

ইচ্ছা থাকবে না অপূর্ণ
এবার নিজের একটা
গাড়ি
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বিনিয়োগ সুবিধায় ব্র্যান্ড নিউ ও
নিকশিড গাড়ি কেনার অপূর্ণ সুযোগ।

• ফ্রি অনলাইন সেবা
যে কোন প্রয়োজনে ০৯৬৯২০৯২২২

এসআইবিএল
ইসলামিক অটো ফাইন্যান্স



Star BUSINESS

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Govt's solar power plant yet to see light

More than four and a half years have passed but the government is yet to kick-start the Tk 192.6 crore installation of a 5-megawatt solar power plant at Kaptai in Rangamati.

The one-year project, which was approved in 2012 and scheduled to be complete by December 2013, has already been extended twice -- first up to December 2014 and then to December 2016.

The authority has sought another two years' time extension to finish the project.

"We are in the process of awarding the contract, but it will take at least three more months," Faruk Ahmed, project director and an executive engineer of Bangladesh Power Development Board or BPDB, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He also explained why the implementation of the project is getting delayed.

In July last year, when the contract was ready to be awarded, the winning lowest bidder declined to sign the documents, Ahmed said.

AT A GLANCE

Cost of project: **Tk 192.6 crore**

Tenure: **One year**

Got approval on **May 2, 2012**

Scheduled to be complete by **Dec 2013**

Extended twice -- first for one year up to **Dec 2013** and later for three years to **Dec 2016**

The contract is yet to be awarded

Another extension of two years has already been sought

Finding no other alternative, the authority now has to start all over again and float a new tender.

The present government has set up the goal of providing electricity to all by 2020 at an affordable price.

And to do so, the government has emphasised the development of renewable

energy as part of eco-friendly and fuel diversification programme.

The Renewable Energy Policy adopted in 2009 has envisioned that 5 percent of total energy production will have to come from renewable sources by 2015 and 10 percent by 2020.

The share of renewable energy is about 1 percent of total electricity available in Bangladesh, according to the Power Development Board.

But the government's target is likely to remain unachievable as different projects like the five-megawatt one at Kaptai has failed to progress as per the project plan.

The Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Department of the planning ministry conducted an inspection into the Kaptai plant on October 7-9.

The project was scheduled to finish by December 2013, but the implementation of the project has been pushed back twice: first by one year and again three years up to December this year. But the project had no physical and technical progress.

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0.5pc registered SIMs have wrong data

Mobile-based crimes have come down significantly: Tarana

Less than 0.5 percent of the SIM cards that were biometrically verified have incorrect data on them, State Minister for Telecom Tarana Halim said yesterday.

"If the subscribers had been conscious when providing finger prints, the errors wouldn't have happened," she said at a media briefing in Dhaka.

In total, 11.4 crore SIM cards have been verified through biometric registration and less than 0.5 percent or 5.7 lakh of those have loopholes.

The authorities are now working to iron out the glitches, the minister said.

Following biometric SIM verification, calls via illegal voice over internet protocol or VoIP have come down to below 10 percent from 35 percent, she said, adding that the trend of committing crimes using SIM cards has declined sharply as well.

"We do not have the real figures but the police and intelligence agencies have

assured us that mobile-related crimes apart from spoofing have declined about 99 percent as all the SIMs are now registered with biometrics."

Biometric SIM verification has no correlation with spoofing, a computer-based technology that is now being used for mobile phone-based crimes, Tarana said.

If anybody receives a spoofing call, he/she should call back the number to know whether the number is registered biometrically.

"After calling back, if the person receives the call, he/she must be owner of a biometrically verified SIM, which would make it clear that a third party has perpetrated it by using computer apps for toll or any other purpose."

The state minister also demonstrated how a spoofing call is generated for crimes.

Shahjahan Mahmood, chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, said they are working on a priority basis to address the issue.

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Customers shun Citycell

Citycell resumed its services after the telecom regulator reinstated its spectrum on Sunday evening but no customer switched back to the network in the last two days.

So far, only 400 connections are active and those too belong to Citycell employees or their family members, said a senior executive of the country's oldest mobile operator.

As of August, Citycell has 1.44 lakh active customers, according to Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission.

Meanwhile, the operator cannot get its billing system running right now, as its billing solution provider, Ushacomm, has jumped ship following Citycell's legal battles.

The operator's website is also offline after the BTRC suspended its spectrum on October 20 for failure to pay dues.

But Citycell won the right to come back in operation after the Supreme Court last week asked the government to restore its spectrum and let it continue for now.

The SC also directed the operator to pay Tk 100 crore to the telecom regulator by November 19; if they fail, BTRC will have the liberty to take any decision it wants on the operator's fate.

Citycell's Chairman Morshed Khan said they are preparing to pay the rest of their dues within the stipulated date.

About the operator's future plan, he said they will place a host of proposals before the board and they will choose one.

Earlier, Citycell's management tried to sell off the company but their efforts were in vain.

In the capital, the operator has started service from its three base transceiver stations in its headquarters in Mohakhali and in Gulshan.

The house owners are allowing Citycell technicians to gain access to some of their other BTSs as huge amounts of rent are unpaid.

In parts of the city, the operator has been unable to pay electricity bills, so there was no power in those BTSs, said another official.

"Most of our equipment is so outdated that after the shutdown we can't reopen it," he added.

Given the state of Citycell's infrastructure, operation will not last long if new investment is made, said another official. "Revenue has come down to zero and it will not come back up again if no new investment comes."

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Apparel export growth hinges on long-term strategies

European diplomats say as denim show kicks off in Dhaka



People through the two-day Bangladesh Denim Expo that started at International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka yesterday.

Bangladesh should set marketing strategies for its goods now, as the country will no longer enjoy the duty benefit once it leaves the least-developed country status by 2021, a European diplomat said yesterday.

International buyers will also take long-term strategies in line with Bangladesh's plans, said Johan Frishell, Swedish ambassador to Bangladesh.

Frishell was speaking at a discussion on "\$50 billion by 2021: innovation, the strategic business driver", on the sidelines of the

fifth Bangladesh Denim Expo at International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka.

Currently, Bangladesh has been enjoying zero-duty benefit to the EU under its Everything But Arms scheme and Generalised System of Preferences to some other countries as a least-developed country, but the trade benefit will not be in place once it is declared a developing country.

As a result, Bangladeshi garment items to the EU will face 12.50 percent duty after 2021.



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If Bangladesh wants to continue enjoying the zero-duty benefit to the EU after 2021, the country should attain the GSP Plus status by maintaining the international standards in fighting corruption, maintaining environmental balance and ensuring human rights.

Bangladesh should also think about the innovation of products, Frishell said.

If there is a long-term plan, the business would be sustainable and the international buyers will have confidence in them, he said.

The buyers will also have long-term

predictability about Bangladeshi market and production, he said.

"Long-term predictability is the key to sustainability," Frishell said.

Bangladesh should also negotiate bilaterally with major markets like the EU, Canada and the US for receiving the duty benefit once it becomes a developing country.

United efforts will be needed to make the garment sector sustainable, said Thomas Prinz, German ambassador to Bangladesh.

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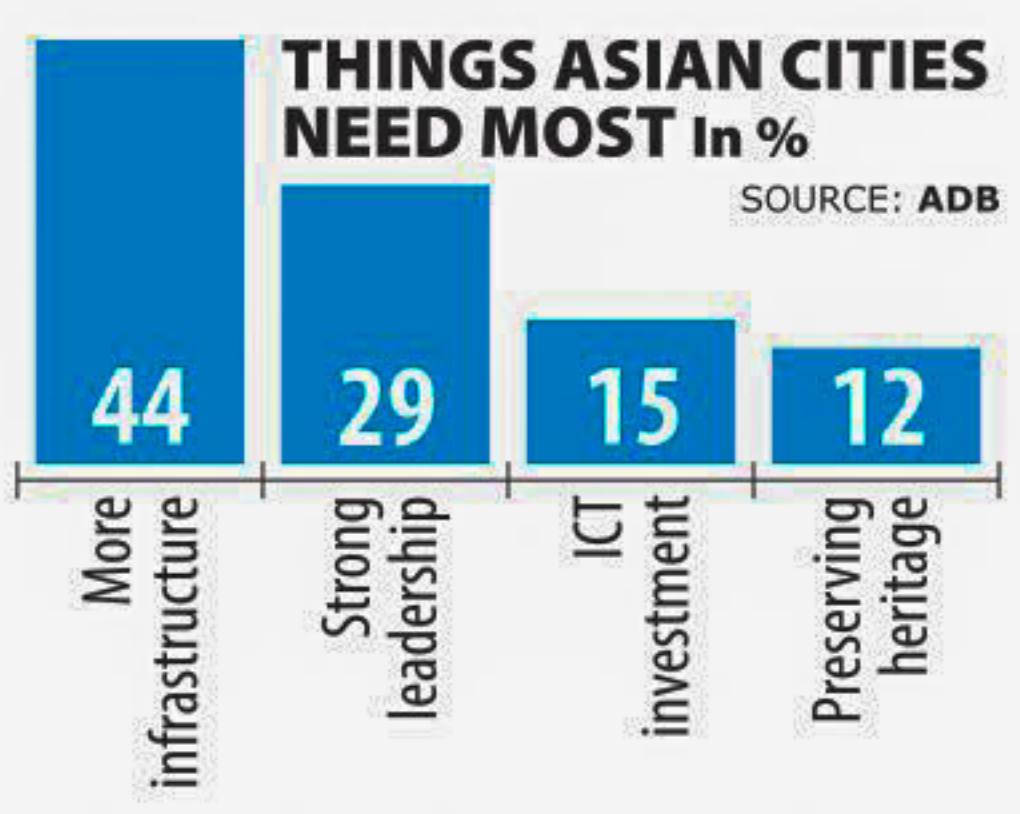
Asian cities should invest more in infrastructure, ICT: ADB poll

Investment in infrastructure, strong leadership, preservation of urban cultural heritage, and higher spending on ICT projects are crucial for Asia's secondary cities to become 'smart', according to a blog poll by Asian Development Bank.

In its October blog poll, the ADB asked its readers what Asia's secondary cities need most to become 'smart' cities, where public service delivery is efficient and all citizens benefit economically and socially from common assets like green space or cultural heritage.

Some 44 percent of the respondents said investing in infrastructure should be a priority.

A secondary city generally falls into one of three types: Sub-national urban centres of administration, manufacturing, agriculture or resource development; metropolitan clustered secondary cities, which develop on the periphery of metropolitan or urban regions and take the form of new towns, spillover growth centres



and linear cities; and corridor secondary cities, which develop as growth poles along major transportation corridors.

Normally, most secondary cities have populations ranging between 100,000 and 5 million, according to the Cities Alliance, a Brussels-based global partnership for poverty reduction and the promotion of cities in sustainable development.

According to the UN Human Settlements Programme, as of 2015 about 47 percent of the Asia's urban residents live in secondary cities, with a population of less than 500,000. Asia's infrastructure development needs are growing faster, and inequality and vulnerability are rising as the infrastructure investment gap widens.

Relative improvements in housing and access to electricity, water and sanitation for the poor have been overshadowed by absolute increases in the number of people living in slums.

"We need to address this problem in a complete way to make our cities -- especially the secondary ones -- not just smart, but more liveable," according to an article published on the ADB website.

Cities have traditionally faced trouble accessing crucial financing for infrastructure. Asia's secondary cities, or indeed major cities, committed to modernising their infrastructure should consider joining the International Infrastructure Support System (IISS).

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Garment retailers' confidence is back

They say they are happy about security steps

International apparel retailers got back confidence in Bangladesh as the government has taken stern actions against militants.

"We feel just fine. We are satisfied with the security. This is why so many garment retailers and businessmen came to the trade show," said Abdelkader Amouche, regional manager (Asia) of Vicunha, a Brazil-based denim factory, yesterday.

Amouche is attending the two-day denim exhibition organised by Bangladesh Denim Expo, a non-profit organisation, at International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka.

"The buyers are coming back as confidence has been restored," he said. After militant attacks at a café in Gulshan in

Dhaka, many international retailers either cancelled their trips to Dhaka or asked their local manufacturing partners to set the meetings in another country.

However, the situation has changed now, he said. "Bangladesh is an important market for us. We export 5 million metres of denim fabrics worth \$13 million to Bangladesh in a year. We have 30 percent year-on-year business growth here."

He said, to supply denim fabric to Bangladesh in the shortest possible time, the company maintains a buffer stock of two million metres in Sri Lanka.

"We have been supplying denim fabric to Bangladeshi garment makers for over six years now. We have potential to grow further as the country's apparel export is increasing fast."

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