

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

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যে কোন প্রয়োজনে ০৯৬৯২০০৯২২

Star BUSINESS

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Bangladesh has lowest internet penetration in South Asia: ITU

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

Bangladesh has the lowest internet penetration in South Asia, with just 14.40 percent of the population having connectivity to the internet, according to a report by the International Telecommunication Union.

The country stands 144th in ITU's ICT Development Index, up from its 148 spot in 2010.

Even Myanmar that introduced mobile phone services only a few years ago came ahead of Bangladesh in the rankings, at 142. Its internet penetration stands at 21.80 percent.

As of December 2015, Bangladesh has 38.67 lakh fixed broadband subscriptions, which is 2.41 percent of the total population, according to the ITU report.

Earlier, the World Bank in its 'World Development Report 2016: Digital Dividends' said Bangladesh has the fifth largest offline population in the world, with about 148 million still not connected to the internet. However, the government denied both the reports.

Zunaid Ahmed Palak, state minister for ICT, said the government is satisfied with the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission's published numbers, which show the country's internet penetration is about 40 percent.

"They are authentic and reliable," Palak said, adding that the government will request the ITU to update the report with the BTRC's figures.

INTERNET PENETRATION
SOURCE: ITU
In % of population

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Paddy prices rebound

SOHEL PARVEZ

The prices of paddy have risen on the back of the government's purchase and duty spike to support farmers, who incurred losses for low prices in the face of higher production and imports last year, said some millers and farmers.

Prices of coarse paddy, mainly hybrid, have increased by more than Tk 200 to Tk 650-Tk 675 each maund in the last two months.

The prices of medium- and fine-quality paddy also rose in the same period, said KM Layek Ali, general secretary of the Bangladesh Auto, Major and Husking Mills Association.

"This is mainly because of paddy procurement by the government at higher prices. Paddy prices started rising as soon as the government began purchasing," he added.

The food ministry in April said the Directorate General of Food would buy seven lakh tonnes of paddy at Tk 23 per kilogram during the *boro* harvesting season.

The *boro* paddy harvesting season ended in June.

It also announced to buy six lakh tonnes of rice at Tk 32 each kilogram from the *boro* harvest.

As of July 21, the food office bought 6.33 lakh tonnes of paddy since it began procurement on May 5.

Also, a slump in import fuelled prices of the staple food as the oversupply that the market recorded last year depleted gradually.

"Now there is no abundant surplus in the market. The supply of paddy in the local markets is very low," said Nirod Boron Saha, a rice and paddy wholesaler and miller in Naogaon, one of the major wholesale centres in the north.

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Recipients of AGROW awards pose with Tofail Ahmed, commerce minister; Abrar A Anwar, CEO of Standard Chartered Bangladesh; Bitopi Das Chowdhury, country head of corporate affairs at StanChart; and Shariful Islam, managing director of Bangladesh Brand Forum; and Syed Ferhat Anwar, a member of the jury board, at an award ceremony at Radisson Hotel in Dhaka yesterday.

Accolades for icons in agriculture

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Four institutions, one group and two individuals were yesterday honoured for their exemplary contribution to the country's agriculture sector, which has achieved self-sufficiency in cereal food production.

Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed handed out the crests and prize money to the winners of the third edition of the AGROW Award, initiated by the Standard Chartered Bank.

This year, AGROW Award honoured the industry contributors in seven categories. A total of 350 nominations were received.

Ispahani Agro Ltd, a sister concern of MM Ispahani Ltd, which has operations in areas of seeds, biotechnology and agro processing, was crowned the Best Agricultural Organisation in the research & innovation category.

The approach of the company operating

since 2007 is to supply agro input to ensure safe food security.

State-run Department of Agricultural Extension, which provides efficient and effective services to all categories of farmers across the country, was chosen the Best Agricultural Organisation in the support & execution category.

Bengal Braided Rugs Ltd, one of the leading manufacturers of jute rugs, bags, baskets, yarn and other jute-related products, bagged the award as the Best Agricultural Exporter.

Its main export markets are North America and Western Europe.

Alim Industries Ltd, one of the leading agricultural machinery manufacturers in Bangladesh, was picked the winner in the Best Use of Technology in agriculture category.

Abdus Sattar Sana from Satkhira was awarded the male farmer of the year, while Hosne Ara

Begum from Pirozpur won the award in the female category.

The Farmer of the Year award (subsistence market group) went to a group of six women from Cox's Bazar for cultivating vegetables through harvested rainwater.

Besides, WorldFish Bangladesh, a research group; Rifat Enterprise; farmers Babul Hossain and Kulsum Begum; and the Group for Making the Village Green were given honourable mentions in different categories.

The best male farmer, the best female farmer and the farmer of the year in subsistence market group categories were handed over prize money of Tk 5 lakh each.

The three honourable mentions in the categories received Tk 50,000 each.

Speaking as the chief guest, Ahmed thanked Standard Chartered Bank for initiating the award.

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Bashundhara to build two economic zones

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bashundhara Group will receive two prequalification licences today from Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority to set up two separate economic zones at Keraniganj in Dhaka. Beza Executive Chairman Paban Chowdhury will hand

over the licences to Bashundhara Group at a programme in Dhaka.

The group will set up the Bashundhara Special Economic Zone on 56 acres of land and the East West Special Economic Zone on 53.87 acres of land in Keraniganj -- some 15 kilometres from the capital.

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Terror attack won't impact business: Tofail

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The recent terror attack on foreigners will not have any bad impact on the economy as the international business community has no plans to leave Bangladesh, Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed said yesterday.

Ahmed is scheduled to hold a meeting with top businessmen today at the commerce ministry to discuss the current security situation.

He spoke to reporters after a meeting with the deputy commissioners at the four-day DC Conference at the secretariat in Dhaka.

Ahmed instructed the DCs to build anti-terrorist unity in each district by involving ordinary people across the country so that no militancy can thrive.

The news reports of foreigners leaving the country and not returning for the terror attacks is not true, he said.

The fact is that foreigners travel and go on holiday in July and August, and as a result, fewer foreigners come here in these two months, according to the minister.

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