

BANGLADESHI TRUCKS

India may allow use of its land

BSS, New Delhi

India may allow vehicles from Bangladesh to enter and ply its territory when they bring goods, to improve bilateral ties and facilitate trade by reducing freight costs and decongesting borders.

Indian commerce department has proposed a unilateral offer in this regard, reports the Economic Times (ET) of India.

The Indian commerce department had written to the road transport and highways ministry, which would be in charge of framing the rules and protocol, about the proposal to unilaterally allow Bangladeshi vehicles to ply in India. And the latter has given a conditional acquiescence.

"We have written back saying that we support the proposal but it needs to be approved by the Cabinet given that the offer is a unilateral one. There needs to be clarity on whether and when it would

translate into a bilateral agreement from which we could also share the benefits. Stakeholder ministries like home affairs need to be on board for this," a highways ministry official told the ET.

A commerce department official said a final decision will be taken only after the Cabinet clears the proposal.

At present, vehicles carrying cargo from both sides have to unload the goods at border check posts. The goods are then transferred to vehicles of the importing country to be taken to their destinations.

This unloading and loading - combined with the rapid rise in bilateral trade growth that has crossed \$5 billion - has led to massive congestion at the border, especially at the land customs stations or integrated check posts, besides taking a toll on trade transaction and freight costs of exporters and importers.

If India goes ahead with its move, it

will significantly bring down trade costs and speed up goods movement from Bangladesh to India.

The highways ministry official quoted earlier said that to facilitate the move, the ministry would need to frame rules under the Indian Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 as well as protocol and procedures particularly regarding acceptable documents.

A bilateral Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) to enable vehicles from both sides to enter and ply within the other's territory was mooted years ago. In fact, in 2011, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh had agreed to work towards concluding the agreement.

It won't be the first time that India makes a unilateral offer to Bangladesh. Under the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) agreement, India provides duty-free, quota-free access to all but 25 products to its market.

Padma bridge needs \$2.1b forex

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The bridge authorities would inform the BB in advance the monthly requirement of foreign and local currencies, said an official of the Bridges Division.

Talking to The Daily Star on Monday, BB Governor Atiur Rahman said the Padma bridge was a top-priority project and the bank would extend all-out support in meeting the foreign currency requirement.

The government wants to complete the tender process and award contracts for three key components of the project -- construction of the bridge, river training and appointment of supervisory consultant -- by June.

It also intends to make some advance payments to the contractor and the consultant then, which will take most of the \$200 million forex required for this FY.

The central bank, however, will not make any direct disbursement from the forex reserve. It would instead provide all supports so that the bank concerned faces no problem in collecting the foreign currency against the budget allocation, said the governor.

The Bridges Division has already opened an account with state-run Agrani Bank to make the payments for the bridge project. The bank will provide the money from its own foreign currency reserve or from inter-bank forex market.

If there is still any shortfall, the BB will sell foreign currency to Agrani Bank, the meeting agreed.

It also decided that the central bank would provide the foreign currency required for paying the contractors at a time to avoid delay, and will issue no-

objection certificates with its Letter of Comfort to the contractors.

Atiur said they would remain alert so that there was no volatility in the inter-bank forex market once Agrani Bank starts purchasing foreign currency for the project.

In a letter to the finance ministry on January 28, the Bridges Division gave details of the present status of the project's three key components and asked the ministry to decide on how to pay the contractors in foreign currency.

The Bridges Division is now evaluating the proposals for the bridge construction. It has also asked the bidders to submit proposals for river training by February 20 and those for the job of consultancy by March 18.

The Padma bridge project is among the six projects under the direct supervision of the Fast Track Project Monitoring Committee headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Once built, the 6.15km long bridge will connect the country's southern part with the capital and cut travel-time by at least one hour.

Originally, it was to be funded by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank and Jica.

But the WB scrapped its \$1.2 billion loan deal with the government in 2012 over alleged corruption conspiracy involving former communications minister Syed Abul Hossain in hiring a Canadian consultancy firm, SNC-Lavalin.

Following the WB decision, other donors also pulled out of the project and the government then decided to implement the project with its own fund.

Asked if the \$2.1 billion payments

in foreign currencies would create any pressure on the forex reserve given it is so vital for imports, a central bank official said the current reserve was in good shape.

"There should be no problem in financing the project with the country's own resources," the official said, requesting anonymity.

India's parliament chaos branded a 'disgrace'

AFP, New Delhi

India's normally disruptive parliament was widely derided yesterday as having hit a new low after lawmakers fought, broke equipment and pepper-sprayed the chamber over a bill to create a new state.

India's media condemned the lawmakers' behaviour as "revolting" and a "disgrace to democracy" after mayhem erupted on Thursday over the bill to carve a new state out of existing Andhra Pradesh.

"Pepper spray in House leaves Indian democracy in tears" screamed the Times of India front page headline on Friday, while the Hindustan Times called the chaos "a complete breakdown of parliamentary conduct".

"Even for a country with a long and unedifying history of parliamentary pandemonium, nothing can be as shameful and disgraceful as the use of pepper spray by a member on his peers to disrupt proceedings," the Hindu newspaper said in an editorial.

Dhaka moves

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includes Additional Secretary of the Home Ministry Dr Kamaluddin Ahmed, Foreign Ministry DG (UN) Saida Muna Tasneem and DG (Americas) Mahfuzur Rahman.

This is going to be the first high-level official delegation to the US since the January 5 parliamentary polls, which America termed "deeply flawed" and did not credibly express the will of people.

Foreign ministry sources say the delegation, which is also going to attend the second steering committee meeting of the newly floated "Global Fund for Community Engagement and Resilience" scheduled for February 20, will hold meetings with officials of the US State Department, as well as labour, trade, energy, human rights and refugee officials.

According to the programme schedule, the Bangladeshi team will hold a meeting with US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Nisha Desai Biswal on February 18 at Washington DC when Dhaka is expected to place a comprehensive report on progress and achievements in regards to the RMG sector and other areas.

After meeting with Biswal, the Bangladesh delegation would hold a meeting with the officials of US Trade Representatives, Department of Labour, and officials drawn from different offices including economic, energy, food security, counterterrorism and refugees.

Sources say Dhaka will apprise the US officials about its achievements and progress in the areas of RMG factories, labour and work place safety and the ongoing steps to further improve the RMG sector, achievements in counterterrorism, energy and connectivity cooperation between Bangladesh and its neighbours, etc.

They add the US officials might come out heavily on the issues of the parliamentary polls, extrajudicial killings, suppression and oppression of political opponents, and workers' rights as well as safety issues.

BGMEA opposes retailers' plan

FROM PAGE 1

After the twin industrial disasters -- Tazreen Fashions fire and Rana Plaza building collapse -- the Accord and Alliance were formed to monitor and ensure factory safety in Bangladesh.

The European platform will inspect more than 1,600 factories while the American body will visit nearly 700 units.

The government has also formed 30 panels under Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) to check 2,000 garment factories. The Buet teams started their inspection in November last year.

Contacted last night, BGMEA Vice-President Reaz-Bin-Mahmood said in a country like Bangladesh, it is "not possible" to enforce the standards of the US and European nations.

For example, he said, the Accord and Alliance want the factories to use very thick electrical coils. But no company in this country produce such coils.

The inspection agencies also want fire sprinkler system in the factories and this is not stated in the BNBC.

The fire sprinkler system is a protection measure used worldwide. A sprinkler sprays water when a fire breaks out and a predetermined temperature is exceeded.

Reaz-Bin-Mahmood said if any electrical bulb is burst out, the sprinkler system will be turned on only to create panic among the workers and other people in the factories.

"We have to gradually improve the standards," he said. "We do not want any repetition of Rana Plaza or Tazreen incidents."

Asked, Mikail Shipar, secretary to the ministry of labour and employment, said the Accord and Alliance prepared the factory inspection standards without consulting the government.

"We will try to make a common set of standards for all inspection agencies," Shipar said.

"I have already asked the ILO (International Labour Organisation) to arrange a meeting involving the Alliance, Accord, BGMEA, Buet and other stakeholders for making a common set of factory inspection standards."

Protector turns into predator

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and brought piles of mud to develop the enclosed area on which there are a dozen fruit and timber trees, said Abdul Jalil Sarkar, a local resident and president of Baridhara Ahle Hadith Jaam-e Mosque management committee.

"They even dug up a trench there to build a concrete boundary wall to detach the site from rest of the park," he said, adding, "But they had to stop in the face of protests by locals."

Sarkar alleged that the move was intended to grab the park land, as the society members occasionally say that they would build a society office and sometimes speak of a waste recycle plant there.

Once the park land is grabbed, it will further destroy the environment and pollute the lake, he fears. Several other residents in the vicinity also voiced similar concerns.

Sarkar said the locals had filed a complaint with the Rajuk about three weeks ago in connection with the attempted land grabbing, but to no avail.

CR Das, executive secretary of Baridhara Society, said they had helped Wasa in setting up the enclosure in the park because there was no other open space to keep their equipment.

"The society intended to build a concrete boundary wall to set up a shed for security guards but it was postponed for the time being in the face of protest by locals," he said.

Das said they would go ahead with the move once Rajuk gave them the official nod.

Meanwhile, the society officials late last month removed some portion of the enclosure but left the garbage vans and piles of bricks and mud.

"It just might be a change in the strategy to occupy the park space," alleged Sarkar.

Robots to build

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should look like before being left to get on with it, researchers said.

All that guides them are signals from infrared and ultrasound sensors and simple "traffic" rules that determine whether to go or stop.

They also know when to lift a building brick and where to attach it, as well as how to avoid collisions and even how to reach higher levels by constructing staircases.

While the robots are just over 6-inches long and the building bricks are made of lightweight foam, the scientists are impressed by what their creations are capable of.

"The key inspiration we took from termites is the idea that you can do something really complicated as a group, without a supervisor and secondly that you can do it without everybody discussing explicitly what's going on, but just by modifying the environment," said US computer scientist Prof Radhika Nagpal, from Harvard University.

"If they [robots] built carelessly, it would be easy for them to build in a way where they got stuck," said team member Dr Justin Werfel, from the Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering in Cambridge, US.

Urdu and the Nawabs

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the language spoken in the Dhaka Nawab family. Nazimuddin could not speak Bangla. But the speech he delivered at the public meeting had been prepared in Bangla written in the Urdu script, by Mizanur Rahman, a senior Bangalee government official in Karachi. In the post-speech period, Aziz Ahmed, the non-Bangalee chief secretary of the provincial government, told Nurul Amin that he had not seen the text of the governor general's speech, but if he had, he would have advised Nazimuddin against making his remarks on the state language issue. Aziz Ahmed would later serve as foreign secretary in the Ayub regime, working under Foreign Minister ZA Bhutto, who would appoint him minister of state for foreign affairs in post-1971 Pakistan.

The Dhaka University State Language

Committee of Action called a meeting on the campus on 29 January 1952 to censure Nazimuddin over his comments. The next day, the East Pakistan Muslim Students' League, at a meeting at Dhaka University, severely criticised the governor general over his remarks and renewed the call for Bangla to be adopted as a state language of Pakistan. After the meeting, the EPMSL activists marched to the residence of the chief minister, where they chanted slogans advocating Bangla as a state language. They also called for a strike at all educational institutions in Dhaka for 4 February 1952.

On the same day, 30 January, an unrepentant Khwaja Nazimuddin, addressing a public meeting in Rajshahi, asked the people of East Bengal to eschew what he called provincialism.

Kejriwal quits

FROM PAGE 1

He threatened on the floor of the House shortly after Congress and BJP legislators effectively shot down his efforts to bring in anti-corruption legislation -- the key plank of his manifesto in assembly election held last December.

AAP had won 28 seats in Delhi's 70-member assembly and came to power with the help of Congress party which rules India.

But Congress decided not to back Kejriwal in yesterday's vote, claiming the anti-graft bill called Jan Lokpal bill, was unconstitutional.

Last month, Kejriwal had described himself as an "anarchist".

During his tenure as Chief Minister, Kejriwal had initiated a number of populist measures including cutting down of power and

water tariff for general consumers and waiving half of electricity bill of defaulters.

The resignation of 45-year-old Kejriwal, a former income tax inspector, came a few days after his government had registered an FIR against India's industrial tycoon Mukesh Ambani, Petroleum Minister M Veerappa Moily and former Petroleum Minister Murli Deora in connection with alleged irregularities in federal Indian government's move to further hike the price of natural gas extracted by Ambani-led firm.

His party's stunning performance in Delhi assembly polls last December has threatened to alter India's traditional political landscape dominated largely by Congress, BJP and several regional parties.

AL now soft on rebels

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expulsion orders against two people in Singair and Senbagh upazilas.

Elections to the 97 upazilas will be held on February 19 and 117 upazilas on February 27.

All efforts to manage party rebels, in the officially non-partisan polls, seemed to have been unsuccessful. The Awami League and BNP still have a large number of rebel candidates taking part in the polls.


Rebels of the parties refused to step aside from the race for chairman and vice-chairman in Kotalipara upazila of Gopalganj-3, Hasina's own constituency, and Parshuram upazila of Feni-1, Khaleda's constituency.

Seven Awami League leaders are running

for the chairman post while five are vying for vice-chairman post in Kotalipara. In Parshuram, two Awami League men and four BNP men filed nominations for the post of chairman while three BNP men and two Awami League men are contesting for the vice-chairman.

After the national elections on January 5, both the camps took the upazila parishad election seriously and it has become a prestige issue for them.

The parties had decided to increase their chances of victory by making sure they had only one candidate vying for each post in the upazilas. They had directed their grassroots to pick one candidate for each post through consensus, which the grassroots failed to do in most upazilas.



পল্লী কর্ম-সহায়ক ফাউন্ডেশন (পিকেএসএফ)

পিকেএসএফ ভবন, প্লট-ই-৪/বি, আগারগাঁও প্রশাসনিক এলাকা, শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭
ফোনঃ ৮৮০-২-৯১২৬২৪০, ফ্যাক্সঃ ৮৮০-২-৯১০৪৪৩১, ৯১২৬২৪৪ web: www.pksf-bd.org

মুদ্রণ ও প্রকাশনী প্রতিষ্ঠান নির্বাচনের লক্ষ্যে প্রস্তাবনা আহ্বান


গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার ১৯৯০ সালে কর্মসংস্থানের মাধ্যমে দারিদ্র্য দূরীকরণের লক্ষ্যে পল্লী কর্ম-সহায়ক ফাউন্ডেশন (পিকেএসএফ) প্রতিষ্ঠা করে। পিকেএসএফ নিয়মিতভাবে বার্ষিক প্রতিবেদন, নিউজলেটার, ডায়েরী, ক্যালেন্ডার, গবেষণা প্রতিবেদন, বিভিন্ন ম্যাগ্যুয়াল, সচেতনতামূলক পোস্টার/ফ্লিপচার্ট/লিফলেট, সভা-সেমিনার ভিত্তিক বিভিন্ন প্রকাশনা ইত্যাদি প্রকাশ করে থাকে। পিকেএসএফ মুদ্রণ কাজে উচ্চ গুণগতমান ও সৃজনশীলতা বজায় রাখার লক্ষ্যে ২০১৪ সালের সকল প্রকার মুদ্রণ কাজ কয়েকটি দক্ষ ও অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন প্রতিষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে সম্পন্ন করার সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করেছে। এ প্রেক্ষিতে যোগ্য প্রতিষ্ঠান বাছাইয়ের লক্ষ্যে প্রকৃত ডিজাইন ও মুদ্রণকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে প্রস্তাবনা আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে।

উল্লিখিত প্রেক্ষিতে নিম্নোক্ত যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন অগ্রাহী মুদ্রণ ও প্রকাশনা প্রতিষ্ঠানকে নির্ধারিত ফরমে আবেদন করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছেঃ

- ১। অগ্রাহী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিজস্ব প্রিন্টিং প্রেস থাকতে হবে অথবা সন্মানমধ্য কোন প্রিন্টিং প্রেস-এর সাথে Affiliation থাকতে হবে;
- ২। অগ্রাহী প্রতিষ্ঠানের অবশ্যই নিজস্ব ডিজাইনার, প্রফ রিডার, Photoshop/Illustrator/Quark Xpress-এ দক্ষ জনবল, অংকনশিল্পী এবং ফটোগ্রাফার থাকতে হবে;
- ৩। অগ্রাহী প্রতিষ্ঠানের সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজে কমপক্ষে ৫ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে;
- ৪। অগ্রাহী প্রতিষ্ঠানের বিগত ২টি অর্থবছরে ধারাবাহিকভাবে ৫টি মানসম্পন্ন মুদ্রণ কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রতিষ্ঠানের মুদ্রণ ও প্রকাশনী খাতে বাৎসরিক সেবা মূল্য (Turnover) কমপক্ষে ২৫ (পঁচিশ) লক্ষ টাকা থাকতে হবে;
- ৫। বার্ষিক প্রতিবেদন, প্রশিক্ষণ মডিউল, ফ্লিপচার্ট, ক্যালেন্ডার ইত্যাদি বড় ধরনের প্রকাশনা ডিজাইন ও মুদ্রণ কাজের অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন প্রতিষ্ঠানকে অগ্রাধিকার দেওয়া হবে।

অগ্রাহী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহকে **পিকেএসএফ ভবন, প্লট-ই ৪/বি, আগারগাঁও প্রশাসনিক এলাকা, শেরে বাংলানগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭** থেকে নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র সংগ্রহপূর্বক আগামী **২৭ ফেব্রুয়ারী ২০১৪** এর মধ্যে উক্ত ঠিকানায়ে সেটি প্রেরণ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে। উল্লেখ্য, পিকেএসএফ এর ওয়েবসাইট www.pksf-bd.org থেকেও আবেদনপত্র সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।

মহাব্যবস্থাপক (চলতি দায়িত্ব) প্রশাসন



Invitation for Tender (IFT) for Purchase of Medical Equipments.

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Project name | BRAC Health, Nutrition and Population Programme (HNPP) |
| Tender package no. | BPD-HNPP/02-14 |
| Reference no.and date | IFT/BRAC/BPD-HNPP/14-03 February 02, 2014 |
| Tender name | Medical Equipments. |
| Time of delivery | As per tender documents. |
| Price of the tender documents | Tk.1000.00 (One thousand) only |
| Tender security | 2.0% of Total tender value. |
| Tender documents available | Accounts Department (8th floor), BRAC Center, 75 Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212. |
| Date & time of Selling Documents | February 18, 2014 to March 05, 2014 Between 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. |
| Tender dropping place, date & time | Procurement Department (Gr. floor), BRAC Center, 75 Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212. March 06, 2014 Between 9:00 am to 2:30 pm. |
| Tender opening place, date & time | 4 th Floor BRAC Canteen, BRAC Center, March 06, 2014 at 3:00pm. |

BRAC, BRAC Centre, 75, Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212
Phone: 9881265 , Ext : 3798

INVITATION TO BID (ITB) ANNOUNCEMENT

Bid Ref. No. LITB-2014-9110342:
Air Conditioners and Refrigerators

UNICEF-Bangladesh wishes to procure assorted sizes and capacities of air conditioners and refrigerators for its assisted programme activities in the country.

Interested and recognized manufacturer's appointed local dealers are invited to contact UNICEF at "supplybangladesh@unicef.org" for detailed solicitation documents by mentioning the above mentioned bid reference number and providing their physical address, email, telephone (Landline & Mobile), contact person for sending the bid documents at no cost (without any charge/fees).

All supporting documents related to this bid **MUST** be in English language.

Bid offers **MUST** be received latest by **11:00 am** local time on **2 March 2014**. Bids received after the stipulated date and time will be invalidated.

