

STOCKS		COMMODITIES		ASIAN MARKETS				CURRENCIES			
DSEX	CSCX	Gold	Oil	MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI	USD	EUR	GBP	JPY
▲ 0.15%	▲ 0.01%	\$1,418.20	\$63.73	▲ 0.17%	▲ 0.30%	▲ 0.13%	▼ 0.33%	BUY TK 83.50	93.24	104.21	0.76
5,380.79	9,984.78	(per ounce)	(per barrel)	39,908.06	21,702.45	3,372.25	3,005.25	SELL TK 84.50	97.04	108.01	0.80

এসআইবিএল
সুপার ডিপিএস
বিশেষ সঞ্চয় কিম

প্রাকালিত মুনাফা:

৩ বছর	৫ বছর	১০ বছর
৯.২৫%	৯.৫০%	১০%

ইসলামী পরীক্ষা'র এক মুম্বালা
নীতির ভিত্তিতে পরিচালিত।

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Star BUSINESS

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Bandwidth of GP, Robi blocked partially for dues

Customers will suffer from call drops, slow internet

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The telecom regulator has partially blocked the bandwidth capacity of Grameenphone and Robi from last evening for non-payment of dues detected in audits – a drastic step that ultimately hurts the 12.25 crore subscribers of the two operators.

According to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission's audit claim, Grameenphone has Tk 12,579.95 crore pending and Robi Tk 867.24 crore.

The telecom regulator had issued demand notes to the respective operators several times but they fell on deaf ears.

Subsequently, it directed all the international internet gateway operators to slash Grameenphone's bandwidth by 30 percent and Robi's by 15 percent – substantial enough to slow down the internet speed and raise the call drop frequency of the two operators.

"We are deeply disturbed by this draconian step from a regulator," said Shahed Alam, chief of corporate and regulatory affairs at Robi.

The operator has already raised its concerns regarding the fundamentally flawed audit claims through official

correspondence with the BTRC, he said in a statement.

Until yesterday, Robi was consuming about 150.67 gigabits per second bandwidth. It was brought down to 128 Gbps. Grameenphone was using 209.93 Gbps bandwidth and after the decision it came down to 146.95 Gbps.

The decision to forcefully reduce bandwidth runs counter to supporting customer interests, said Md Hasan, a deputy general manager of Grameenphone.

"This instruction seems to be designed to penalise our gateway partners and could have a negative impact on millions of data users in Bangladesh. We are surprised by the instruction and question the legality of this action," he added.

Other than mobile operators, independent experts also vehemently criticised the move.

"This is an unlawful decision," said Abu Saeed Khan, senior policy fellow at LIRNEasia, an information and communication technology policy and regulation think-tank active in the Asia Pacific region.

The government does not have the authority to curtail the legally purchased internet bandwidth as a punitive measure for unpaid dues, he added.

However, Md Jahurul Haque, chairman of the telecom watchdog, told The Daily Star, "We have no other way of blocking their capacity to realise the public money."

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dbi CERAMICS

India-funded \$7.5b projects move at snail's pace

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and JAGARAN CHAKMA

Projects involving about \$7.5 billion under the three Indian lines of credit are progressing slowly owing to lengthy processes in land acquisition, change in design and delays in hiring consultants and document preparation.

Despite various steps to expedite the utilisation of the funds, Bangladesh managed to use \$523 million of the \$862 million of the first LoC and \$14 million out of \$2 billion of the second LoC, according to a Bangladesh-India joint monitoring meeting in Dhaka that concluded yesterday.

No money has been used from the third LoC of \$4.5 billion. The funds are ready for the projects but their implementation has been delayed for various reasons, said a finance ministry official.

The implementing ministries have included the projects in the LoC without doing sufficient homework, he said.

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RASHED SHUMON

Visitors check jute products being showcased at an ongoing fair organised at Karim Chamber in the capital's Motijheel yesterday. The fair ends on Sunday.

Rod prices may rise for gas price hike, tax measures

JAGARAN CHAKMA

The retail price of mild steel (MS) rod will likely see an average increase of Tk 9,000 per tonne for the recent gas price hike and new VAT and tax measures, apprehend industry insiders.

This means, each tonne will cost Tk 70,000 to Tk 72,000 whereas currently the price hovers around Tk 63,000 to Tk 65,000, said Md Alamgir Kabir, chairman of GPH Ispat.

With the energy regulator deciding to increase gas prices for all users by 32.8 percent from July 1, manufacturers' gas bills will go up by around 17.5 percent.

"Every tonne of rod will require around Tk 8,250-worth gas whereas now it takes some Tk 6,500 to Tk 7,000," said Tapan Sengupta, executive director of Bangladesh Steel Rolling Mills (BSRM).

Consumers will ultimately have to shoulder the impact as it is directly related with construction, industry insiders said.

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Explore full trade potential with Bangladesh

PM urges Chinese businesses

Bss, Beijing

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday invited Chinese businesspeople to explore the full potential of business and trade relations with Bangladesh as the country is marching ahead in various areas of economic growth and development.

"As Bangladesh is marching ahead in various areas of economic growth and development, I invite you to explore the full potential of business and trade relations with Bangladesh," she said.

The prime minister made the request while delivering her keynote speech at a roundtable with Chinese business leaders at the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT).

CCPIT Chairperson Gao Yan delivered the welcome address at the roundtable.

Hasina also hoped that Chinese businesspeople would significantly enhance their imports from Bangladesh in the coming years given the fact that Bangladesh's export basket is expanding rapidly.

"There are so many areas to further expand your investment, especially in manufacturing sectors such as textile, leather and medium and heavy industries," she said.

China has already emerged as the largest trading partner of Bangladesh. The total volume of trade between the two countries was \$12.4 billion in the 2017-18 financial year.

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TONIGHT

We honour our business leaders with the prestigious

18th

Bangladesh Business Awards

DHL The Daily Star

AWARDING EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS



KEYNOTE SPEAKER



N. R. Narayana Murthy
Founder, Infosys Limited

Narayana Murthy has been listed among the 12 greatest entrepreneurs of our time by Fortune magazine. He has been described as the "Father of the Indian IT sector" by Time magazine due to his contribution to outsourcing in India. Murthy has also been honoured with the Padma Vibhushan and Padma Shri awards. He is also the author of many notable books including The Wit and Wisdom of Narayana Murthy, Mere Business Mantra, A Better India, Behtar Bharat : Behtar Duniya, A Clear Blue Sky, Pudhiya Kanavugal, Pudhiya India, Mikacha India Mikavutta Lokam.

Marking the 18th anniversary of Bangladesh Business Awards, we will once again recognize the best in our business world. We are proud to be partners of our corporate world's rise to global recognition.

Join us as we celebrate their success.*

*Attendance by invitation