

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



Star BUSINESS

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Biscuit market grows fast as demand rises

SOHEL PARVEZ

Biscuits are fast becoming the snack of choice for Bangladeshi consumers, enabling the market to grow 15 percent a year, said industry insiders.

The market for biscuits is now worth Tk 5,000-Tk 6,000 crore, with large, well-known brands taking up a major share.

"The biscuit market is growing mainly because of consumers' hunt for hygienically prepared foods. It is expected to grow at the same pace in the next 10-15 years," said Quazi Touhiduzzaman, general manager, sales and marketing of Olympic Industries, the leader in the biscuits market.

The annual market for branded biscuits is nearly Tk 3,000 crore now. The market was earlier dominated by small bakeries. Demand for biscuits is growing as entrepreneurs have shifted to automation in baking and consumers are looking for a variety of quality foods at low prices.

Encouraged by rising demand, particularly from the lower middle and middle income groups, a number of large firms have joined the fray in the last several years. Some old players have also expanded their production capacity.

Recently, Reedisha Food and Beverage Ltd, a concern of Kohinoor Chemical Co (Bangladesh) Ltd, unveiled its plan to cater the domestic biscuit market as well.

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Mobile internet emerging as a revenue churning

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

Data service is emerging as a solid revenue-generator for mobile operators following the launch of high-speed 3G network in the second half of 2013.

In 2016, the segment accounted for 12.5 percent of the revenues for Grameenphone, Robi and Banglalink -- the country's three leading operators who altogether have a market share of about 97 percent.

In 2015, data service fetched 8.32 percent of the three operators' revenues, up from 5 percent in 2014 and 2 percent in 2013.

"In our assessment, it will take 7 to 8 years for operators to earn more from data services than voice services," said Ekram Kabir, vice-president of Robi.

Kabir's comment echoes those of other operators.

"In the digital world of tomorrow, customers will use smartphones for their every-day chores, be it shopping or reading books and newspapers, listening to music or watching movies," said Asif Ahmed, head of corporate communications at Banglalink.

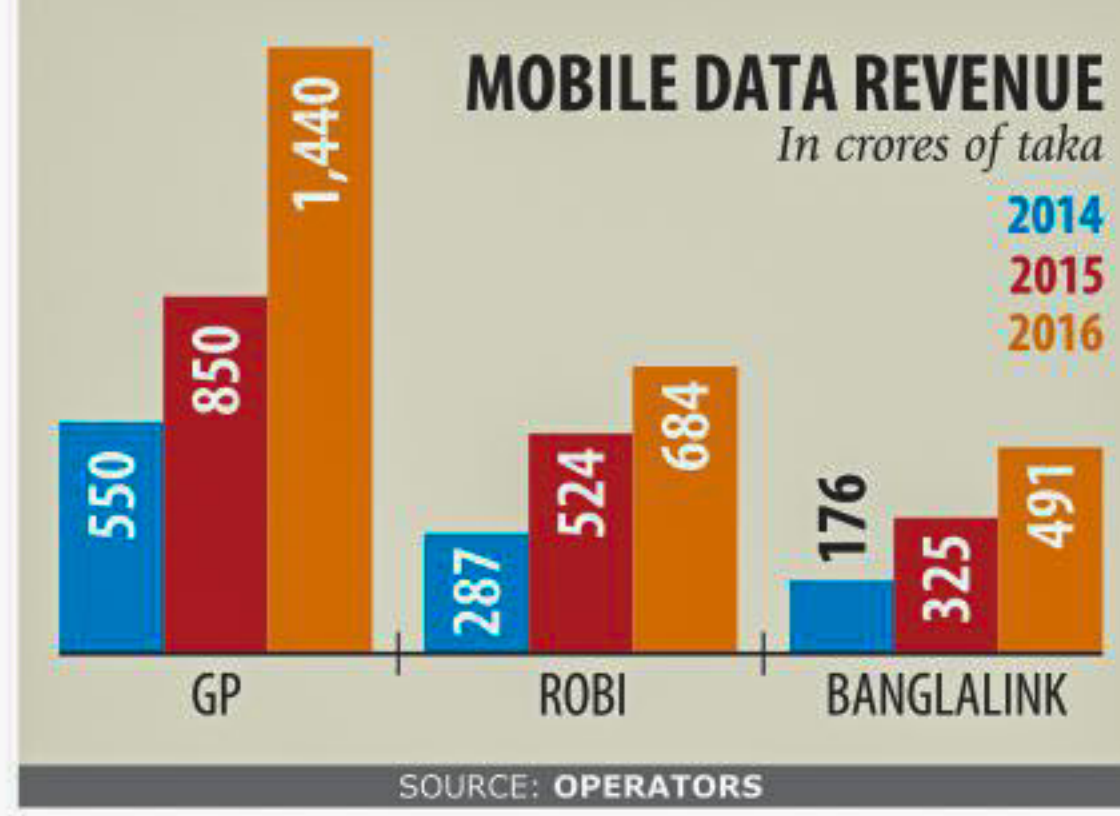
Customers will have to consume more data to enjoy the digital benefits, he added.

Market leader Grameenphone saw 77 percent year-on-year growth in data revenue in 2016 even though over 70 percent of its customers do not have 3G-enabled handsets.

The operator earned Tk 1,440 crore from mobile data services last year, which is 12.53 percent of its total revenue, according to its financial statement.

It earned Tk 850 crore and Tk 550 crore from data services in 2015 and 2014 respectively.

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Bepza to lease land for EPZ in Chittagong

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza) will lease 1,150 acres of land at Tk 300 crore at Mirsarai in Chittagong to set up an economic zone.

Bepza has received permission from the Prime Minister's Office to sign a memorandum of understanding with Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (Beza) in this regard.

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Denim exports to US almost stagnant

Bangladesh remains 3rd largest supplier to US



REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Bangladesh's denim shipments to the US, its single largest export market, have remained stagnant for the last seven years, hovering around the \$400-million mark.

In 2010, Bangladesh exported \$404 million worth of denim products to the US, and since then it peaked at \$455 million in 2013, after which it started sliding, according to data from the United States International Trade Commission.

Denim exports to the US in 2015 stood at \$430 million, and in the first half of 2016, the figure reached \$186.30 million.

Exporters blamed the slow growth on the growing popularity of overdyed fabrics and higher imports from the US's neighbouring country Mexico.

"Denim shipments to the US were supposed to be higher but for some reasons it did not increase as much as we had expected," said Kutubuddin Ahmed, chairman of Envoy Group, a major producer and exporter of denim.

One of the reasons is the growing popularity of overdyed fabrics, he said.

Overdyeing is a process where the fabric is either dyed for too long or dyed a second time. It is most often used on denim to add an overtone of colour to the indigo.

In recent years, the US has increased denim imports from Mexico due to competitive prices and shorter lead-time, said Mostafiz Uddin, managing director of Denim Expert.

Besides, American retailers get duty benefits for sourcing from Mexico. Bangladeshi garment imports are subjected to 15.62 percent duty upon entry to the US, while Mexico's wares get duty-free access. Moreover, the US itself produces a lot of denim garments, he said.

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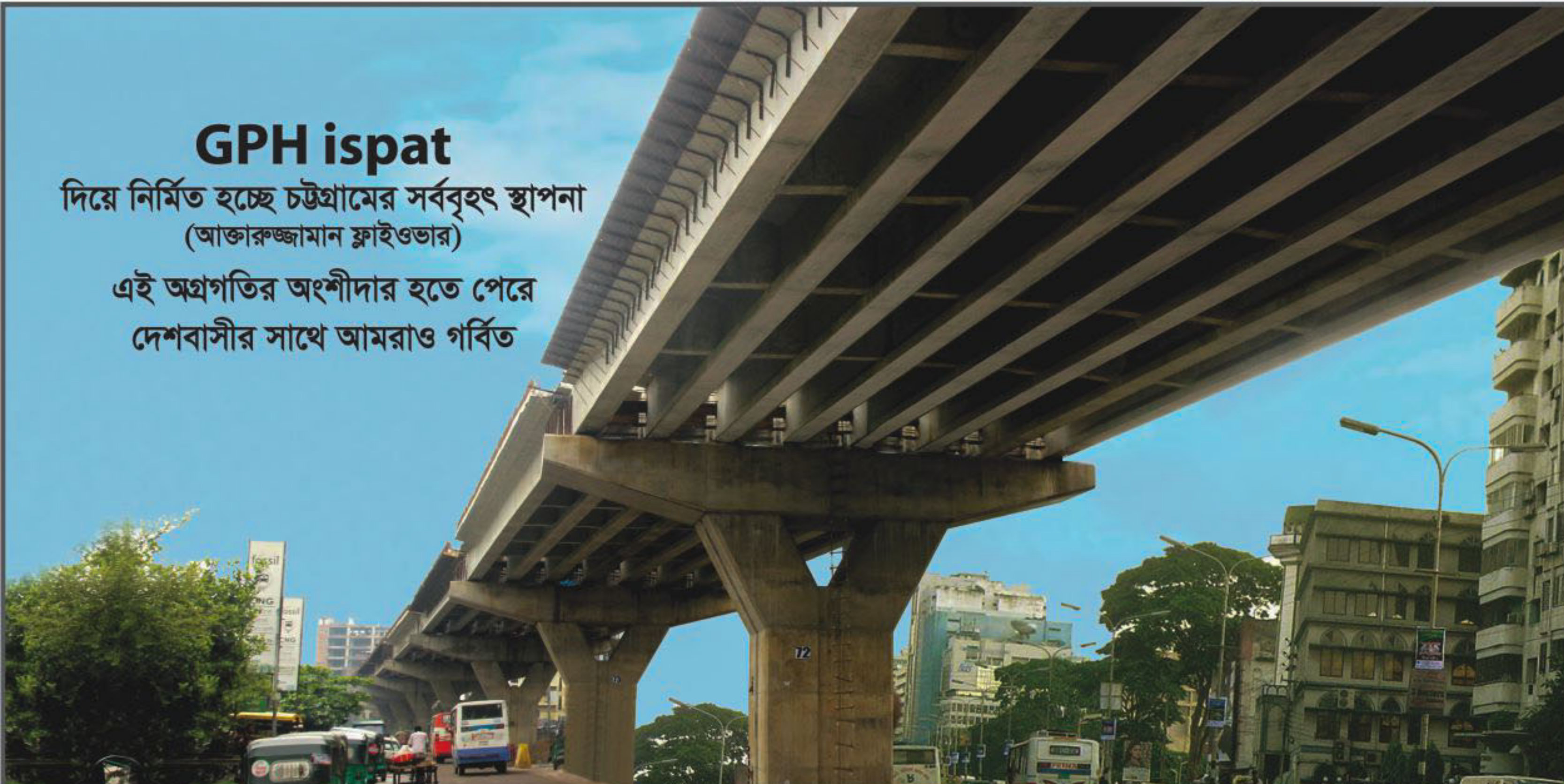
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