

Hyundai's 10 locomotives

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Hassan Mansur told The Daily Star yesterday. He said directives have been given to the authority concerned on April 21 for using those locomotives for passenger and freight trains "on trial basis until further notice" and the operations started from Sunday.

The metre-gauge diesel electric locomotives -- bought under a project worth around Tk 300 crore -- arrived at a railways workshop in Chattogram's Pahartoli after they were unloaded at the Chattogram port in September last year.

In its report, a BR commissioning committee said the technical specifications of four key components -- engines, alternators, compressors, and traction motors -- of the supplied locomotives did not match the specifications mentioned in the agreement.

The railways minister in October last year ordered a probe into the matter. The locomotives had been sitting idle in a workshop since then.

The project authority also halted 65 percent of the payment for the locomotives. A probe committee, led by Md Faruquzzaman, additional secretary (law and land) of the ministry, submitted its report on February 25. The Daily Star obtained a copy of the report.

The committee recommended actions against Hyundai for supplying locomotives in deviation from the contract and CCIC Singapore Pte Ltd, which the BR employed for the pre-shipment inspection, for failing to carry out its duties.

The probe committee report shows that Hyundai supplied alternator model TA9-12CA9SE, but the agreement sought alternator model TA12-CA9.

BR officials said the two models are different in terms of power output.

Besides, as per a government plan, all rail lines in the country would be converted into dual gauge within a few years. The government had instructed the BR to purchase locomotives which could be used on both metre-gauge and broad-gauge by changing the undercarriages.

But with the TA9-12CA9SE alternator, the locomotives will not run on broad-gauge, said some officials.

The then project director not only halted the Hyundai's payment but also

raised allegations against "some senior BR officials" of joining hands in an unethical activity to release the fund.

In this given situation, the immediate past DG, Nur Ahmed Hossain, was changed on March 31 and posted under a junior in his BCS batch.

However, incumbent PD Hassan Mansur said the overall performance of the locomotives is "quite good".

"But as they [HRC] did not give alternators as per the contract, we have asked them to change the alternators," he said, adding that "If they do not change the alternators, we will cut money from their due payment..."

Asked about the equipment supplied without following the contract, he said there is no problem in engines and traction motors and the company made the changes in the equipment with the project authority's permission after the contract was signed.

In reply to another query, he said they would take further steps following the recommendations of a technical body.

On March 23, the BR formed the four-member committee, led by Prof Mahbubur Razaque of Buet's Mechanical Engineering Department, to determine whether those engines can be used for railway operations.

The committee has been asked to submit its report within 10 working days.

Mahbubur Razaque, who was also a member of Faruquzzaman's led probe committee, declined to be part of the new committee.

He said their committee has given their recommendations for taking action against the companies for violating the contract.

"The authority could have formed a committee to determine the extent of punishment, instead another one was formed how to accept the locomotives. This is ridiculous. So, I decided not to be part of the new committee," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Contacted yesterday, BR Director General Dharendra Nath Mazumder said the committee was reconstituted with Chief Mechanical Engineer (East) of BR its chief and they were asked to submit the report "as soon as possible."

Asked whether action would be taken against Hyundai, he said, "We have asked them to change the alternators. We will take action if they failed."

Lockdown

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have to impose stricter restrictions if the situation in West Bengal worsens like in Delhi," an official, who was present at the virtual meeting yesterday, told The Daily Star.

India has been witnessing about 3.5 lakh infections and more than 2,700 deaths every day over the past week amid oxygen shortage. Hospitals in Delhi and Mumbai are failing to accommodate patients.

The situation in West Bengal is also worsening. Laboratories in Kolkata and surrounding areas have been reporting positivity rate of 45-55 percent. On April 1, the total cases in West Bengal was 1,274, which went up to 14,281 on April 24.

Sources in yesterday's meeting said the Bangladesh government was considering to allow operations of buses and trains, suspended since April 5, from April 29. However, the decision remains halted for now.

"This is because if the buses are allowed, people from the districts bordering with India will travel to Dhaka. This may result in the rise in infections, including those caused by mutant virus," an official said.

The meeting also discussed allowing bus operations before the upcoming Eid and then again suspending them again a week after the festival, said meeting insiders.

"We have allowed opening of shops and malls ahead of Eid because the businesses have been facing losses for long. But after the Eid, shops may be closed again," said meeting sources.

The inter-ministerial meeting was attended by top officials of the ministries of home, health, public administration, and Prime Minister's Office. The meeting also discussed the re-opening of the public and private offices.

"Our strategy of lockdown will depend on the situation in Kolkata," an official, who participated in the meeting, said.

TRAFFIC, PEOPLE MOBILITY RISE
Keeping the Eid in mind, the government has decided that shops can stay open from 10:00am to 8:00pm every day.

Despite the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, traffic movement on streets has increased significantly lately, although operations of buses, train and launches have remained suspended.

Visiting some major shopping malls and markets in Dhaka -- New Market, Chandni Chowk, Gausia, Noor Mansion, Chandria Super Market, and Bashundhara City Mall -- yesterday, The Daily Star correspondents found customers pouring into the shops from 10:00am.

At most shopping centres, maintaining the health safety rules appeared as a big challenge due to the heavy rush of customers. Only a few of the health safety guidelines were being followed.

Many shop owners and their customers were seen with their masks down. At entry points of some markets, antiseptic mix was sprayed on customers, instead of providing them with hand sanitisers. Besides, there was not enough space inside most of the shops to maintain physical distancing.

Heavy traffic congestion was seen in front of New Market and Bashundhara City Mall.

In another development, the government has urged Muslims to offer Eid-ul-Fitr prayers at mosques instead of at Eidgahs as part of efforts to curb the spread of the virus, according to a UNB report.

Nomadland

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to win best actor in the final award of the night, besting sentimental favorite Chadwick Boseman, who died of cancer last year.

The unorthodox Oscars ceremony was moved from a Hollywood theater to a glammed-up downtown train station to abide by strict Covid-19 protocols, and reunited Tinseltown A-listers for the first time in more than a year.

Papul to serve seven years in Kuwait jail

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Papul is the managing director and CEO of Marafe Kuwaitia Group.

The independent lawmaker from Lakshimpur-2 was also fined 1.97 million Kuwaiti dinars (Tk 55 crore) the day he was handed the sentence.

Papul's fine was also increased by the court yesterday, but the amount could not be known.

Following the verdict of Kuwait's criminal court, his Jatiya Sangsad membership was cancelled.

The defendants can now seek a review petition with the court, which will check if there was any legal deviation in legal procedures. It won't, however, change the verdict delivered by the appeal court.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Kuwait Maj Gen Md Ashikuzzaman said he learnt about Papul's extension of imprisonment to seven years through a newspaper and has asked the embassy lawyer to collect the copy of the verdict.

"We can then provide you with the details," he told The Daily Star

yesterday evening.

Papul was accused of human trafficking, money laundering and bribing Kuwaiti officials with millions of dollars to recruit Bangladeshi workers and get contracts for his company. He was also accused of labour exploitation and violation of the residence law.

Ashikuzzaman said Papul was not found guilty of human trafficking but was guilty of bribing officials. The money laundering case is still being investigated.

Quoting Al-Qabas, Kuwaiti news portal The Times earlier reported that Papul was estimated to have obtained five million Kuwaiti dinars in assets. During investigations, all his bank accounts and those of his company were frozen.

Papul went to Kuwait in 1989 as a worker and eventually started working as a recruitment broker and later established companies. He ran four companies involved in providing cleaners through government contracts in Kuwait, employing around 9,000

workers.

He had no involvement in politics back home before 2016.

Papul invested crores of taka to prevent other potential candidates in the Lakshimpur-2 constituency and became an independent MP in the 2018 national election. His wife Selina Islam allegedly did the same to become an MP from the reserved seats for women.

The Anti-Corruption Commission of Bangladesh opened an enquiry into an allegation that Papul amassed Tk 1,400 crore by trafficking people to Kuwait and laundered the money to different countries.

The ACC said the enquiry was to look into the charges of loan forgery and money laundering by the NRB Commercial Bank Director Kazi Papul, his wife Selina, their daughter Kazi Wafa Islam and Selina's sister Jesmin.

On December 28, a Dhaka Court ordered the freezing of 617 bank accounts and 92 deeds of immovable properties of Papul, following a petition filed by the ACC.

'Don't squeeze Yahya'

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The minister said the new administration would try to fulfil the demands of the people by keeping a direct link with them. Kamaruzzaman, who recently travelled inside Bangladesh, said the movement of the Pakistani troops were now restricted to the cities only. But other areas were now completely under their control. He said it was a fact that at some places the Mukti Fojh had to retreat but this did not mean a defeat.

The minister said he was glad to see the high morale of the freedom fighters. He was confident that the millions of people of Bangladesh would fight to the last drop of their blood. He added that attainment of complete freedom could help to forget

the agonies of genocide that had been perpetrated in Bangladesh.

INDIAN MISSION STAFF IN DHAKA INTERNED

The diplomatic deadlock between India and Pakistan in connection with the repatriation of diplomats, staff and dependents of the respective mission in Calcutta and Dhaka continued today. Pakistan in its latest move practically interned the personnel of the Indian Deputy High Commission in Dhaka, including the head of the mission, KC Sen Gupta, after the mission's closure yesterday. India tonight protested strongly to Pakistan over the internment. The internment was probably in retaliation to India's action in barring the exit of Pakistani

personnel in India without prior permission from the government.

ISLAM DOESN'T PERMIT SUCH BLOODSHED: JAMIAT ULEMA

The Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind today expressed its resentment, deepest sorrow and grief over the inhuman atrocities in Bangladesh. A resolution adopted at the conclusion of a two-day meeting of its working committee said, "Islam does not permit such bloodshed and rampage." The Jamiat appealed to intellectuals, thinkers, statesmen and conscientious men all over the world to make fullest efforts to stop large-scale killing and destruction.

Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

38 DSA cases filed

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release. Following this, the attackers filed a case accusing the newspaper's editor of attacking them.

In addition, the city corporation mayors of Khulna and Rangpur filed two DSA cases against two journalists for publishing news against them. Abu Tayeb, the journalist from Khulna was even arrested on April 21, pointed out the press release.

He is still languishing in jail, they added. The Rangpur mayor filed a case against a journalist named Ratan Sarkar for putting up a Facebook status about corruption by the mayor.

"Ratan Sarkar was physically assaulted before. He is now living in fear of being arrested or worse," said the statement.

"We strongly condemn these arrests, attacks and cases," the organisation said in the statement, adding that the journalists must be released unconditionally and that the cases against them must be retracted.

The organisation also invited the authorities to investigate the alleged attack that took place at the "Amar Habiganj" office.

"The powerful have always used the Digital Security Act to repress those disclosing instances of corruption," said Faruq Faisal, the regional director of Article 19 in Bangladesh and South Asia.

Most of those filing cases under this law belong to the ruling party, he added. "Its abuse during the pandemic has risen to worrying levels."

The statement said that the DSA should be used to regulate issues regarding cyber security.

"It is mentioned in the law that the case must be disposed of within 120 days, with a possible extension of a further 90 days. If this case was followed as written, writer Mushtaq Ahmed would not have had to die in jail," it said.

Faisal invited the government to reconsider the law.

TCB goods available online

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purchase five litres edible oil and other commodities only 3kg a week.

Buyers will have to pay Tk 30 as delivery charge in Dhaka city and Tk 40 outside Dhaka.

Asif Ahnaf, director of e-CAB, said the TCB allocated them 150 tonnes of products for supply until May 6.

Of the amount, they will supply 146 tonnes for Dhaka city dwellers and the rest for the people of Sirajganj and Tangail.

He said as they have not got any demand from other districts, they did not include them.

e-CAB said Dhaka city dwellers can buy the goods from chaldal.com, shwapno.com, onestopsupershop.com.bd, sobjibazaar, jachai.com and kgclick, while Sirajganj people can get the products from epolli.com.bd and Tangail people from bairan.com.bd.

Presided over by e-CAB President Shomi Kaiser, Senior Commerce Secretary Jafar Uddin also spoke on the occasion.

2 warehouse owners held

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capital's Karwan Bazar.

Each of them paid a monthly rent of Tk 15,000 for each shop in Musa Manson, Rab officials said.

Mostafa lived on the first floor of the building. He managed to flee with his family members through the balcony moments after the fire broke out, they added.

The fire also injured 23 people.

Ten of the injured are still being treated at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery.

Three of them, including a newly married couple, are in the ICU, said Samanta Lal Sen, the coordinator of the institute.

Muna Sarkar and Ashikuzzaman Khan, both computer engineers, got married just over a month ago. They are on life support with severe injuries to their lungs, he added.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Regional Controller of Food Barishal division Club road, Barishal www.food.barishaldiv.gov.bd				
Record Number	13.01.0000.000.55.032.17.901			Date 25/4/2021
e-Tender Notice No-01/2020-2021 (LTM) (WORKS)				
e-Tender have been invited in the national e-GP System portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for procurement of Following Works:				
SL. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of Works	Last Selling (Date & Time)	Closing and Opening (Date & Time)
1.	570494	Repair of Food Godown with Ancillary Facilities at Subidkhalo LSD, Mirzagonj, Patuakhali.	17 May, 2021 17:00	18 May, 2021 14:00
2.	570630	Repair of Food Godown with Ancillary Facilities at Muladi LSD, Muladi, Barishal.	17 May, 2021 17:00	18 May, 2021 14:00
This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.				
Only Enlisted contractor of Directorate General Food & Those who are renewed in 2020-2021 Fiscal Year can participate in the Tender.				
The fees for last selling/downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches.				
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).				
 25-04-2021 Md. Zahangir Alam Regional Controller of Food Email: rcf.bs@dgfood.gov.bd				

 ISO 9001:2015 Certified Dhaka Electric Supply Company Limited. (DESCO) 22/B Farrukh Sarani, Nikunja-2, Khilkhet, Dhaka-1229 Phone:02-8900110-11, Fax: 02-8900100 E-mail: info@desco.org.bd Web: www.desco.org.bd				
Invitation for Tender				
1	Ministry/Division: Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources			
2	Agency: Dhaka Electric Supply Company Limited (DESCO)			
2	Procuring Entity Name: Procurement, Inspection & Testing Division, DESCO			
3	Procuring Entity District: Dhaka			
4	Invitation for: Upgradation of Master Information Center (MIC) of DESCO on Turn Key Basis			
5	Tender No.: 04/2021			
6	Invitation Ref No.: 27.24.0000.021.07.04.21.541			
7	Date: 25/04/2021			
KEY INFORMATION				
8	Procurement Method: Open Tendering Method (Single Stage Two Envelope)			
FUNDING INFORMATION				
9	Budget and Source of Funds: DESCO's own fund			
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
10	Tender Name: Upgradation of Master Information Center (MIC) of DESCO on Turn Key Basis			
11	Tender Selling Date, Closing & Opening Date and Time	Last Selling Date: June 09, 2021 5.00 PM	Closing Date & Time: June 10, 2021 12.00 Noon	Opening Date & Time: June 10, 2021 12.30 PM
	12	Name & Address of the office for selling Tender Document, receiving & opening tender	Selling: Office of Deputy General Manager (Accounts), DESCO. House # 22/B (6th floor), Faruque Sarani, Nikunja#2, Dhaka-1229.	Receiving: Office of the Superintending Engineer (P.I&T), DESCO. House # 22/B (1st floor), Faruque Sarani, Nikunja#2, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh.
Opening: Office of the Superintending Engineer (P.I&T), DESCO. House # 22/B (1st floor), Faruque Sarani, Nikunja#2, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh.				
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
13	Eligibility of Tenderer: No. of lots under this tender is 01 (One) . All qualification criteria have been mentioned in Section 2: Tender Data Sheet of the Tender Document.			
14	Description of Goods & related Service: Upgradation of Master Information Center (MIC) of DESCO on Turn Key Basis. Details are described in Section 6: Employer's Requirements and Section 7: Drawings.			
15	Price of Tender Document: BDT 4,000/- (Four Thousand Taka) only payable in the form of Pay Order/Bank draft from any scheduled bank in Bangladesh in favor of 'Dhaka Electric Supply Company Limited'.			
16	Tender Security Amount: The amount of the Tender Security shall be Tk.1,50,00,000 (One Crore Fifty Lac Taka) only. The Tender Security shall be payable in the form of Bank Guarantee/Bank Draft/ Pay Order in favour of Dhaka Electric Supply Company Limited.			
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS				
17	Name of Official inviting the Tender: Engr. Mohammad Kamruzzaman			
18	Designation of Official inviting the Tender: Superintending Engineer (Procurement, Inspection & Testing)			
19	Contact details of Official inviting the Tender: Interested firms may obtain further information from the office of the under signed during normal office hours (09:00 AM to 05:00 PM). Office of the SE (Procurement, Inspection & Testing), DESCO. Address: 22/B (1st floor), Faruque Sarani, Nikunja # 02, Uttara. Dhaka-1229. E-mail: pit@desco.org.bd			
20	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any/all tender(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever.			
Engr. Mohammad Kamruzzaman Superintending Engineer (P, I & T), DESCO				