

Row erupts in Germany over plans for Turkish schools

AFP, Berlin

The proposed opening of three Turkish schools in Germany has rekindled a long-standing row over the perceived influence of Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government on the country's three-million strong Turkish community.

Coming after years of debate over Turkish influence in German mosques, the proposal has met fierce criticism from conservative politicians.

"We don't want Erdogan schools in Germany," declared Markus Blume,

general secretary of the Bavarian CSU, the sister party of Angela Merkel's ruling conservatives, in an interview with media group RND yesterday.

The German government is currently in negotiations with its Turkish counterparts to open three private Turkish schools in Frankfurt, Cologne and Berlin.

While critics such as Blume fear that the schools will extend Erdogan's influence over the Turkish diaspora, Ankara sees the proposal as a simple reciprocal move.

Stay away from graft

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of the profession without being attracted to any kind of greed or lure. Only then the students will consider you as their ideal."

He said some teachers use the university job as a shield. "They spend busy hours in weeklong evening courses and taking classes at private universities. They are very sincere in all these activities."

On the other hand, the same teachers are very reluctant to taking their scheduled classes, the president said.

"These teachers are also very serious about completing the syllabus. So, they take classes for three to five hours continuously. Sometimes, even on the weekends, students are called to attend classes for several hours together without bothering about how much they understand."

Hamid also urged the VCs to look into the matter strictly. The academic programmes of the universities must be monitored to ensure that those were being administered properly, he

added.

Mentioning that the major portion of the total expenditures of public universities comes from the national exchequer, he said, "You must give the highest priority to the responsibilities of that university where you work."

Terming VCs and teachers the main driving force in running a university, the president said each public university has its own law. Therefore, they must be respectful to the law and abide by that, he added.

Noted physicist Prof Emeritus Dr Arun Kumar Basak delivered speech as the convocation speaker. A total of 18,284 graduates and post-graduates were conferred upon degrees at the convocation ceremony.

Education Minister Dipu Moni and JnU VC Prof Mijanur Rahman also spoke on the occasion.

The Speaker of Jatiya Sangsad, cabinet members, lawmakers, VCs of different universities, and senior civil and military officials, among others, were present.

Failing to rape

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brother over her going missing, police recovered the body from a bush beside the road in Kawalipara area and sent it to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College for autopsy.

The autopsy would confirm the cause of death and whether she was raped before being killed, the OC told our Savar correspondent.

Police seized the bus and a murder case was filed in this regard.

MAN ARRESTED FOR RAPING TWO GIRLS

Police on Friday night arrested the manager of a mess on charge of raping two female boarders in the city's Rampura area recently.

A Dhaka Court yesterday sent GM Mushfiqul Alam, 38, to jail after police produced him before it, Akhtaruzzaman Munshi, sub-inspector of Rampura Police Station, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Both the victims, aged 19 and 18, were working girls and used to share a flat in a mess in Rampura area.

The SI said the accused used to run several messes in adjacent buildings but the dining was common. As the 19-year-old victim was alone in her room on Thursday evening, the accused raped her and warned her not to disclose it to anyone.

He also raped her roommate on December 25 and January 1. But she kept silent in fear of social humiliation and reprisal by the rapist, the SI said.

The victims were sent to the one-stop crisis centre at Dhaka Medical College Hospital after they filed two separate cases against Mushfique on Friday night, police said.

According to a case forwarding submitted to court by the SI, the accused is a serial rapist, who has been running messes for about nine years. He maintains good relations with female mess members and rape them whenever he gets a chance.

Many of the victims kept mum in fear or considering the social stigma. After the two rape victims came forward, many other girls lodged verbal complaints against him, the SI

said in the forwarding.

ACCUSED ARRESTED OVER GANG-RAPE

Meanwhile, Rab yesterday arrested another accused in the case filed over the gang-rape of a 13-year-old girl in Keraniganj.

Md Ratan, 18, from Shariatpur, was arrested in Savar, said Maj Mohammad Anisujjaman, a company commander of Rab-10.

Kamrangirchar police arrested five others, including a female friend of the victim, on Friday, hours after the girl was raped at an under-construction building on Thursday night.

Three of them -- Hasan, Sifat, Sabuj -- gave confessional statements before magistrates, while another accused, Rony, was placed on a one-day remand.

The victim's friend was sent to Gazipur Correction Centre as she was underaged.

GANG-RAPE IN N'GANJ

A class-nine student was kidnapped by three men on Thursday and was raped until she was released yesterday morning.

Police arrested two youths -- Towsib Mia, 22, and his friend Afzal Hossain, 24 -- after the girl's mother filed a case with Rugganj Police Station yesterday, said Rafiqul Haque, inspector (operations) of the station.

The police officer said Towsib borrowed Tk 500 from the victim a couple of days ago. As the victim was on her way home after taking the money back from Towsib on Thursday, the two men, along with their accomplice Abu Sufian, dragged her into a microbus and took her to a house in Rupshi area.

The accused confined the girl there for two days and raped her, police said quoting the case statement.

As the girl fainted, the accused dropped her in Mouchak area yesterday morning. On information, the family members rushed there and took her to hospital.

Rafiqul said the arrestees during primary interrogation confessed to raping the girl. He also said they were trying to arrest Sufian.

Money wasted

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Urban Transport Project funded by the WB. The first two sets of lights were installed at Gulshan-1 and -2 intersections. But in a 2006 report, the WB mentioned that the system went out of order due to lack of maintenance.

Under the Clean Air and Sustainable Environment project that ended in March this year, Tk 112 crore funded by the WB were spent between 2010 and 2018 for repairing and installing 100 traffic lights and other intersection infrastructure. The city corporations handed the lights to Dhaka Metropolitan Police. But the latter does not have any monitoring and maintenance capacity, officials said.

Visiting at least 30 intersections in the capital recently, this correspondent found that the lights were working only at six.

At Gulshan-2, a traffic policeman was seen struggling to control traffic flow. Police often use ropes to control traffic at Rajarbagh and Gulshan-1 intersections.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority took another Tk-15.6 crore project, funded by Japan International Cooperation

Agency, to set up what officials an Intelligent Traffic System at Gulistan, Paltan, Gulshan-1 and Mohakhali intersections. These lights may start operation soon.

Transport expert Prof Shamsul Hoque of Buet said, "We need to have people to look after these traffic lights. Launching one project after another will only help those who are involved in the projects."

Asked why the automatic signaling system is not being followed at Kakrail, Traffic Inspector Tariqul Alam said, "Nightingale and Kakrail intersections are only about 100 metres apart. If we follow the same timeframe for each intersection, the tailbacks would be too long."

Contacted, Chief Town Planner Sirajul Islam at Dhaka South City Corporation said most of the traffic lights were out of order because the DMP didn't look after them.

Additional DMP Commissioner (traffic) Mofiz Uddin Ahmed said police are working to form a separate division to look after the lights.

"There should be a system in which the intersections are further apart so that traffic can be controlled as per the automatic signals," he said.



Thousands of devotees flood the banks of the Turag river in Kamarpara area of Tongi yesterday. The first phase of Biswa Ijtema will end today with the Akheri Munajat. Story on page 16.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Najmul ton guides Khulna

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Khulna chased down the huge 206-run target posted by Dhaka with eleven balls to spare. It was the highest ever successful run chase in BPL history.

With this win, Khulna climbed to second position on the points table, just behind Rajshahi Royals despite having an equal eight wins in twelve games due to the net run rate. The two sides will face off in the first qualifier tomorrow evening.

Chattogram Challengers also have eight wins out of twelve matches,

however, they hold third position due to their net run rate and will take on the fourth placed Dhaka in the eliminator tomorrow.

The winner of the eliminator match will face the losing team of the first qualifier on January 15 while the final is scheduled for January 17.

In chase of the daunting target, Khulna made a flying start as Najmul and Mehedi Hasan Miraz paired up to add a quick 70 runs for the opening stand. Miraz was eventually dismissed on 45 runs off 25 balls but Najmul went on to register his maiden T20

hundred off 51 balls.

Skipper Mushfiqur Rahim remained not out with 18 at the other end as Najmul struck the winning boundary to seal a fantastic win for Khulna.

Earlier, Dhaka posted a big 205 for four total in their allotted 20 overs, courtesy of a 59-ball 91-run knock from opener Mominul Haque. Mominul, along with Mahedi Hasan, added 153 runs for the fourth wicket with the latter remaining unbeaten after a quick-fire 68 off 36 balls to help post the huge total, which however ultimately went in vain.

PLANES BROUGHT DOWN BY MISSILES SINCE 1973

298 KILLED, UKRAINE

July 17, 2014: A Boeing 777 of Malaysia Airlines was shot down over eastern Ukraine, killing all 298 people aboard. The Kiev authorities and separatist pro-Russian rebels accuse each other of firing the missile that downed the flight.

11 KILLED, SOMALIA

March 23, 2007: An Ilyushin Il-76 cargo aircraft belonging to a Belarusian airline was shot down by a rocket shortly after takeoff from the Somali capital of Mogadishu, killing 11 people.

78 KILLED, BLACK SEA

October 4, 2001: 78 people were killed when a Siberia Airlines Tupolev Tu-154 exploded mid-flight over the Black Sea due to the accidental firing of a Ukrainian missile.

290 KILLED, GULF

July 3, 1988: An Airbus A-300 belonging to Iran Air, was shot down in the Gulf by two missiles fired from a US frigate patrolling the Strait of Hormuz, apparently mistaking it for a fighter aircraft, killing 290 passengers.

269 KILLED, SAKHALIN

September 1, 1983: A Boeing 747 belonging to Korean Air was shot down by Soviet fighter jets over the island of Sakhalin, killing all 269 people on board.

108 KILLED, SINAI DESERT

February 21, 1973: A Libyan Arab Airline Boeing 727 was shot down by Israeli fighter jets over the Sinai Desert, killing 108 people.

N Ireland govt returns after three-year suspension

AFP, Belfast

Northern Ireland's government will reopen for the first time in three years after rival parties rallied around a new power-sharing agreement that can help the volatile province handle the pressures of Brexit.

The region's devolved assembly at Stormont collapsed in January 2017 over a scandal caused by the runaway costs of a renewable energy scheme.

Numerous rounds of increasingly acrimonious negotiations failed to reach a solution and basic services were left unattended.

Pro-Irish republicans and pro-British unionists were pushed into an agreement on Friday by the threat of a new regional election if they missed a looming deadline on Monday.

The UK government in London also promised a large cash infusion into the tiny but strategically vital region if the republican Sinn Fein and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) came to terms.

"Sinn Fein has taken the decision to re-enter the power-sharing institution and nominate ministers to the power-sharing executive," party leader Mary Lou McDonald told reporters.

EC, AL at odds

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votes. It is not possible to go beyond the law."

The AL-EC tension began after the AL on January 3 formed two committees to coordinate the campaigns for mayor hopefuls from the AL tent.

AL advisory committee members Tofail Ahmed and Amir Hossain Amu will lead the committees for DNCC and DSCC. Both of them are lawmakers.

AL presidium member Faruk Khan MP and Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif MP are members of the DNCC committee. Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque is a member of the DSCC committee.

Talking to reporters after meeting the AL delegation led by Tofail Ahmed, the CEC yesterday said MPs would not be able to seek votes on behalf of any candidate in the city polls.

The CEC said MPs were not allowed to be coordinators of a campaign. Be it indoors or outdoors, they must keep away from any election related activities.

"We have explained it to them. The prime minister, ministers, and MPs cannot speak on behalf of or against a candidate."

Asked whether Tofail and Amu would be able to act as campaign coordinators, the CEC said, "I think they will not be able to do that... We are yet to be informed officially about this. Once we are formally informed, we will tell them that they won't be able to become campaign coordinators."

After yesterday's meeting at the EC, Tofail said they went to the EC to learn about the electoral code of conduct regarding the bar on MPs taking part in the election campaign.

MPs have no bar to act as coordinators staying inside their office, he said.

Coordinators will be able to do every election related activities, except for seeking votes, he added.

The AL senior leader claimed that all the election commissioners, except Mahbub Talukder, agreed with them.

Meanwhile, AL leader Mohammed Nasim yesterday said the EC should amend its electoral code of conduct allowing MPs to participate in the campaign.

"It's unfortunate we couldn't participate in the campaign," he said at AL President Sheikh Hasina's Dhanmondi office.



A toddler is being given a capsule of vitamin A at a health centre in the capital's Mugdapara during the semi-annual national vitamin A+ campaign yesterday. Story on page 5.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ