

Concern over Petrobangla's proposal on gas price hike

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Businesspeople and other stakeholders expressed their concern at an open discussion in Dhaka yesterday that further gas price hike will seriously hamper investment and industrial growth.

Opposing the Petrobangla's (the state-owned oil and gas exploration corporation) proposal to hike the price of gas, the representatives of different chamber and trade bodies, and consumers' associations said all industries would suffer in consequence of the gas price hike.

Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) organised the open discussion to hear opinions of different stakeholders on the proposed gas price hike.

At the discussion Aftab Ul Islam, a representative of the Federation of Bangladesh

Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), said, "Many entrepreneurs are faced with the problem of low pressure or unavailability of gas. So, it will not be justifiable to hike gas price".

Secretary General of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) GKM Towfique Hassan said export of RMG products will face serious problem as a result of imposing a Tk 5,00,000 licence fee for operating captive power plants.

He said BERC has already started to send letters to the textile and garment factory owners, urging them to receive the licences from the BERC office in exchange of payment of Tk 5,00,000.

"The fee is too high for the factory owners, as the production cost has already gone beyond the capacity of many owners due to recent increase

in the cost of doing business," he said, adding that many factory owners across the country are largely dependent on captive power plants due to interrupted power supply in the factories.

He said the factory owners have to pay a lot of money to gas and power supplying authorities as connection fees during the setting up of the factories. "Charging of such fees is anti-industry," he added.

A representative from the Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB) said the consumers are not in a position to tolerate any further rise in gas price. "Industries will face serious crisis due to such move," he said.

Representatives of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) and Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) also echoed the views of

these stakeholders on the issue.

One representative from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources urged the officials of both Petrobangla and BERC to take decision in consonance with the opinion of the stakeholders.

"BERC should give a second thought on charging Tk 500,000 as licence fee," he said, adding that government wants to control gas consumption through enhancing the price.

Jalal Ahmed, chairman of Petrobangla, proposed gas price hike to Tk 93.73 per million cubic feet (MCF) for power (PDB, IPP and SPP) from its existing rate of Tk 73.91 per MCF. The Petrobangla also proposed price hike to Tk 93.73 per MCF from its Tk 63.41 per MCF for fertiliser factories, while Tk 182.25 per MCF from existing Tk 105.59 for captive power plants, Tk 182.25 per MCF for industry from existing

Tk 148.13 per MCF Tk 182.25 for Tea-Estate from Tk 148.13 per MCF Tk 291.59 per MCF for commercial usage from existing Tk 233.12 per MCF have been proposed.

In case of domestic usage, Tk 550 from existing rate of Tk 350 for single burner and Tk 600 from existing Tk 400 for double burner have been proposed, Petrobangla chairman said.

Chairman of BERC Ghulam Rahman said there would be a public hearing on the proposed price hike of gas on September 15 to know the public opinion on the issue.

"Petrobangla must prove justification for the proposed gas price hike at the public hearing, otherwise the price will not be increased," Ghulam Rahman said.

He urged all people concerned to contact with the BERC to register their names to attend at the public hearing.



Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Executive Director Mustafizur Rahman (left) speaks at the launch of UNCTAD's (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) 'LDCs Report 2008: Growth, Poverty and the Terms of Development Partnership' in Dhaka yesterday. According to the report, Bangladesh will require another 17 years to graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) status to a middle-income country if 6.5 percent growth is sustained. (Story on page 16)

Aktel to offer lower call tariff for pre-paid customers

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Aktel, country's third largest mobile phone operator, yesterday announced to launch a reduced call tariff of Tk 1 per minute for its pre-paid customers, an evidence of the company's intention to enter into the price war.

Under the new tariff structure, which is likely to come into effect very soon, Aktel's prepaid customers from 7:00 am to 12:00 midnight will enjoy a reduced call tariff of Tk 1 per minute from Tk 1.50.

Other tariff structures, however, will remain unchanged.

The new tariff structure was announced at a press conference in Dhaka.

The company, which has lost its market position from second to third at the end of last year in terms of subscriber acquisition, now piling to fight back by reducing call charges.

The Egypt based Orascom Telecom's subsidiary Banglalink exceeded Aktel with serving 9.46 million customers in the local market, whereas Aktel holds 7.85 million subscribers.

The total mobile subscriber in Bangladesh reached at 43.7 million as of June this year, mainly dominated by Norway's Telenor having majority Grameenphone with having 20.30 million customers.

New president of specialised textile mills



Sharif M Afzal Hussain
STAR BUSINESS DESK

Sharif M Afzal Hussain has been elected the new president of the executive committee of Bangladesh Specialised Textile Mills and Powerloom Industries Association for 2008-2009 and 2009-2010, says a press release.

Abdus Satter was elected senior vice-president, while Kazi Rafiqul Alam, Faiz Uddin Ahmed Lavlu and Abu Sayeed Mia were elected vice-presidents of the 21-member committee of the association.

Sharif Afzal Hussain is the president of Spain-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry and was previously a director of Agrani Bank and Shilpa Bank. Now he is a director of Infrastructure Development Company Limited.



Wonder Wang, deputy chief representative of Huawei Technologies (Bangladesh), and Prof Aminul Hoque, head of EEE Department of Buettich University of Engineering and Technology, signing an agreement on behalf of their organisations in Dhaka on Wednesday. Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman, Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser Prof M Tamim, Buett Vice-chancellor Prof AMM Safiullah and Charge d' Affaires of China embassy Wang Yu were present.

Huawei, Buett sign deal to set up wireless communication lab

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Huawei Technologies (Bangladesh) Ltd and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buett) have signed an agreement to set up a Wireless Communication Laboratory & Training Centre, said a press release.

Under the deal, Buett will provide all necessary physical amenities such as space for laboratory, computers and internet facilities, while the Huawei will donate wireless communication equipment related to GSM and CDMA technologies worth about US\$ 3 million (around Tk 21 crore) to Buett.

Wonder Wang, deputy chief representative of Huawei Technologies (Bangladesh), and Prof Aminul Hoque, head of EEE Department of Buett, signed the agreement on behalf of their organisations in

Dhaka on Wednesday.

Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman, Special Assistant to the chief adviser and Prof M Tamim, Buett Vice-chancellor Prof AMM Safiullah, and Charge d' Affaires of China embassy Wang Yu were present at the signing ceremony.

The joint lab and training centre, to be set up in the Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering (EEE) of Buett, will enable the students of Buett to perform all the experiments related to wireless communication.

In addition, training courses on various wireless communication technologies related to GSM and CDMA will be offered through the laboratory. The engineers and technicians of local telecom operators and vendors will be able to develop their technical skill.

City Bank launches SME division, loan products

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The City Bank launched its small and medium enterprise (SME) division in Dhaka yesterday.

"We launched SME division with the aim to support small and medium business entrepreneurs and encourage more new entrepreneurs into business," said K Mahmood Satter, managing director and CEO of the bank, at a press conference in Dhaka.

He also announced introduction of three SME loan products styled -- City Shulov, City Muldhan and City Sheba -- for such sectors as manu-

facturing, trading, and service as well as for women entrepreneurs.

Mahmood Satter said the bank plans to open 20 SME centres in different divisions of the country.

Through these centres City Shulov loan would be disbursed at 16.5 percent interest rate, while City Muldhan and City Sheba loans would be available at 17 percent.

Sohail RK Hussain, deputy managing director (business), and Raihan Ul Karim, deputy managing director (operations), of the bank were also present at the press conference.

Novartis marks 35 years in Bangladesh

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Novartis celebrated its 35 years in Bangladesh yesterday through community activities such as conducting health check for marginalised people and tree plantation, said a press release.

The leading brands of Novartis in Bangladesh are Probitor, Vass, Voltalin, Azyth, Xionil, Diovan, Tegretol.

"These positive developments are due not only to our strategic direction but also to the competence and engagement of our employees during the last 35 years," said Asafque ur Rahman, managing director of Novartis (Bangladesh) Limited.

Novartis started its journey in 1973 as Ciba Geigy in Bangladesh and since then has kept the commitment of addressing the needs of patients by strengthening its medicine-based portfolio of innovation-based pharmaceuticals.

UNB, Dhaka

Best Air, the country's third private airline, will start flying on Dhaka-Colombo route ahead of Saarc summit from July 28 to carry passengers from Bangladesh.

"We have got the permission of Sri Lankan Civil Aviation Authority this afternoon and will start our operation from July 28," Best Air spokesperson Tito Siddique told the news agency yesterday.

Initially, the lone Boeing 737-200, already in operation on Dhaka-Bangkok route, will fly on the Dhaka-Colombo route.

"As two of our leased aircrafts are in the pipeline, we have to use our Boeing for this route also," Tito Siddique said.

The airline got permission to operate seven flights a week, but remains undecided on how many flights they will operate

per week at the initial stage.

Two aircrafts, MD-83 and ERJ-145, will be added to the fleet of Best Air to fly on Dhaka-Kuala Lumpur, Dhaka-Dubai and Dhaka-Kolkata routes.

The 162-seat MD-83 will fly on Kuala Lumpur and Dubai routes, while the 50-seat ERJ-145 will fly on Dhaka-Chittagong, Dhaka-Kolkata and Dhaka-Bangkok routes. Both the aircrafts will be brought under dry lease system.

Best Air has already got permission from the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh to operate four flights a week on Dhaka-Kuala Lumpur route.

Negotiations, which are at the final stage, are on with the Malaysian Civil Aviation Authority.

Best Aviation started its journey in 1999 as a helicopter operator followed by its opera-

tion as a Freight Airline in 2000. It obtained license in 2006 from the Civil Aviation Authority to operate passenger services on the international and domestic routes. The company launched its passenger fleet with Boeing 737-200, which was the first to arrive in Bangladesh.

The airline started its operation on the country's busiest Dhaka-Chittagong route on January 14 this year with the Boeing 737-200. It operates flight to Bangkok four days a week with the same aircraft.

The aviation industry in Bangladesh has witnessed a boom with the launch of three private airlines in last one year. Yet, another is set to start commercial flights next month.

The industry is growing at 7.5 to 8 percent a year, while the market size is worth around Tk 3,500 crore, according to private operators.



The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd.

Gazipur

Web site: www.spcbl.org.bd

INTERNATIONAL TENDER FOR SUPPLY & INCORPORATION OF COVERT-OVERT FEATURED FOIL ONTO POLYVINYL CHLORIDE (PVC) AND POLYETHYLENE TEREPHTHALATE (PET) FOR PRODUCTION OF BANDROLL AND STAMP ON TURN-KEY BASIS

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the manufacturer/suppliers for supply & incorporation of covert-overt featured foil onto Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) and Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) for production of bandroll and stamp on turn-key basis for this corporation as per under noted schedule. Tender document showing terms and conditions with specification will be available from the office of The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd, Gazipur and its Liaison Office at Annex Building-1, 6th Floor, Bangladesh Bank, Dhaka-1000 during Sunday to Thursday between 09.00 am to 4.00 pm against an application in the letterhead pad from the respective firm. Necessary information is given below:

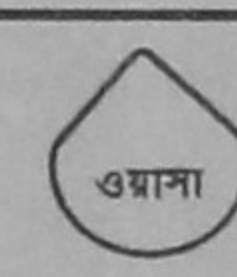
1. Selling of tender : From 17.07.2008 to 03.08.2008.
2. Last date & time for submission of tender : 21.08.2008 up to 11.00am.
3. Date & time for opening of tender : 21.08.2008 at 11.05am.
4. Value (non-refundable) : 5,000/- (five thousand) taka only.

Earnest money @ 3% (three percent) of the total tendered amount shall have to be submitted in the form of Bank Draft/Pay-Order/irrevocable Bank Guarantee from any schedule bank in Bangladesh. Irrevocable Bank Guarantee may also be given from any international commercial bank abroad having counter guarantee from any schedule bank in Bangladesh along with the tender in favour of the Managing Director, The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd, Gazipur. Tender(s) without earnest money shall not be acceptable. The tender(s) under sealed cover addressed to the Managing Director, The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd, Gazipur shall have to be dropped in the tender box kept in Corporation's Office at Gazipur and shall be opened as per schedule mentioned above in presence of tenderer(s) if any. Tender may be sent also through postal/courier services which must be reached within the scheduled deadline. 1(one) tender schedule is applicable only for one principal/manufacturer/supplier by submitting one offer along with earnest money. The authority reserves the right to reject or accept any tender(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever. Submission of tender after the specified time shall not be acceptable under any circumstances.

Md Kalimulla

Dy General Manager (P&S)
Phone: 88-02-9205116

GD-3269



Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (DWASA)

WASA Bhaban

98, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue

Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215

July 16, 2008

PUBLIC NOTICE

Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (DWASA), under Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, is responsible for operation, maintenance and expansion of water supply, sewerage and drainage network in Dhaka City Area.

DWASA has planned for rehabilitation of the drainage channels and will undertake the re-excavation re-profiling and slope protection of selected storm water khals (canals) to be financed by GoB & IDA with a view to mitigate the water logging problem in Dhaka city. The scope of canal rehabilitation works initially would cover thirteen selected canals namely Khilgaon, Bashabo, Shahjadpur, Shutivola, Abdullahpur, Kalyanpur main canal, Digan, Manda, Mirpur Housing and Kalanpur branches KA, KHA, GHA, UMO and CHA. Among the selected canals four canals (Khilgaon, Bashabo, Shahjadpur, Shutivola, Abdullahpur) have been identified to be included under pilot phase of the project, with future phases predicated on the lessons from and success of the pilot where new mechanisms and procedures for khal recovery and rehabilitation would be considered.

The Executive Summary Reports (ESR) of Environmental Management Framework (EMF) and Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) has been prepared by DWASA to mitigate the social impact of the project. The ESRs are available for public information in DWASA website (www.dwasa.org.bd), World Bank's Infoshop and at DWASA Head Office. The ESRs will also be available at the DWASA zonal offices i.e. MODS Zone # 5 & 6.

Any interested person can view the Executive Summary Reports up to 30 days from this announcement. Any question may please be directed to the Project Director, Dhaka Water Supply and Sanitation Project, Dhaka WASA, 98, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215, Tel: 02-8121177, Fax: 02-8112109.

Md Tajul Islam
Superintending Engineer

Project Director
Dhaka Water Supply and Sanitation Project
Dhaka WASA

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