

**জীবনে প্রয়োজন**  
**আরো বেশি স্বাস্থ্য**  
সর্বাধুনিক প্রযুক্তি সম্বলিত ব্যাংকিং সেবায় মাসিক আয়ের সাথে বাড়তি আয় যোগ করুন আর জীবন করুন সুসমৃদ্ধ।

যে কোন প্রয়োজনে ০৯৬১২০০১১২২  
ইসলামী শরীআহ'র ম্যুদারাবা নীতির ভিত্তিতে পরিচালিত



## EU threatens to scrap trade benefits over labour rights

**REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA**

The European Union has threatened suspension of trade privileges for Bangladesh if the labour standards are not improved further.

The suspension would mean that Bangladesh would have to pay 12.5 percent duty for exports to the 28-nation bloc. At present, the country enjoys zero-duty access under the EU's Everything But Arms (EBA) scheme.

Three European Commission bodies in a joint letter to the Bangladesh embassy in Brussels said the country needed to implement the four recommendations made by the experts of the International Labour Organisation last year.

Bangladesh will need to demonstrate that it is taking concrete and lasting measures to ensure that labour rights are respected, according to the letter, which was forwarded to the commerce ministry last week by the embassy.

"This will be essential for Bangladesh to remain eligible for the EBA regime. Without such progress, our monitoring could eventually lead to the launch of a formal investigation, which could result in temporary withdrawal of preferences," it said.

Contacted, Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed said: "The labour unions in Bangladesh have been enjoying full freedom. We have improved the labour standards a lot."

Ahmed will discuss the matter with the EU in the upcoming third round of Sustainability Compact meeting between the EU and Bangladesh in May.

Siddiqur Rahman, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said they are already in talks with a visiting EU team.

"We have progressed a lot in ensuring labour rights over the years. We are highlighting our progresses to the delegation. We have a daylong meeting with the team in Dhaka tomorrow," Rahman said.

Under GSP (Generalised System of Preferences) regulation, beneficiaries are required to respect international principles of human rights and labour rights in order to continue to benefit from this preferential trade regime with the EU.

The ILO Committee of Experts in its latest publication in February expressed its concerns about the recent allegations of acts of violence and harassment against trade union.

"This is a very serious indication of deterioration of situation, which we do not consider lightly," according to the letter.

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## BTRC set to assess mobile operators' service quality

**MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM**

The telecom regulator's plan to assess the quality of data, voice and video call services offered by the mobile operators is one step closer to fruition with the arrival of all the required equipment in the capital.

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission is expected to kick off the drive within the next two weeks at random spots in the capital.

Through the drive the BTRC will look to gauge the mobile operators' data speed, call set-up time, call success rate, call drop rate and call quality.

Until now, the telecom watchdog had to rely on reports prepared by the mobile operators themselves on their quality of service, the accuracy of which was open to debate.

Subsequently, the BTRC could not properly penalise the operators for poor service.

"We are giving top priority to ensuring quality services for users and this drive is a part of that process," said BTRC Chairman Shahjahan Mahmood.

The drives will later be conducted in Chittagong and in other cities as well. The BTRC has appointed Anite Finland Ltd, a leading supplier of wireless air interface tools for measurement and analysis, to conduct independent assessment of the mobile operators' service quality on a regular basis.

Anite will provide periodical reports on call drops, call generation time, call clarity, quality of the data transferring process and time, and other aspects of service quality, said BTRC officials.

The Finnish company will be paid \$293,000 for the entire service.

The operators will be ranked in terms of their service quality and the reports will be made public.

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## Import of soymeal, key feed ingredient, on the decline

**SOHEL PARVEZ**

The rise in soybean import and domestic production has largely displaced the import of soymeal, a key ingredient to make feed for poultry, livestock and aquaculture, said the US Department of Agriculture.

Soymeal import, which was 4.58 lakh tonnes in fiscal 2015-16, is estimated to decline by over 23 percent to 3.50 lakh tonnes this fiscal year and to 3.25 lakh tonnes the following year.

On the other hand, domestic soymeal production is likely to increase 8.5 percent to 10.2 lakh tonnes in fiscal 2017-18, driven by the increased demand from the feed industry.

"Strong soybean imports and domestic production have enabled soybean crushing plants to increase soymeal production," the USDA said, adding that the production of soymeal would be 9.40 lakh tonnes in fiscal 2016-17.

The agency said imports are expected to rise 2.40 percent to 11.5 lakh tonnes in fiscal 2016-17 on strong demand in the crushing industry.

Soybean imports may rise 2.17 percent to 11.7 lakh tonnes next year, riding on strong demand from the crushing industry and for soybean oil, it added.

"Since 100 percent of the imported soybean is crushed to produce meal and oil, the surge in soybean imports has largely displaced the import of soymeal," the USDA said.

Bangladesh has a couple of seed-crushing plants established by edible oil giants City Group and Meghna Group of Industries. The plants can crush 7,000 tonnes of seeds daily.

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Models pose for photographs with sport utility vehicles on display at Dhaka Motor Show that ended yesterday.

## DSE declares 10pc cash dividend

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**

The Dhaka Stock Exchange has approved 10 percent cash dividends for the second consecutive year, although the bourse's net income dropped by more than 11 percent year-on-year.

The premier bourse's net income came down to Tk 119 crore in fiscal 2015-16 -- its third year of demutualisation.

The approval came at the premier bourse's 55th annual general meeting that was presided over by DSE Chairman Abul Hashem at the DSE Tower in Nikunja on Thursday according to a statement.

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## Stocks pass breezy week on dividend declarations

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**

Stocks just passed a positive week, driven mainly by healthy earnings and dividend declarations by the financial sector securities.

DSEX, the benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange, rose 24.96 points or 0.44 percent to finish the week at 5,701.27 points on Thursday.

The banking sector also captivated investors due to positive declarations, according to market analysis.

"As the banks' annual earnings declarations started coming one by one, the index gained a positive momentum, although the week's last day saw a 10-point correction," LankaBangla Securities said in its market review.

The stockbroker also said there was a clear preference for the financial stocks as all other sectors were in the red.

Three banks and one non-bank financial institution announced dividends last week. Brac Bank announced 10 percent cash and 20 percent stock dividends, Standard Bank recommended 5 percent cash and 5 percent stock dividends, Eastern Bank 20 percent cash and 5 percent stock dividends and Uttara Finance 30 percent cash dividend.

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**Chagalnaiya Branch** of NCC Bank Ltd. is now at new address from **Monday, 27 March 2017.**

Old Address: 574, Dak Soudur Road, Chagalnaiya, Feni.

New Address: 57, Haji Ahasan Ullah Bhuiyan Tower 1422, Main Road Chagalnaiya, Feni.



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