

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES				
STOCK	CHANGE	PRICE	CHANGE	MARKET	CHANGE	PRICE	CHANGE	CURRENCY	BUY	SELL	PRICE	CHANGE
SDX	0.09%	4,480.18		MUMBAI	0.38%	24,717.99		USD	77.85			
CSCX	0.15%	8,396.91		TOKYO	0.51%	16,938.87		EUR	86.03			
Gold		\$1,249.40		SINGAPORE	0.70%	2,828.86		GBP	111.37			
Oil		\$38.49		SHANGHAI	0.16%	2,809.17		JPY	78.84			
								BUY TK	77.85	86.03	111.37	0.67
								SELL TK	78.84	89.42	114.76	0.70

# Star BUSINESS

DHAKA MONDAY MARCH 14, 2016

আপনার বিআরটিএ ফি এবং সকল ইউটিলিটি বিল এসআইবিএল এর যে কোন শাখার মাধ্যমে জমা দিন

\* ফ্রি অনলাইন সেবা  
যে কোন প্রয়োজনে ০৯৬৯২০০৯২২

## New push for Robi's merger with Airtel

### Malaysian High Commission writes to BTRC for approval

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

The Malaysian High Commission in Dhaka is pursuing the telecom regulator on the proposed merger of Robi and Airtel, saying the move will further strengthen relations between the two countries' business communities.

"We truly believe your decision in favour of the merger would encourage potential Malaysian investors to further invest in Bangladesh and would certainly have a positive impact in attracting more foreign investment in the country," reads the letter signed by Ahmad Fikri Zakian, second secretary of the high commission.

The merger will allow Robi to lend a strong hand in realising the vision of a Digital Bangladesh, according to the letter.

Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission received the letter in the first week of March, just before Malaysia halted the recruitment of new foreign workers, including 15 lakh Bangladeshis.

On January 28, the parent companies of Robi and Airtel signed a merger deal that would make the combined entity the second largest operator in Bangladesh.

They began merger talks in August last year and got the primary approval with some conditions from the regulator a month later.

Without mentioning Grameenphone, the letter said the competition in the market is heavily in favour of the leading operator and it is difficult for Robi and Airtel to separately sustain the heavy investment considering their market share.

"Both Axiata Group and Bharti Airtel believe that combining their businesses will form greater economies of scale for both groups and will definitely enhance the value and services to the consumers as well as to the industry at large."

Recently, several banks, the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, international gateway (IGW) operators, and interconnection exchanges (ICXs) sent letters to the BTRC to express support for the merger.

Meanwhile, the BTRC organised a public hearing for the opinions of different stakeholders. The telecom watchdog also conducted two separate market studies to gauge the socio-economic implications of the merger.

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Extreme right, Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed poses at the launch of Bangladesh Trade Portal, at Sonargaon hotel in Dhaka yesterday.

## Website launched for investors

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

With just the click of a button, anyone can now gather information on the government's internal and overseas trade and investment policies as the commerce ministry yesterday launched the Bangladesh trade portal.

The ministry launched the website as local and foreign businessmen sometimes complain that they do not get adequate information on the country's export, import, investment policies and current economic situation.

"I hope businessmen will immensely be benefited from the use of the trade portal. We would be able to connect to the rest of the world with this portal," Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed said at the launching ceremony of the website at Sonargaon hotel in Dhaka.

The ministry will sign a deal with the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry to make sure that the portal is regularly updated with data from the apex trade body, said Ahmed.

Chris Lewis-Jones, project manager of Bangladesh Trade Portal, said users can view the portal in both English and Bangla, as many people prefer to get information in the local language. The portal -- www.bangladeshtradeportal.gov.bd -- will ensure more transparency in trade data and reduce the cost of doing business.

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## DCCI calls for quick fix to ban on direct air cargo

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry yesterday expressed deep concern over the UK's and Australia's ban on direct cargo flights from Bangladesh.

"The DCCI is deeply concerned over the decision to ban the entry of direct cargo to the UK. We believe this will have a serious impact on our exports," the leading chamber said in a statement yesterday.

The UK government banned the entry of direct air cargo flights from Dhaka on March 8, citing

Bangladesh's failure to meet international security requirements.

Earlier on December 19, 2015, Australia banned direct air cargo flights from Bangladesh, citing the same concern.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines, the national flag carrier, flies cargo directly to the UK four times a week in its passenger flights.

Each flight carries an average of 25 tonnes of cargo, mostly apparel, vegetables and agro-products, to the UK.

The UK is the third largest garment export destination for

Bangladesh after Germany.

In 2014-15, the total export and import volumes of Bangladesh with the UK were \$3.2 billion and \$330.72 million respectively, according to DCCI.

"This is pertinent to emphasize our concern as the export basket of Bangladesh includes garment products and frozen fish to large extent, among others items, which are likely to be hit the hardest by this ban," according to the statement.

The chamber urges the Bangladesh government to work jointly with the UK and Australia

to improve the overall security requirements.

If the ban is not lifted soon, Bangladeshi exporters may have to export their products through Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand or Dubai, which will definitely increase the cost of doing business and lead time, added the association.

"For better security arrangements, the government should look into the matter now with serious concern. We must not fall back due to security excuses," said the chamber.

## Maisha Group to get licence for private economic zone

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Arisha Economic Zone, a concern of property developer Maisha Group, will receive a prequalification licence today from Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority or Beza to set up an economic zone in Bosila in Dhaka.

Beza Executive Chairman Paban Chowdhury will hand over the licence to Arisha at a programme in Dhaka, officials said.

In line with the prequalification licence, Arisha Economic Zone will have to do an environmental impact assessment, feasibility study and a masterplan by the next one year.

It will be the seventh economic zone to be built by any private company.

An industrial park will be constructed, where 158 industrial plots will be available for entrepreneurs at the economic zone on 85 acres, according to Maisha Group's website. The company has also investments in real estate, infrastructure development and power.

The project will consist of a container terminal and jetty, a well-equipped fire station and security arrangement, a five-star hotel with a helipad and a modern effluent treatment plant.

Three power plants, each with 108MW capacity, are also being built. It will be a completely planned and organised industrial park for safe investment, according to the website.

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## Malaysia to build power plant

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Malaysia plans to set up a 1,320-megawatt power plant at Moheshkhali and provide 70 percent of the project cost as loans to Bangladesh.

The cabinet committee on purchase yesterday in a meeting chaired by Finance Minister AMA Muhith gave the project the go-ahead.

The government and Malaysia will each have a 50 percent share of the plant and Bangladesh will bear 30 percent of the project cost.

The meeting directed the power division to discuss the issue of bringing down Bangladesh's share in the fund to 20 percent with the Malaysian government.

Also at yesterday's meeting, the cabinet committee rejected a Chinese proposal on setting up another 1,320 MW power plant at Moheshkhali.

The proposal said the country would provide 70 percent of the required loan amount and control 70 percent ownership as well.

The finance minister informed reporters that he directed the power division to have talks

with China so that their terms and conditions match with those of Malaysia.

The government plans to set up a total power hub at Moheshkhali where Japan will build several power plants that will altogether produce 3,000 MW of electricity, Muhith said.

Japan will also build a seaport at Moheshkhali through which coal for the power plants will be imported.

A huge amount of coal will be imported using this port, but Japan will not use the whole amount; some of the coal will be used in other power plants, he added.

## Asia's prosperity vital for the world: IMF chief

SOHEL PARVEZ, from New Delhi

Asia's prosperity is vital not only for the region but for the world, the International Monetary Fund said yesterday.

"Asia is a vibrant region with a large population. It is clear to us that this region of the world is where growth is originating and is going to come from in the years to come," said Christine Lagarde, managing director of the IMF.

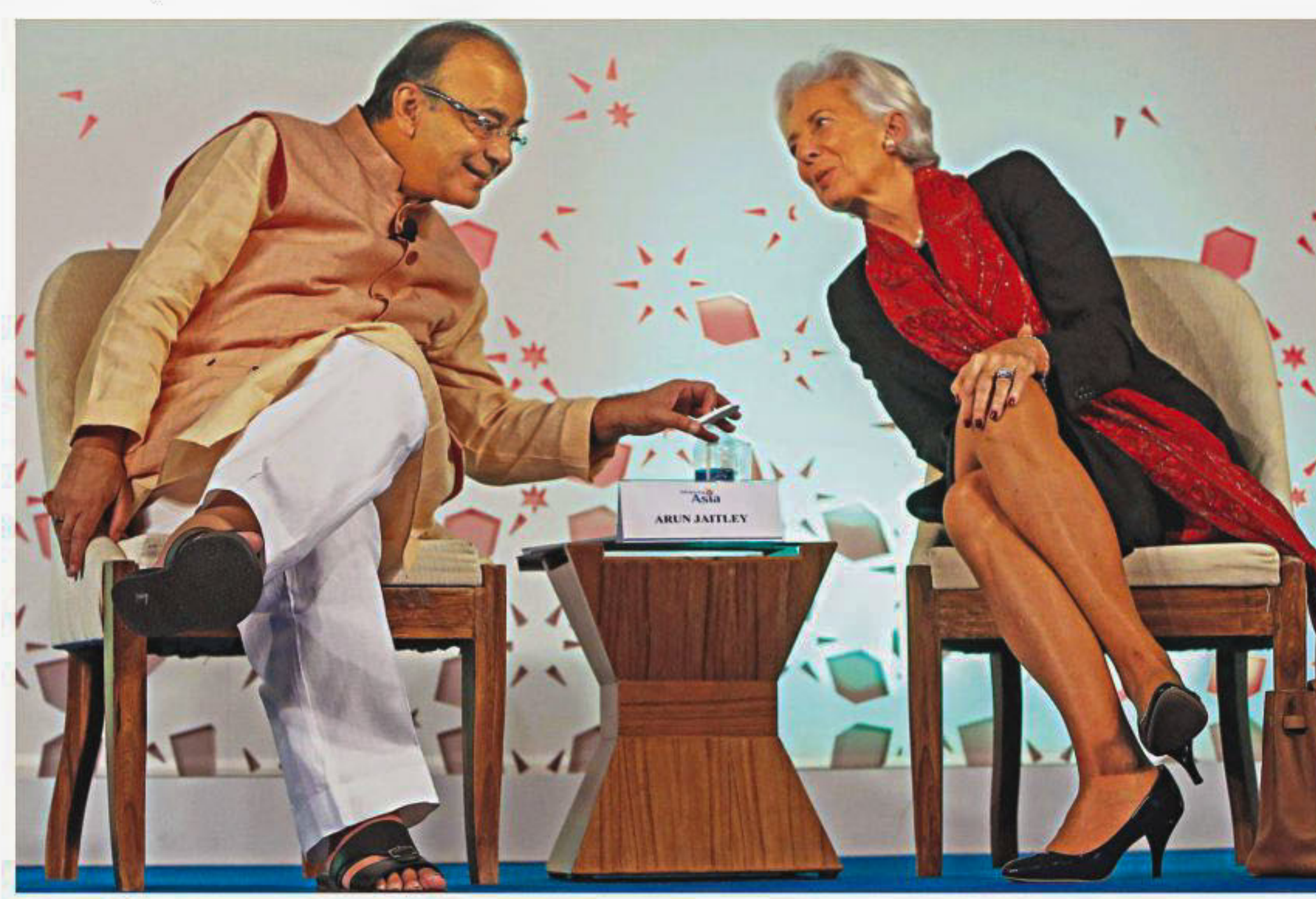
Her comments came at the conclusion of the two-day conference, 'Advancing Asia: Investing for the Future', organised by the IMF and the Indian government at the Taj Palace in New Delhi.

The conference saw participation from senior officials, corporate executives, academics and civil society representatives of more than 30 Asian countries. The Daily Star is a media partner of the event.

Lagarde went on to term the conference a productive and constructive one. "It has really been a great success."

"We took stock of Asia's strong economic performance and its ongoing policy challenges -- monetary, fiscal and structural -- in the face of an increasingly uncertain global economic environment."

A combination of monetary, fiscal and structural reforms will make economic growth sustain-



India's Finance Minister Arun Jaitley speaks with International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde after delivering his closing address during the "Advancing Asia: Investing for the Future" conference in New Delhi, India yesterday.

able and inclusive, she said.

The issues of climate change, inclusive growth, gender inequality that dog Asia require attention as of now.

Lagarde said the IMF is Asia's

partner and wants to continue to be one. "That partnership with IMF and Asia is embedded in the quota reform that we have just completed."

The IMF in January announced

implementation of quota reforms that will give more voting rights to emerging economies such as India and China in the functioning of the multilateral institution.

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## Energy-efficient electronic products gaining popularity

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Manufacturers are increasingly moving toward energy-efficient electronics and electrical and engineering products due to rising awareness of environmental sustainability.

A decade ago when solar home systems started to garner attention, solar energy was limited to small-scale power solutions that could light up homes, charge mobile phones and run radios and TVs.

In recent years, the use of solar energy has diversified and renewable energy is being used to run power pumps, water pumps, solar street lights and solar fridges, to name a few.

The demand for environment-friendly products is going up, said M Jocelin, sales manager of Shenzhen Yingli New Energy Resources Company Ltd of China.

His company produces solar panels, LED bulbs, fans, TVs, radios and mobile phone chargers that could be run by solar power. The products were displayed at the seventh International Innovation and Development Expo held at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka.

Rahimafrooz Distribution Ltd, a concern of Rahimafrooz Group, has brought in hotel room solutions made by France's Hager, a leading supplier of solutions and services for electrical installations in residential, commercial and industrial buildings.

The solutions are controlled by a key card, which can be used to regulate energy consumption in a room.

The company has already supplied the solutions to five major hotels in Bangladesh and is in the process of installing another three, said Reza Noor Alam, a senior official of the company.

Allied Solar has brought in, among other products, street lights with built-in battery, said Rasheduzzaman Raju, assistant manager for sales and marketing of the company.

Honeycom IT & Automation's home automation system can reduce carbon emissions by 35 percent and water use by 40 percent and save energy by 50 percent, said Imtiaz Ahmed, the company's commissioning engineer.

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মিডল্যান্ড ব্যাংক এর শাখায়

Contact Centre: (+88) 096 66 410 888  
(+88) 096 11 410 888

midlandbank ltd  
bank for inclusive growth