

Emami to provide 250 kl bio-diesel for CTC buses

Our Bureau

KOLKATA

EMAMI Biotech has entered into an agreement with Calcutta Tramways Company (CTC) for supplying some 250 kilolitres of bio-diesel to its fleet of buses.

The company, which is part of the Rs 2,000-crore personal care products major Emami Group, is also in talks with various state-run organisations like West Bengal Surface Transport Corporation (WBSTC), Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC), and Kolkata Police among others for supply of bio-diesel for their vehicles.

Speaking to reporters here on Tuesday, Emami Group director Aditya V. Agarwal said: "Under the agreement with CTC, we will supply only 25% of its 450-tonne monthly diesel requirement. The move will not only help CTC reduce its monthly fuel cost, but also minimise the city's air pollution level."

Emami Biotech produces about 300 tonnes of bio-diesel a day at its Haldia plant. To begin with, the company intends to produce only five-to-six days a month due to lack of buyers.

Since Emami is selling bio-diesel at Rs 31.42 paise per litre, compared with a normal diesel price of Rs 32.92 per litre, contrary to the interna-

tional practice where consumers buy bio-diesel at a premium, company officials claim its production will become unviable unless government modifies price mechanism on selling bio-diesel.

"Since CTC has started purchasing bio-diesel from us after a trial run, we urge bus and taxi associations to take a similar initiative as pollution is the main issue for scrapping the 15-year-old vehicles," another Emami Group director Manish Goenka said.

Interestingly, there is no need to change engines of the vehicles to run it in bio-diesel mix.

Apart from government departments, the company is also in talks with various mining companies, defence departments, power houses, which can use bio-diesel as an alternative fuel, Mr Agarwal said, without naming the targets. Emami is also talking to Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum for selling a mix of diesel and bio-diesel through their dispensing stations.

Emami Biotech is also looking to set up its own dispensing stations at Haldia and Balasore, Orissa. Emami claims its bio-diesel product has low sulphur content, far out-performing the industry standards. Besides, the product has also out-performed the industry benchmarks in ash content, moisture content, total contamination and carbon residue indicators.

