

**কিডনী ডায়ালাইসিস মাত্র ২,৩০০ টাকা!**  
 প্রথম বছরে ৯৯,০৯৮ ডায়ালাইসিস সম্পন্ন।  
 Presenius Machine Germany  
**SIBL Foundation Hospital & Diagnostic Center**  
 ফার্মাং প্রাঙ্গণ, ৭০ ব্রিড্লেড, পাবনা মোড়  
 ফোন: +৮৮০-২-৯৬৪২৯৭  
 Hotline: 01991150900

# Star BUSINESS

DHAKA WEDNESDAY APRIL 26, 2017, BAISSAKH 13, 1424 BS

## Prices won't rise under new VAT law: NBR

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**  
 The revenue authority yesterday said the prices of goods will not rise in general once the new VAT law comes into effect in July 1. The National Board of Revenue's assurance comes amid concerns that the prices of many goods and services will soar, while various local industries will face increased competition with imported goods once the new VAT and Supplementary Duty law is implemented.

GLOBAL VAT RATE (%) IN 2013		
COUNTRIES/REGIONS	SIMPLE AVERAGE	MEDIAN
South Asia (India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka)	10.7	12
East Asian LMICs (11 countries)	10.7	12
South and East Asian LMICs (14 countries)	10.7	12
All Available LMICs (55 countries)	14	15
World (190 countries)	13.8	15
Bangladesh (as per new law)	15	15

LMICs: Lower Middle Income Countries  
 Median: The middle number in a list of numbers  
 SOURCE: CPD

It said the net VAT burden under the new law will be 13.04 percent because of the scope to get rebate and inclusion of VAT in the selling prices of an item. The government is also considering measures so that the prices of products that currently enjoy waiver or low VAT, such as edible oil and rod, do not rise, said the VAT Online Project in a press release. The VOP, which is an office under the NBR, issued the statement to mark a discussion on implementation of the new VAT law at its office at the Institute of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh. At present, rod, a key construction material, enjoys a fixed amount of VAT. The new VAT law, which envisages a uniform 15 percent VAT instead of the existing multiple rates, will be implemented under an automated environment, bring-

ing down the curtains on the present manual system. At the programme yesterday, NBR Chairman Md Nojibur Rahman said domestic industries will be given protection. Incentives for export-oriented sectors will also be present so that the locally manufactured goods can enjoy comparative advantage in the international market, he said. Representatives from businesses and professional bodies said the impact of 15 percent uniform VAT will fall on the country's 16 crore populations: they will all have to pay the consumption tax. Subsequently, they demanded slashing the uniform VAT rate to 7 percent for smooth transition into the new system. Earlier, the Centre for Policy Dialogue by analysing rates said Bangladesh's proposed uniform VAT rate of 15 percent is on the high side when compared to neighbouring low- and middle-income countries in South and East Asia. It recommended trimming the present 15 percent VAT rate to 12 percent gradually. "People will have to pay the VAT, so it should be seen from the consumers' point of view," said Md Humayun Kabir, chairman of the Taxation and Corporate Laws Committee of the Institute of Chartered Accountants Bangladesh. "Political sides should be concerned about it too. This is not just

the issue of businesses." But firms are concerned if their cost of doing business will rise, Kabir added. In response, Law Minister Anisul Huq said the new law will reduce the cost of doing business and bring in transparency and accountability. The NBR and the businesses held a series of discussions on the new VAT law and there was also a joint declaration too, said Abdul Matlub Ahmad, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry. "But we are not yet clear whether the recommendations of the joint declaration will be accepted. We are kept in suspense." Ahmad said there are some services such as doctors' consultation where 15 percent VAT will be applicable. "This would be too high." Besides, withdrawal of supplementary duty under the new law may affect various domestic industries. Imported goods will be cheaper, Ahmad said, citing biscuits as a case in point. "The government should not take any such step," he added. NBR officials said the law will be implemented gradually so that businesses can get accustomed with the latest legislation and comply accordingly.

## PM asks Teletalk to find foreign partner

### Hasina stresses ways to make it a profitable venture

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**  
 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed dissatisfaction over the service quality and business performance of state owned mobile carrier Teletalk, asking it to seek a suitable foreign company for probable merger. A network expansion project proposal for Teletalk was placed before Hasina, who is also the telecom minister, at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC). However, she came down heavily upon the operator's passive attitude on becoming a competitive player. The prime minister directed the management of Teletalk to find ways of becoming a profitable venture. "To become a competitive player in the market, the prime minister gave an order to Teletalk to search for an appropriate foreign company for merger," AHM Mustafa Kamal, planning minister, told journalists after the meeting. The premier also directed the operator to improve service quality and offer better services to customers, he added. The meeting held at the NEC conference room at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar with the prime minister in the chair approved a project of Teletalk for network expansion at a cost of Tk 675 crore. Teletalk will get the money from the government as equity, which the company will return from its earnings, said the planning minister. Earlier, Telecom State Minister Tarana

AT A GLANCE	
Established	March 2005
Rebranded	March 2016
Current subscribers	37.33 lakh
Capacity	1cr connections
Revenue 2014-15	Tk 969cr
Investment so far	Tk 3,000cr

Halim sought investment for Teletalk from the Malaysian government as well as Indian giant Tata Communications, as a part of efforts to turn the state-run operator into a vibrant company. Tarana was present at yesterday's meeting. However, she was not available for comment later. Shyam Sunder Sikder, secretary of the telecom division and chairman of the Teletalk board, said the prime minister has directed them to become a vibrant company. Teletalk began its journey as the country's fifth operator in March 2005 with a capital of Tk 643 crore as a company under the telecom ministry. It initially had the capacity to serve only 40 lakh users, which has now been raised to one crore. **READ MORE ON B3**

## IT parks to be set up in 12 districts

### Govt approves project of Tk 1,796cr

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**  
 The government approved the establishment of 12 IT and hi-tech parks in different districts at a cost of Tk 1,796.40 crore, to move closer to a digital economy. In a meeting yesterday, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) approved the project, where Tk 1,544 crore will come in the form of credit from India and the government will bear the rest of the amount. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presided over the meeting at the NEC conference room at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. The IT and hi-tech parks will be built in Khulna, Barisal, Rangpur, Natore, Chittagong, Comilla, Cox's Bazar, Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Gopalganj, Dhaka and Sylhet under the project 'Establishing IT Park/High-Tech Park at District Level (12 Districts)'. The project will be implemented from July 2017 till June 2020, according to a statement of the ICT division. A senior official related to the project said they are in the process of selecting lands in the districts for the parks. The project will further strengthen the endeavours of the government to build a knowledge-based society by 2021, said Zunaid Ahmed Palak, state minister for ICT.

KEY POINTS
India will provide a credit of Tk 1,544cr for the project
The parks will be built in Khulna, Barisal, Rangpur, Natore, Chittagong, Comilla, Cox's Bazar, Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Gopalganj, Dhaka and Sylhet
The project will be implemented from July 2017 till June 2020

"It will boost our initiative to earn \$5 billion from the ICT sector by generating employment for 20 lakh youths." The government is also setting up the Sheikh Hasina Software Technology Park in Jessore, which will be launched by June. Furthermore, it is establishing the Bangabandhu Hi-Tech City -- the country's first full-fledged special economic zone for IT/ IT-enabled services and hi-tech industries -- at Kaliakoir, Gazipur. Earlier, the government formed the Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority in 2010 to develop the ICT industry through creation, management, operation and development of hi-tech parks. Palak said these initiatives will help generate employment in the sector.

## Major data gaps in monitoring SDGs

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**  
 Bangladesh is facing a significant data gap for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals as statistics on two-thirds of the indicators are either partially available or not available at all, a study found. There are 241 indicators to monitor the 169 targets under 17 SDGs. But, data of only 70 indicators are readily available, 108 partially available and 63 not available at all, according to the study that will be released tomorrow. The General Economics Division of the Planning Commission in collaboration with the Support to Sustainable and Inclusive Planning Project of the UNDP conducted the study styled "Data Gap Analysis for SDGs: Bangladesh Perspective". The data used for the study were provided by all relevant ministries, divisions, agencies and the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, which is the national statistical organisation. The United Nations said data will be crucial to tracking the progress of the goals and in formulating a monitoring and evaluation framework for the implementation of the SDGs. Though the UN has globally set 230 indicators to monitor the SDGs, the GED has done the analysis using seven indicators twice and two indicators thrice, raising the total number of indicators to 241. **READ MORE ON B3**



The analysis identified that there are high challenges to tracking SDG 12, which pertains to ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. As much as 69 percent of the data for the goal is not available. Tracking SDG 14, which involves conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, will also be challenging as 60 percent of the data is unavailable. However, maximum data can be found for SDG 1, 2, 5, 7 and 19. The goals mainly pertain to ending poverty and hunger, improving nutrition, promoting sustainable agriculture, and achieving gender equality.

## Access to banking rises at upazila level: study

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**  
 The access to and use of formal banking services at the upazila level improved substantially between 2010 and 2015, according to a recent study that highlighted the government's efforts to take financial services closer to the people. The General Economics Division of the Planning Commission carried out the study with support from the statistics department of the central bank. The findings of the study titled 'Banking Atlas' will be published in Dhaka tomorrow. According to the report, Bangladesh has shown a steady upward trend in all eight major banking variables at the upazila level, giving a boost to the government's financial inclusion efforts. Banking Atlas consists of 48 maps on the eight major banking variables from 2010 to 2015 at the sub-district level. The number of branches of all banks increased at the upazila level during the time. The branch density, the average number of branches of all banks per square kilometre, rose to 0.86 from 0.71. The average number of branches per 100,000 adults went up to 11.34 in 2015 from 9.25 in 2010. The average size of deposits and loans also witnessed a significant rise. An adult's bank deposit nearly trebled to Tk 118,050 in 2010 from Tk 44,500 five years ago. The loan per account increased to Tk 24,970 from Tk 17,170. According to the report, while the outreach of branches in terms of geographical density and account per adult increased substantially over the period for the whole country, the rate of increase is much higher in rural areas. "This growth is largely driven by the growth in branches and accounts of private banks." The southern part of the country saw much higher proliferation in the number of bank accounts between 2010 and 2015. "This is interesting because we don't see such patterns for the branch density. It implies that the number of accounts per branch has grown at a much faster rate in the south than in the north during the period." According to the GED, the Banking Atlas will help Bangladesh Bank as well as the government identify the regions where greater banking penetration is required. "It will also help private sector banks take informed decisions on opening a branch upon identifying the potential untapped markets."

## First tea processing factory in Thakurgaon

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon**  
 Green Field Tea Industry opens its tea processing factory in Thakurgaon yesterday that is capable of producing 10,000 kg of processed tea every day. Located in Shahbazpur village under Baliadangi upazila, this is the first tea processing factory in the district. The factory will purchase tea leaves from the local growers, who have to travel 65 kilometre to sell their produce in Panchagarh district, said Fayjul Islam Hiru, managing director of Green Field Tea Industry. "As a result, the growers will get fair prices and will be able to save on transport cost," he said at the opening ceremony. The opening of the factory would certainly encourage small tea growers in the district, said Md Shafeenul Islam, chairman of Bangladesh Tea Board. Dabirul Islam, a lawmaker and Amirul Islam, president of the Small Tea Garden Owners Association, also spoke.

## Patenga container terminal to be ready by 2019

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**  
 The construction of the 600-metre long Patenga container terminal, which is expected to take the pressure off the Chittagong port, will be complete by the end of 2019, the chairman of the Chittagong Port Authority said yesterday. "A new jetty is a must to cope with the ever increasing growth in cargo, container as well as vessel traffic," CPA Chairman M Khaled Iqbal said at a meeting with journalists on the eve of 130th Chittagong Port Day. The Chittagong port has been experiencing 16 to 17 percent growth

in cargo and container handling in the last few years, according to Iqbal. "If the new jetty is not ready by 2019, this growth rate would come down and that would have the ultimate cascading effect on overall economy." A number of projects have been undertaken in the last one year to enhance the capacity and efficiency of the port, he said. Emphasis is being given on the Patenga terminal, which would have three jetties, yards and rail link, as the other three big projects -- Karnaphuli container terminal, Laldia multipurpose terminal and bay terminal -- can

only be partially completed before 2021. The CPA has requested the government to construct the terminal through the direct procurement method for timely completion. The existing 13 jetties of general cargo berth area would be reconstructed as the Karnaphuli container terminal, he said, adding that contracts for the Tk 2 billion-project are likely to be awarded by 2018. Though the Chittagong port has been used as a harbour since 400 BC, it formally started its journey as a port on April 25 in 1887.

**BBS CABLES**  
 more than safety  
**SKIN COATED CABLES**  
 Environment Friendly  
 +8801755597727 www.bbscables.com.bd