



COMPANIES THAT WILL USE RAILWAYS' OPTICAL FIBRE CABLE FOR 5 YEARS


FIRMS	LENGTH	LEASE MONEY
Bahon Ltd	1,683.93 KM	Tk 81.57cr
Summit Communications	895.21KM	Tk 43.48cr
Banglalink	595.39km	Tk 29.6cr
Robi	280.39KM	Tk 13.39cr
Fiber@Home	177.81KM	Tk 9.36cr





Total length of Railway's optical fiber cable: 3205 km



Railway earlier leased out optical fiber cable to Grameen-phone, Robi







5 cos to use railway's OPTICAL FIBRE

Users likely to get faster internet

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh Railway has leased out its spare optical fibre cables to five telecom and internet service providers for five years, a move which is expected to ensure faster internet speed for end users.

Through the deal, the railway will earn Tk 177.81 crore during the period.

The companies signed agreements with Bangladesh Railway through a ceremony at Rail Bhaban yesterday. Railways Minister Md Nurul Islam Sujan was present as chief guest.

Under the agreement, Bahon will use an optical fibre network of 1,683.93 kilometres, Summit Communications 895.21 kilometres, Banglalink 595.39 kilometres, Robi 280.39 kilometres, and Fiber@Home 177.81 kilometres.

“We will expand our network through the railway’s robust network. Customers will get faster internet,” said Rashed Amin Biddut, chief operating officer at Bahon, a nationwide telecommunication transmission network (NTTN) operator.

An NTTN operator provides data service by deploying optical infrastructure for internet service providers, internet gateway service providers and telecom operators.

“The fibre of the railway is solid and they don’t get damaged, allowing us to provide a better price,” Biddut added.

With the new 1,683.93 kilometres from the railway, the total optical fibre network of Bahon would stand at 3,000 kilometres.

Md Arif Al Islam, managing director of Summit Communications, said Summit already has a strong optical fibre network of about 50,000 kilometres.

“We have taken a new 895 kilometres of optical fibre network from railways to ensure better redundancy.”

Fiber@Home, which has a total of 50,000 kilometres of optical fibre network across the country, took 178 kilometres under this deal from the railway mainly as a

backup, said its chief technology officer, Sumon Ahmed Sabir.

However, it’s unclear how much telecom operators Robi and Banglalink will benefit from this deal since telecom operators cannot import or install dense wavelength-division multiplexing (DWDM), an essential technology device to maximise the use of optical fibre.

In Bangladesh, only NTTN operators can import or install the DWDM technology.

“Without the DWDM, fibre networks can give little benefit to a telecom operator,” said an official of a telecom operator.

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Mohammed Shahedul Alam, Robi’s chief corporate and regulatory affairs officer, said the railway assured them that it would install DWDM for the telecom operators.

“So, with the newly leased network of optical fibre, we will be able to fiberise more of our network site.”

In 2017, the railway leased out 2,190 kilometres of optical fibre network to Robi. But, Robi officials said they could not use those due to the bar on importing the DWDM.

Earlier, the railway leased out 2,071 kilometres of optical fibres to Grameenphone.

The operator is using these fibres since it was able to import and install the DWDM at that time. The bar on installing the DWDM by telecom operators was issued in 2018.



However, a Grameenphone official said the lifespan of many of the DWDM devices had expired and many of them were now damaged. So, they do not get expected benefits out of the fibre network of the railway, said the official.

Erik Aas, chief executive officer of Banglalink, said they were happy to enter into this partnership with Bangladesh Railway for the optical fibre sharing initiative, which would enhance the operator’s connectivity and quality of digital services across the country.

“Banglalink will always remain open to such opportunities considering their far-reaching impacts on the telecom industry and the country as a whole,” he said.

Bangladesh Railway recently completed a project involving 583 kilometres of optical fibre cable along rail lines, taking its total length of optical fibre-based telecommunication network to about 3,205 kilometres.

After obtaining an NTTN licence from Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission in 2014, Bangladesh Railway availed the legal validation to lease out fibre optical networks to internet and telecom services operators.

Banu Ranjan Sarkar, chief signal & telecommunication engineer (telecom) of Bangladesh Railway, and Perihane Elhamy Ahmed, chief technology officer at Robi Axiata, were present at the deal signing ceremony.

Fuel price cut sends stock higher

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Shares on the Dhaka and Chattogram stock exchanges continued their bull run yesterday on the back of a fuel price cut, albeit marginally.

On Monday, the government slashed the fuel prices by Tk 5 per litre in line with the 11.25 percentage points cut in the import duty of diesel by the National Board of Revenue.

From yesterday, the retail price of diesel and kerosene stood at Tk 109, petrol Tk 125 and octane Tk 130. The price adjustment came 23 days after the government went for a record fuel price hike of 42.5 to 42.7 per cent.

As a result, the DSEX, the benchmark index of the Dhaka Stock Exchange, added 24 points, or 0.39 per cent, to close at 6,432, posting an increase for the fifth consecutive day.

The DS30, the blue-chip index, gained 0.17 per cent to 2,279, and the DSES, the shariah-based index, was up 0.21 per cent at 1,396.

Turnover, one of the important indicators of the market, was up slightly at Tk 1,769 crore. It was Tk 1,744 crore on Monday.

Of the securities, 184 advanced, 123 declined and 73 did not show any price movement.

“Stocks continued the bull run as the bargain hunters sustained their buying appetite amidst enthusiastic participation.

The buoyant investors exerted their interest riding on the news that the government cut down the fuel oil price by Tk 5 per litre,” said International Leasing Securities Ltd, a brokerage house, in its daily market review.

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Yesterday, the market opened on an upbeat note and defended the sale pressure mid-session as cheerful investors put fresh bets on large-cap stocks.

Among the sectors, service rose 3.4 per cent, financial institutions gained 2.3 per cent, and cement added 1.8 per cent. On the other hand, telecom shed 1.2 per cent, ceramic lost 1.1 per cent and IT suffered a 0.6 per cent price correction.

The investors’ activity was mostly centred in the textiles, pharmaceuticals and engineering sectors, which accounted for 21.8 per cent, 13.2 per cent and 12 per cent of the market’s turnover, respectively.

Among the individual companies, Eastern Housing posted the highest gain on the day, advancing 9.92 per cent. Advent Pharma and National Housing Finance and Investments Ltd surged more than 9 per cent, while Pacific Denims, Apex Foods, Orion Infusion, and Apex Spinning & Knitting Mills rose over 8 per cent.

Bangladesh Monospool Paper Manufacturing Company Ltd was the worst-performing stock on the day, retreating 5.13 per cent. Pharma Aids, Paper Processing & Packaging, Vanguard AML Rupali Bank Balanced Fund, Northern Islami Insurance, Nahee Aluminum Composite Panel, and Rahima Food Corporation lost more than 3 per cent.

Bangladesh Export Import Company retained the top post of the most-traded stocks with its shares worth Tk 92 crore transacting.

Orion Pharma, Bangladesh Shipping Corporation, Eastern Housing, and LafargeHolcim Bangladesh were among the companies that saw significant turnover.

The CASPI, the all-share price index of the Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE), rose for the fourth straight day yesterday as it closed at 18,898 after adding 69 points, or 0.37 per cent.

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Indian rupee marks biggest gain in one year

REUTERS

The Indian rupee notched its biggest one-day gain in a year on Tuesday against a wobbly dollar as local equities saw a rush of foreign investor inflows.

The partially convertible rupee surged 0.6 per cent to 79.45 in its best session since Aug. 27, 2021. The currency had hit a record low of 80.12 on Monday, but closed at 79.9625.

India’s Nifty 50 stock index soared 2.7 per cent as investors returned to buy the dips after a recent selloff. Overall, local equities have seen foreign investor inflows of about \$6 billion in August, the highest since December 2020.

August also marked the first month this year when overseas investors turned net buyers of India’s government debt. On the day, yield on the 10-year paper dropped 6 basis points to 7.1893 per cent.

HSBC analysts became more optimistic about the rupee, citing a pullback in commodity prices and return of inflows supporting the currency, in addition to support from the country’s central bank.

“While we think the USD/INR pair can still rise further, we see scope for the rupee to outperform some other “deficit” peers temporarily,” they wrote in a note.

The rupee’s strength on Tuesday comes after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) stepped in to prevent the currency from trading under 80 per dollar in the previous session, traders had told Reuters.

The dollar index losing steam ahead of US jobs data also lifted market sentiment.



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German inflation climbs

AFP, Frankfurt, Germany

German inflation gathered pace again in August, official data published Tuesday showed, as the soaring price of energy heaped pressure on households.

Consumer prices rose by 7.9 per cent in the year to August, according to the federal statistics agency Destatis, having fallen to 7.5 per cent in July.

Energy prices, which have taken off since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, had a “substantial impact on the high inflation rate”, Destatis said in a statement.

The prices paid for household electricity and fuel rose by 35.6 per cent in the year to August, according to the agency.

Sky-high inflation figures – well above the two per cent rate targeted by the European Central Bank – have strengthened calls for a response from central bank policymakers and the government in Berlin.

PHOTO: REUTERS