

BUSINESS COMPANIES

VinFast-linked EV taxi firm vows 'transparency' over train crash probe

Transportation experts said the EV taxi stalling on the level crossing, which triggered the subsequent tragic events, may have been caused by various factors, including human error or activation of the vehicle's safety system.

Ni Made Tasyarani (The Jakarta Post)

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Vietnamese electric vehicle maker VinFast, along with its affiliated EV taxi operator Green and Smart Mobility JSC (Green SM), has pledged transparency during the ongoing investigation into the recent deadly train crash involving one of Green SM's taxis.

"We are fully cooperating with the investigation led by the relevant authorities and are conducting a thorough internal review to support the process. We are committed to ensuring transparency, and will provide updates as appropriate once verified information becomes available," VinFast wrote in a statement on Wednesday.

Green SM also published a statement on Tuesday, saying that "the incident is currently under investigation and has yet to reach an official

conclusion from the authorities”.

“Safety and transparency remain our top priority. We are committed to maintaining stringent operational standards to support drivers, passengers and public safety,” Green SM added.

Both firms expressed condolences to the victims, their families and all those affected. Green SM had issued its first statement earlier on Tuesday, focusing on support for the investigation without addressing the fatalities, which later sparked a backlash from critics who said it lacked empathy.

The fatal train crash occurred on Monday evening, following a separate incident in which a commuter train from Cikarang, West Java, heading west toward Bekasi, struck a stalled Green SM taxi at an unguarded level crossing near Bekasi Timur Station. The taxi driver escaped unharmed.

The crash forced an eastbound commuter train bound for Cikarang to halt on the opposite track at Bekasi Timur Station, while wreckage was cleared from the line. At around 8:55 p.m., the Argo Bromo Anggrek intercity train traveling from Jakarta to Surabaya, East Java, struck the rear carriage of the stationary commuter train.

As of Wednesday afternoon the casualty figures from the accident stood at 16 people confirmed killed, with 90 others sustaining injuries. The injured passengers were rushed to nearby hospitals in Bekasi.

Read also: [Bekasi deadly train crash renews railway safety concerns](#)

The Transportation Ministry's land transportation director general Aan Suhanan conducted an unannounced inspection on Tuesday evening of

the Green SM taxi depot in Bekasi following the accident.

“Our sudden inspection is to ensure all safety aspects are being implemented, from pre-trip inspection to driver competency and health,” said Aan in a statement on Tuesday.

The inspection focused on checking administrative documentation, vehicle condition, fleet operational readiness, among other safety measures.

“We want to ensure that the safety management systems at public transportation firms, including Green SM, are being implemented in accordance with regulations. From the results of initial checks, there are several findings that we will explore further,” Aan added.

Another inspection was set to be carried out at Green SM's taxi depot center in Kemayoran, Jakarta, on the following day as authorities seek to "reach a thorough conclusion".

Yusuf Nugroho, the ministry's director of road transportation facilities and safety, who also led the inspection, explained that under Transportation Minister Regulation No. 85/2018, authorities may conduct inspections through "observation and monitoring" after serious or repeated accidents.

Inspection results and findings will be used as the basis for safety recommendations or administrative sanctions, ranging from warning letters to license suspension or revocation, he added.

Prior to Monday's incident, Green SM taxis had also been involved in several accidents with other modes of transportation. In December last year, a Green SM taxi was struck by a train while passing a level crossing

in Kemayoran, Central Jakarta. In January, another Green SM taxi rear-ended a stationary Transjakarta bus.

Read also: [Prabowo orders thorough probe into Bekasi train crash as fatalities rise to 15](#)

Transportation experts said the EV taxi stalling on the level crossing, which triggered the subsequent tragic events, may have been caused by various factors, including human error or activation of the vehicle's safety system.

An automotive expert Jusri Pulubuhu explained that an EV car's system is supported by two types of batteries, a main battery that powers the vehicle and a smaller one that powers control systems and indicators.

Once the smaller battery runs out, the car will enter safe mode, rendering it unable to move. "Safe mode will prevent the car from moving and lock the vehicle. But it still needs to be investigated further [whether that was the case]," he said on Wednesday, as quoted by *Kumparan*.

Another factor is the uneven railway surface, which could disrupt the vehicle's momentum, especially at lower speeds. During an emergency situation, he said, it could cause a driver to panic and weaken his ability to make rational decisions.

Jusri stressed that EV incidents could not be attributed solely to the vehicle's system, adding that many people assume conventional vehicles and EVs operate in the same way, although they have "significantly different characteristics and systems".

Similarly, Mahaendra Gofar, founder of EV Safe and lecturer at the

National Battery Research Institute said that modern vehicles with electronic shifters have a safety mechanism that activates the brakes and immobilizes the car when facing disruption.

"If the brakes lock, the car can't be pushed," he said on Tuesday, as quoted by *Kompas.com*.

However, he also emphasized that the main cause of the EV coming to a standstill needed to be investigated to determine whether it was due to a system disruption, power supply loss or other potential factors.