bear the cost of workers photos for the appointment letters.

BTRC to ask Citycell to clear dues

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The telecom regulator will ask Citycell to clear dues of Tk 258.24 crore in two weeks, or will sue the company for failure to pay.

A letter will be issued to the country's oldest mobile operator soon, according to a decision taken at a meeting of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, said an

official.

Citycell has not cleared any government fees, including licence renewal charges, in the past two years, the regulator's documents show.

It last renewed its licence in 2011 and paid just one instalment out of three, leaving Tk 229 crore unpaid.

BTRC is also yet to receive Tk 12.34 crore in spectrum fees, Tk 10.98 crore in revenue sharing, and Tk 5.92 crore

for the social obligation fund.

In November last year, BTRC served a legal notice to Citycell, asking why its licence should not be cancelled for non-payment of fees.

In response, the operator said there was no reason the licence should be cancelled as they paid 49 percent of the allocated fees and also received lower than their allocated share of spectrum.

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