

আপনার বিআরটিএ ফি এবং সকল ইউটিলিটি বিল এসআইবিএল এর যে কোন শাখার মাধ্যমে জমা দিন

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star BUSINESS

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Power purchase deals signed with S Alam-led groups

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government yesterday signed power purchase agreements with two private joint ventures led by S Alam Group to buy electricity at 8.259 US cents or Tk 6.61 per kilowatt-hour.

The state-run Bangladesh Power Development Board or BPDB struck the deals for the two projects with total electricity generation capacity of 1,224 megawatts.

SS Power I Ltd and SS Power II Ltd, two joint ventures of S Alam Group and SEPCOIII Electric Power and HTG of China, will set up the power plants in Banskhal, Chittagong by November 2019. The electricity will be supplied for 25 years.

The project will require an investment of \$2.4 billion of which \$1.75 billion will come from Chinese lenders, according to a handout distributed during the contract signing ceremony at Bidyut Bhaban in Dhaka.

BPDB and Power Grid Company of Bangladesh, another state-run company, also signed project implementation agreements with the joint ventures.

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Tk 10,000cr sought for state banks

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The Bank and Financial Institutions Division (BFID) has sought more than Tk 10,000 crore for the next two fiscal years mainly to meet the capital shortfall of the two scam-hit state banks.

It also wants to inject fresh capital into other banks and financial institutions.

Last week, the BFID sent a comprehensive proposal to the Finance Division saying the institutions have been facing a capital shortfall of Tk 14,054 crore.

Subsequently, it sought Tk 5,000 crore for fiscal 2016-17 and fiscal 2017-18 each.

Some Tk 5,000 crore has already been earmarked in the current year's budget, of which Tk 1,200 crore has already been disbursed to BASIC Bank. In the last two fiscal years, a total of Tk 10,000 crore was set aside for the purpose, but in the end, about Tk 6,400 crore was given to banks.

BFID Secretary M Aslam Alam said a comprehensive plan was sent

State banks' capital deficit as per Basel II	
SONALI	Tk 2,935cr
JANATA	Tk 663cr
RUPALI	Tk 146cr
BASIC	Tk 3,051cr
KRISHI	Tk 6,676cr
RAKUB	Tk 583cr

SOURCE: BFID

to the Finance Division this time to avoid having to ask for funds over and over again.

As per Basel II, Sonali Bank has Tk 2,935 crore of capital shortfall and BASIC Tk 3,051 crore, according to BFID statistics. Krishi Bank has a shortfall of Tk 6,676 crore, which is the highest.

Due to the scams at Sonali and BASIC, a big hole has been created, Alam said. Although the two banks are now running well, the financial hole has to be plugged still.

Sonali is the largest bank in the

country, and if its balance sheet remains bad the international community may lose trust in Bangladesh's banking sector altogether, he said.

The capital shortfall at Krishi Bank is not only due to corruption and inefficiency.

The government waived a portion of the bank's loans that turned into defaults since independence, and the trend continued until the mid-1990s, Alam said. This has created a long-term capital shortfall, so the government has decided to inject funds.

Alam said the government has shares in some private banks, including the Grameen Bank, so it needs to top up their capital as well.

As per the new insurance law, the government has to provide capital to Sadharan Bima Corporation and Jiban Bima Corporation as well.

On the other hand, the government has set up some new banks like Palli Sanchay Bank, where it also has to provide capital.

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Mobile payment picks up at book fair

MUHAMMAD ZAHIDUL ISLAM

Digital payments are gaining popularity at Ekushey book fair, as beneficiaries are more comfortable with the service, while publishers also encourage buyers to pay via the mobile solution.

The leading mobile banking solution provider, bKash, first introduced the service at the Ekushey book fair in 2014. It offers 10 percent cash-back for buying books from the fair.

DBBL saw around 50 percent growth in transactions in the first two weeks of the fair compared to last year, said Md Rabiul Alam, head of merchant accounting and e-commerce business of DBBL.

Response from the visitors is huge this time, said publishers, adding that the system has made transactions hassle-free.

BKash said 253 stalls of 124 publishers accepted their payment system this year, up from 243 stalls last year.

In 2015, around Tk 20 lakh was transacted through bKash at the fair; sales in the first two weeks this year have already sur-

passed that amount.

"Buying books through the bKash wallet is new to me. I opened my bKash wallet mainly to receive money from my father at home. But I can use it now for other purposes too, for example, buying books," said Rumana Rahman, a Dhaka University student.

She bought eight books from the book fair this year, paying through bKash.

Hasnat, another student, had chosen some books to buy but saw that he had insufficient funds in his mobile account. He called a friend and asked him to transfer some money to his account and he was able to make the purchase successfully.

AK Nasir Ahmed Salim, owner of Kakoli Prokashoni, which is one of the first few publishers who adopted the digital payment system at the Ekushey book fair, said the method was helpful not only for the buyers but for them as well.

The system is becoming popular so fast that he thinks a majority of the transactions at the fair will take place through digital payment systems in the next few years.

Some publishers are also accepting debit and credit cards as a mode of payment, although they are few in number.

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Start-ups to get a boost from govt

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government is working on identifying ten start-up companies that could represent Bangladesh abroad.

To that end, the ICT Division launched a competition -- Connecting Startups Bangladesh -- in October last year, and received 400 applications.

A process to select the top ten start-ups began at an event at Krishibid Institution in the capital yesterday.

The winners will get space free of cost in the country's first software technology park at Janata Tower in Dhaka, and Tk 5 lakh each as seed money.

Bangladesh Association of Software

and Information Services (BASIS), and Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority (BHPTA) are supporting the initiative of the ICT Division.

Mobile operator Banglalink has joined the programme as the telecom partner while other partners are Fenox Venture Capital, GAP and Kizki.

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