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Gold \$1,291.50 (per ounce)

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MUMBAI +0.26% 31,271.28

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SINGAPORE -0.16% 3,230.49

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BUSINESS

DHAKA THURSDAY JUNE 8, 2017, JAISHTHA 25, 1424 BS

Regulator working on internet price guideline

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

The telecom regulator is formulating a pricing guideline for internet services as data is not becoming cheaper at the user level despite significant cuts in bandwidth prices.

The government reduced the internet bandwidth price to as low as Tk 625 a megabyte last year, which was Tk 72,000 eight years back.

Two consultants of the International Telecommunication Union are in Dhaka and working with the telecom regulator and other stakeholders to set the cost modelling benchmark. The ITU is charging Tk 26 lakh for the service.

AT A GLANCE

BTRC started data cost modelling with ITU consultants from June 6

Internet users in Bangladesh: **6.67cr**

95% use internet from mobile phones

5% use internet of ISPs

Govt brought down bandwidth price to Tk **625** per Mbps last year, from Tk **72,000**

The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission already has cost modelling benchmarks for voice and short message services.

The consultants are working to

bring the best practices for cost modelling," said Md Emdad ul Bari, director general for system and services at BTRC.

In November last year, the BTRC organised a public hearing where mobile users complained about the higher price of internet.

This prompted the telecom watchdog to run the data cost modelling for mobile operators.

But it changed its mind yesterday and decided to engage the internet service providers, who have only 5 percent of the internet customers but use up 60 percent of the bandwidth in the country.

READ MORE ON B3

Stop injecting funds into state banks

Help the poor instead, analysts say

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Half a million people would have been brought out of poverty had the government allocated Tk 2,000 crore to the poor instead of doling out money to the state banks, analysts said yesterday.

"There is no logic in subsidising the

state's fragile banks or industries in this way. It's a reward for their inefficiency," Abdul Bayes, director of Brac Research and Evaluation Division, said at a discussion.

The discussion, styled "National budget 2017-18: expectations, gains, and challenges", was organised by Brac and

the Institute of Informatics and Development at the capital's Brac Centre.

At the discussion, analysts urged the government to increase the allocation for the education sector to at least 4 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

READ MORE ON B3

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People transacted Tk 17,000 crore in the fortnight ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr as cash transactions increase significantly during the festival, said a senior executive of BB.

He said banks have been instructed to ensure the use of modern fake-note detecting machine at branch level.

People transacted Tk 17,000 crore in the fortnight ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr in 2015, according to BB.

The BB advised banks to check notes before putting those in ATMs. At the same time, all branches were asked to display the security features of bank notes in video during banking hours.

The central bank fears that forgers will try to release fake notes ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr as cash transactions increase significantly during the festival, said a senior executive of BB.

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