

Taxi unions plan to use bio-diesel

300 tonnes produced at Haldia

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TAXI AND bus unions are now planning to switch to bio-diesel to decrease the level of pollution as the judiciary and the city's green lobby are slowly tightening their grip on polluting vehicles.

And talks in this regard have already been initiated among the taxi and bus unions and private companies that manufacture bio-diesel.

According to Bimal Guha of Bengal Taxi Association, Emami Biotech Limited, one of the companies that manufacture bio-diesel from palm oil has already approached the taxi associations asking them to use this green fuel.

"They approached us last week and we have requested them to send us some samples so that we can use them in our vehicles. We have to see the pollution level, the mileage and the whether the fuel is leading to any wear and tear of the engine. Only then we will be able to use this fuel regularly," said Guha.

Calcutta Tramways Company (CTC) that switched to bio-diesel mode from February 2 will be saving around Rs 2 lakh per month since the cost of bio-diesel being offered is lower by Re 1 to Rs 1.50 than the actual price of conventional diesel.

Emami Biotech, which is already supplying bio-diesel to CTC to operate its buses, has not only approached taxi unions but has also had talks with private bus unions, lorry and truck operators and also the state transport department, so that the use of this fuel can be promoted.

Director of Emami Biotech, S. K. Mondol, said: "We have our plant in Haldia and have recently started to supply CTC for its buses. Every month we supply nearly 220 kiloliters to the CTC. Also several lorries and private vehicles ply in and around Haldia with bio-fuel. They take the fuel from our factory outlet. We have approached the bus and taxi unions in Kolkata and some of the state government organisations like CSTC. Our talks

GREEN CARD

CTC SWITCHED to bio-diesel on **February 2**

CTC SAVES Rs 2 lakh per month after switching to bio-diesel

CTC CONSUMES about **220 kilolitres** of green fuel every month

CONVENTIONAL FUEL costs about **Re 1 to Rs 1.50** more than green fuel

have just begun and they have asked for samples".

Mondol also said, if things materialise, they would open at least 12 outlets (pumps) offering bio-diesel in and around the city. "Talks have already been initiated so that we can give franchise to pumps. There are also plans to fan out to Orissa as well," said Mondol.

In an attempt to decrease the pollution level in the city, CTC has decided to switch to bio-diesel for its fleet of 300-odd buses. The CTC, which has already signed a MoU with Emami Biotech for regular procurement of bio-diesel, said the move would lead to twin benefits of reduced cost and lower emissions.

The CTC is currently looking at 25 per cent of bio-diesel procurement to remix with diesel and officials say the percentage will be increased soon. Emami will be able to meet the CTC's monthly requirement with less than a day's production at its Haldia plant that produces 300 tonnes of bio-diesel each day.

"We had a trial run of the bio-diesel from the company and saw it emits 35 per cent less pollutants than what the vehicles using normal diesel do. What we gain financially is yet to be seen," said CTC managing director, P.K. Chattopadhyay.

Emami group has also initiated talks with the Kolkata Municipal Corporation, Kolkata Police along with power utilities like CESC and West Bengal State Electricity Board and mineral mining firms for the promotion and adequate supply of bio-diesel.

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