

আপনার সংসার গুছিয়ে দিচ্ছি আমরা

এসআইবিএল ইসলামিক কনজুমার ফাইন্যান্স

আপনার সংসার পোছানোর আসবাবপত্র, শিফা সামগ্রী, ইলেক্ট্রনিক ও অন্যান্য জিনিসপত্র কেনার সুন্দর সমাধান দিচ্ছি আমরা।

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যে কোন প্রয়োজনে ০৯৬৯২০০৯২২



STAR BUSINESS

DHAKA FRIDAY JANUARY 13, 2017, POUSS 30, 1423 BS

No witch-hunting: new Islami Bank chairman assures staff

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The new management of Islami Bank will not indulge in any "witch hunting" of its employees, its Chairman Arastoo Khan said yesterday.

One can vote for any party, but it must not reflect on employees' professional activities, he said after a meeting with Finance Minister AMA Muhiath at his secretariat.

"But if any political leaning is found in your work, we will not allow it at any cost."

Khan cited diverting funds from the Islami Bank Foundation towards political movement in the guise of corporate social responsibility activity as a case of subversion.

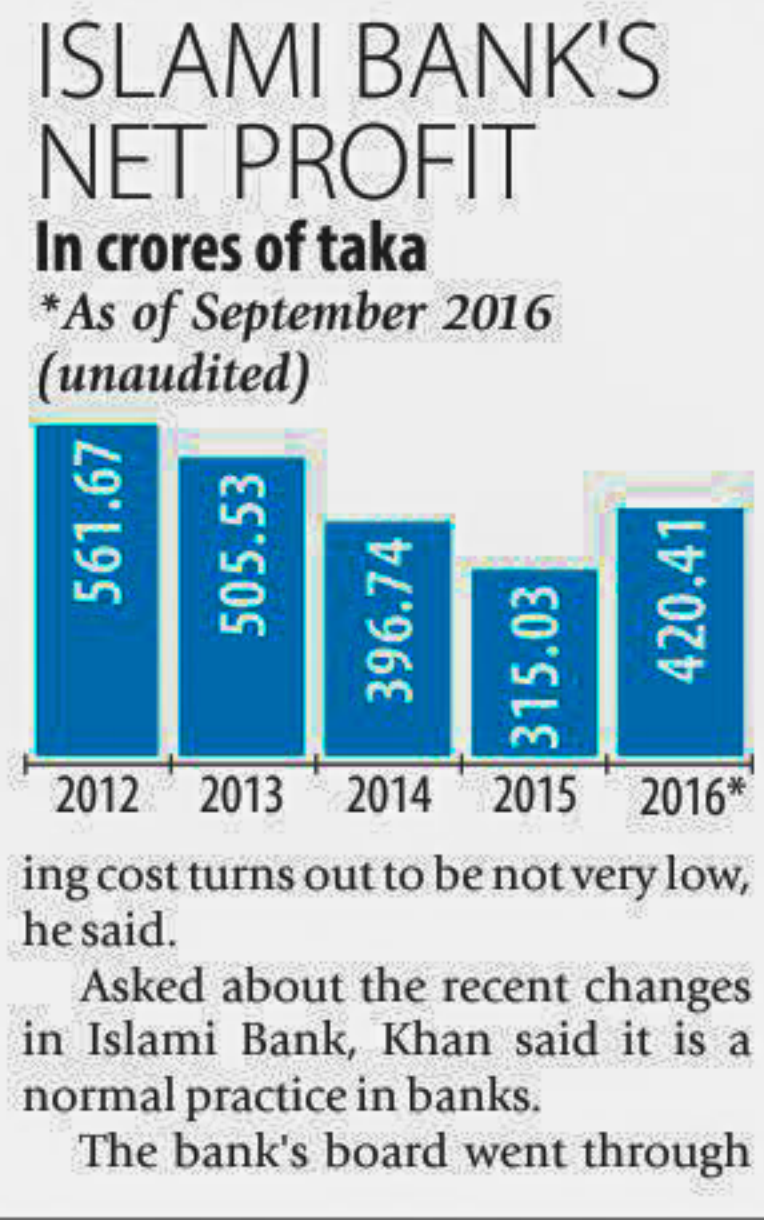
Asked about the reason for the meeting, Khan said the finance minister wanted to know about the bank's financial condition and how it was running.

"The financial health of the bank is very good. Last year it made Tk 2,003 crore [in operating profit]. Its non-performing loan is 3.5 percent," he said, adding that it was sitting on excess funds.

Discussions were held with the finance ministry about whether the banking system's excess funds can be used to finance the government's infrastructure projects.

Bangladesh usually takes funding from China and other countries to finance the projects.

Although the loans come with a 2 percent interest rate, the financ-



wholesale changes on January 5.

Responding to another question as to whether there is any political motive behind the recent changes, Khan said: "It is a change of guards. It is nothing political."

Meanwhile, the bank is also holding a two-day managers' conference, which started yesterday. The chairman and the directors spoke at the conference.

"The bank will not belong to any coterie -- it will be a bank for all. All will have to work in that way," said one of the board members.

Islami Bank will deploy all of its strength and abilities in developing the country and building the nation, Khan was quoted as saying in a statement.

12.75 lakh SIMs blocked for illegal calls in 9 months

Most of the SIMs are of Teletalk: BTRC report

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

The telecom regulator blocked 12.75 lakh SIMs of six mobile phone operators during January-September last year as those were used in carrying international calls illegally.

Of the blocked SIMs, 61 percent were from state-owned operator Teletalk, according to an internal report of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission.

The telecom watchdog seized 20,593 SIMs in raids against illegal routing of international calls during the period.

The mobile operators blocked 83,819 SIMs by self-regulation; 41,679 SIMs used in illegal call termination were detected by two European sample testing companies.

Teletalk has been at the top in illegal call termination for several years though its market share is only 2.51 percent, according to the report.

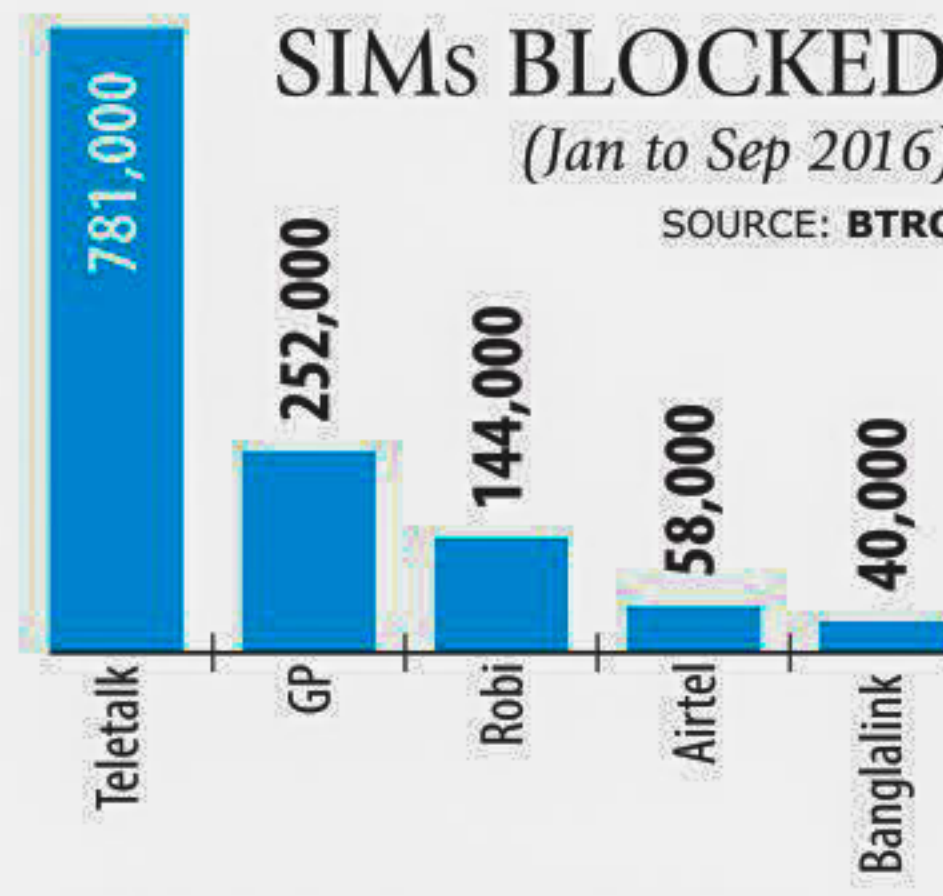
BTRC officials said they informed the government and the parliamentary standing committee on the telecom ministry about the illegal practice of Teletalk.

Tarana Halim, state minister for telecom, said she asked the telecom regulator to take action against any operator involved in carrying international calls illegally.

"If the BTRC doesn't take any action, it will have to accept responsibility for that," she said at a press conference at her office on Wednesday.

Teletalk officials declined to comment on the matter. Md Faizur Rahman Chowdhury, chairman of the Teletalk board, and Gias Uddin Ahmed, its managing director, said they are yet to get the report.

Chowdhury, who is also the telecom secretary, said any negative report on Teletalk is



Mandatory jute sacks for 11 more farm products

SOHEL PARVEZ

The government is set to make jute packaging mandatory for 11 more agricultural products as it continues to drum up domestic support for the ailing industry.

"Bringing more items under the compulsory packaging rule will accelerate the domestic use of jute goods," said Nasima Begum, joint secretary of the textiles and jute ministry, adding that the notice will be sent soon.

The newly-added commodities to the compulsory packaging rule are: chilli, onion, ginger,

garlic, turmeric, pulses, coriander, potato, flour and rice bran. The latest move is expected to create an additional demand for 7.26 lakh bales (1.32 lakh tonnes) of jute a year, according to an estimate of the Department of Jute.

Industry insiders said the move will help jute goods makers face the fallout of the antidumping duty imposed by India.

India on January 5 slapped an antidumping duty on the import of jute and jute goods from Bangladesh and Nepal to protect the domestic industry.

For Bangladesh's jute goods exporters, the

duty ranges between \$19 and \$352 per tonne -- a measure that is likely to affect shipments of jute products to the neighbouring country.

India accounted for 17 percent, or 1.41 lakh tonnes, of the 8.25 lakh tonnes of jute goods exports registered in fiscal 2015-16, according to data compiled by the DoJ.

Increased domestic consumption for inclusion of more items under the mandatory packaging rule will provide support to manufacturers to withstand any possible fall in demand, Nasima Begum said.

Microsoft, PlusOne team up to offer virtual access to healthcare

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Microsoft Bangladesh and PlusOne, a cloud-based telemedicine platform, have recently teamed up to provide more people with virtual access to healthcare in Bangladesh.

The Microsoft Azure cloud-based platform powered by RingMD will enable patients and doctors in Bangladesh or abroad to take part in live video and audio consultation, take appointments online and share encrypted medical records.

Virtual interactions on the platform are digitised and stored securely online for over 15,000 doctors registered with RingMD to make decisions based on the data.

Doctors and patients can register for free, Microsoft said in a statement yesterday.

Sonia Bashir Kabir, managing director of Microsoft Bangladesh, signed a memorandum of understanding with Mehreen Asaf Islam, chairman of PlusOne, and Rubaba Dowla, managing director, at a programme.



From right, Mehreen Asaf Islam, chairman of PlusOne; Sonia Bashir Kabir, managing director of Microsoft Bangladesh, and Rubaba Dowla, managing director of PlusOne, sign a memorandum of understanding at a programme to provide more people with virtual access to healthcare in Bangladesh.

US-Bangla starts daily flights to Muscat tomorrow

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

US-Bangla Airlines is going to operate daily flights to Muscat from Dhaka via Chittagong from tomorrow to cater to the growing passenger traffic on the international route.

The airline will add one more flight from the capital with its existing six weekly flights to make it a daily flight to the Gulf city, the private carrier said in a statement yesterday.

It will fly from Dhaka at 9pm and from Chittagong at 10:45pm every day and will arrive in Muscat at 2am.

The flight will start from Muscat at 3am every day and will arrive in Chittagong at 9:30am and in Dhaka at 10:40am.

Since the introduction of its flights on the route on November 11 last year, the private carrier has received tremendous response from passengers, leading US-Bangla to announce daily flight operations on the route.

The two-way fare on the Dhaka-Muscat route, including taxes and surcharges, starts from Tk 38,607 and the ticket price for the Chittagong-Muscat route starts from Tk 40,557.

US-Bangla also operates on Dhaka-Kathmandu and Dhaka-Kolkata routes.

The airline also plans to expand international flights to Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Bangkok, Doha and Guangzhou this year.

Textile makers get good response at German fair

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA, from Frankfurt

Bangladeshi companies received positive response from international retailers at the annual Heimtextil fair, the world's largest home textile exhibition, currently taking place in Frankfurt, Germany.

A total of 23 home textile companies from Bangladesh are participating in the four-day fair that began on Tuesday. Messe Frankfurt, one of the largest trade fair companies in the world, has been organising the event since 1971.

"The response from buyers is very positive. Most of our old customers in the EU are coming to our stalls," said Rashed Mosharrar, general manager for marketing at Zaber & Zubair Fabrics Ltd, a concern of Noman Group.

In fact, the interest this year has been higher than last year, he said, adding that the fair is a good oppor-

tunity to network with European retailers.

"The EU is our largest market," Mosharrar said, adding that 70 percent of the company's export receipts come from the region. Zaber & Zubair exports \$16 million worth of home textile in a month.

Almost all the Bangladeshi participants echoed the views of Mosharrar: they received overwhelming response from retailers from Germany, the second largest export destination for Bangladesh after the US.

Presentation is the most important factor for attracting buyers, said M Shahadat Hossain Sohel, managing director of Towel Tex Ltd, a Gazipur-based factory.

But, Bangladeshi home textile makers are facing challenges from Pakistani products, which also enjoy the zero-duty benefit to the EU.

Pakistan has the benefit of being a cotton grower, whereas Bangladesh is

a net importer of the fibre.

"This is why Bangladesh has been facing stiff competition in the home textile product segment," Mosharrar said.

Bangladeshi textile manufacturers should counter the threat by bringing diversified products into the market, he added.

"We are very much interested in Bangladeshi goods as the products are of high quality and the prices are very competitive," said HM Saiful Islam, a representative of Japanese brand Nitro.

Nitro has a longstanding business relationship with Bangladeshi companies, he said.

This year, nine companies from Bangladesh are participating in the fair under the supervision of Export Promotion Bureau, said AKM Ali Ahad Khan, joint secretary of the commerce ministry.

ICT exports much higher than reported: minister

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Export earnings from software and IT-related services of the last 12 months touched the \$700 million mark, which is much higher than the official number.

"The overall growth of the industry is huge. We hope to reach our target of earning \$1 billion from exports by 2018," said Zunaid Ahmed Palak, state minister for ICT.

Palak spoke at a press meet at his office in the capital yesterday on the occasion of the current government's three years in power. The government also targets the export earnings from the sector to reach \$5 billion by 2021, he said.

Data from the Export Promotion Bureau shows earnings from the sector stand close to \$250 million, which is a misleading figure and needs to be corrected, he said.

"We have earned over \$100 million from freelancing and another \$100 million from outsourcing."

A portion of the earnings of the industry comes from the informal channel, he said.

ICT exports can hit the \$1 billion mark as Bangladesh has no other single product to match it, Palak said. "ICT exports will cross \$5 billion by 2021 if the present trend of export of software and IT products by the IT companies together with freelance software developers and call centres continue."

The sector earned only \$26 million in January 2009 from exports when the government led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina came to power.