

## DHAKA MATH FESTIVAL

## Over 1500 display math skills

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Divisional Mathematics Festival was held at Govt Laboratory High School in the city yesterday in a festive mood with the participation of students from 100 schools of Dhaka, Gazipur, Narsingdi, Narayanganj, Munshiganj and Manikganj districts.

As many as 1,584 students took part in different daylong programmes, including math test, friendship session, question answer session and quest for local history.

On the basis of their performance, 120 students were selected for the two-day National Mathematics Festival-2009 and 7th Bangladesh Math Olympiad to be held on February 13 and 14 at St Joseph Higher Secondary School in the city.

The students taking part in Math Olympiad were divided in four categories - Primary (Class III-V), Junior (VI-VIII), Secondary (IX-X-SSC) and Higher Secondary (XI-XII-HSC).

Bangladesh Math

Olympiad Committee (BMO) organised the festival in collaboration with the Dutch-Bangla Bank Ltd (DBBL) and the Prothom Alo.

Math Talent searching programme has been divided into 14 math divisions comprising Dinajpur, Rajshahi, Bogra, Jessore, Khulna, Barisal, Faridpur, Tangail, Dhaka, Comilla, Noakhali, Chittagong, Rangamati and Sylhet.

Meanwhile, the competitions of 11 math divisions were completed. From each divisional festival, 60 winners were selected for the national math festival and 7th Bangladesh Math Olympiad.

The best performer of the national Olympiad will get the chance to participate in the 50th International Mathematics Olympiad (IMO) in Germany. This is for the fifth time Bangladeshi students are taking part in the prestigious event.

Headmaster AKM Mostafa Kamal inaugurated the math festival by hoisting the national flag on the high school premises, while BMO

President and Brac University Vice Chancellor Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury hoisted maths Olympiad flags and released balloons.

Prof Md Zafar Iqbal, DBBL Managing Director Yasin Ali, Prof Khodadad Khan, Prof Mohammed Kaikobad, noted mathematician Prof Lutfuluzzaman, Joint Editor of Prothom Alo Abdul Quaiyum and BMO General Secretary Munir Hasan took part in the festival.

Speakers at the programme said mathematics is an easy subject if it is practised well, adding that the objective of the festival is to popularise maths among the students.

Participants laid emphasis on introducing information technology to upgrade standards of maths at school and college levels.

Bangla Innovation through Open Source (Bios), a voluntary organisation, mobilised visitors and participants at the programme to cast their votes for Sundarbans and Cox's Bazar to place them in the list of the world's new seven wonders.



Students pose for photo at Dhaka Divisional Mathematics Festival at Govt Laboratory High School in the city yesterday. As many as 1,584 students took part in the daylong event organised by Bangladesh Math Olympiad Committee.

## Workshop on managerial excellence held

METRO DESK

Prothom-alojobs.com organised a workshop on 'Managerial excellence through leadership and team building' at the seminar room of the daily Prothom Alo office yesterday, says a press release.

Quazi M Ahmed, CEO, Future Leaders, was the facilitator of the workshop that was attended by corporate professionals and students.

Riyad Hossain, head of operations, prothom-alojobs.com, moderated the workshop.

Abdul Quaiyum, joint editor, the daily Prothom Alo, was also present.

## BTTB burdened with low quality equipment

FROM PAGE 1

The taskforce under now-defunct National Coordination Committee on Corruption and Serious Crimes (NCC) last year also found that BTTB officials and former telecom minister barrister Aminul Haq had violated the Public Procurement Regulation (PPR), 2003 to favour Huawei during project implementation.

The taskforce investigated three projects - 'BTTB's 10-lakh mobile project', 'Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of IP-based NGN TAX at Dhaka, Khulna, Kushtia, Barisal and Sylhet', and 'Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of an access network through XDSL system on turn-key basis'.

The taskforce accuses Huawei of blatant negligence in completing any of the three projects within deadline. The 10-lakh mobile project, awarded to Huawei in July 2002, was originally supposed to be completed in 2004. Although BTTB (now Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Ltd) repeatedly rescheduled the deadline, Huawei has not completed the project till date. The last rescheduled deadline expired in June 2008.

The NGN TAX project, awarded to Huawei in December 2006, was supposed to be completed in May 2007. But Huawei has not completed it as yet.

The access network project, awarded in June 2007, was supposed to be completed in October 2007. This also remains incomplete.

Surprisingly, BTTB did not take any action against Huawei or issue any show-cause notice for all these irregularities.

INTER-DISTRICT TELECOM NETWORK PROJECT The Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BTTB) took 'Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of IP-based NGN TAX in Dhaka, Khulna, Kushtia, Barisal and Sylhet on turn key basis' in 2006.

Huawei and BTTB signed a deal in December 2006 involving \$2.42 million and set the project to end by May 2007. But till June 2008 the company did not complete the project

as it refused to supply five SDMO diesel generators, one of the major requirements to run the project, the probe reports.

According to the deal, Huawei had to install France-made SDMO brand diesel generators. But the company mysteriously supplied Spain-made PRAMAC generators through local Rahimafrooz, there reports.

It also says at first BTTB denied receiving PRAMAC generators as such activity completely mismatches with the rule 33 (2) of the PPR.

Interestingly, Huawei persuaded the BTTB high-ups to amend the deal they had signed so that they can supply PRAMAC generators.

The Billing of Quantity (BOQ) committee repeatedly denied accepting Huawei's proposal to amend the deal. But in a sudden move on December 24, 2007, BTTB's then sitting chairman M Moudud Chowdhury and director (planning and development) M Shamsul Alam agreed to amend the deal.

The probe body says the son of BTTB's former chairman was an employee of Huawei Technology and therefore the deal amendment plan came to provide extra benefits to the China-based vendor.

Meantime, Huawei signed a deal with Rahimafrooz secretly to supply the low-priced generators. However, after a long time, the company has yet to deliver the generators.

Recently, Huawei in a letter said the country of origin of PRAMAC generators has been changed and they cannot supply SDMO generators. "This kind of intention may increase deadline of the project execution," the taskforce report comments.

M Shamsul Alam left the country after the 1/11 change-over. Contacted, M Moudud Chowdhury yesterday told The Daily Star: "I have no idea what the probe report said about me. What I did completely followed the committee's recommendations."

BROADBAND INTERNET PROJECT Huawei was awarded BTTB's 'Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of an access network through XDSL system on turn key basis' projects to ease broadband internet facilities to BTTB users.

To execute the project, BTTB signed a \$2.34-million contract with Huawei in June 2007 and set October 2007 as the project deadline.

The taskforce report adds the project office repeatedly

asked Huawei to complete the work in due time. But the company did not act accordingly. Twenty days after the project deadline, Huawei informed BTTB that it would start XDSL equipment installation.

When Huawei failed to install XDSL equipment in the set timeframe, BTTB initiated another project to install Optical Distribution Frame (ODF), and Digital Distribution Frame (DDF) so that the vendor could get benefits.

However, the project entitled 'Multi Service Access Network (MSAN)' was abandoned as Huawei's irregularities of XDSL project had meantime surfaced.

The probe report says of the 26 project sites, only six have been completed. The rest witnessed some work, but it may take over a year to install required equipment in the sites.

The XDSL technology is a digital subscriber line system, which offers much higher speeds - up to 32 Mbps for upstream traffic, and from 32 Kbps to over 1 Mbps for downstream traffic.

10-LAKH MOBILE PROJECT Along with now scamster Siemens, Huawei also got the chance to bag \$35 million contract of BTTB's 10-lakh mobile project now known as TeleTalk.

According to the taskforce investigation, Huawei also failed to supply required equipment for the project. As per the deal, the company has yet to supply required NMS (Network Management System) equipment.

Talking to The Daily Star, a TeleTalk high official admitted that Huawei intended to supply substandard equipment for call centre and pre-paid scratch card platform.

"But we did not agree to receive it," he said. The probe

started in 2002 and completed in June 2008, but the Chinese vendor has yet to complete its job.

The probe body also found some ineffective training programmes in these projects arranged by vendors and BTTB as well. In these three projects 124 employees were trained in different countries.

Interestingly, only 23 training recipients joined the related projects and 12 retired just after coming back from the training programmes. The rest stayed far off from the projects.

The taskforce report says even after knowing such irregularities, BTTB remained silent and did not take any action against the vendor as per the code of conduct of the deal.

"Against all the irregularities, BTTB even did not issue a show-cause notice to Huawei, which is nothing but a mystery," the report says.

HUAWEI'S VERSION Thong Poh Wah, vice director (PR), Asia Pacific Marketing of Huawei, clarifies the issues raised by taskforce report.

On the 10-lakh mobile phone project, he says Huawei is not responsible for the delay in installation of the Network Monitoring System (NMS), which was supposed to be installed in the main switch room of TeleTalk.

Huawei had already got approved layout diagram from TeleTalk to do the installation, but could proceed after the state-owned mobile phone operator decided to shift its main switch room to another location. As the shifting process has not been completed, it is estimated that it will be another month before Huawei can proceed to

install the NMS equipment, he adds.

On the NGN TX project, he says, "We would like to clarify that Huawei was unable to provide the SDMO (France) diesel generator engines as the principal company which manufactures the said product was acquired by another company, and that the new company had subsequently ceased production of the said SDMO generator."

"Such information was not made available to us during that time. When Huawei proposed to substitute the engine with PRAMAC diesel engine generators [Volvo, Sweden Engine and Stamford, UK Alternator] with delivery expected in May 2007, the client had decided to purchase its own generators instead," Poh Wah says.

The decision was reflected in inclusion of an additional provision line in clause 34.2 of the contract. As a result, Huawei did not provide the PRAMAC generators.

On Access Network through XDSL system, the probe report claims Huawei had delayed implementation of the projects without any reason despite the fact that the four-month contract was scheduled to end in June 2007.

"We would like to clarify that Huawei had completed the installation, commissioning and partial Provisional Acceptance Testing of the Access network in November 2007. The delay was due to the fact that BTTB needed more time to provide us installation sites and necessary transmission resources for installation of the network," Poh Wah claims.

Most of the sites are now ready for commercial operation, he adds.

## Strengthen local govt to institutionalise democracy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Janatar Sangsad, a platform of civil society members, yesterday placed a 26-point proposal for the government to institutionalise democracy and establish rule of law in the country.

The proposals were announced at a view exchange meeting of the Sangsad at the National Press Club in the city.

Terming the ordinances promulgated during the caretaker government 'anti-people', speakers at the meeting said these cannot be given legitimacy.

They said the posts of secretary, deputy commissioner and upazila nirbahi officer will have to be abolished to rid the country of bureaucracy.

They also called for creating new posts of chairman at district and upazila level so that the ministers, district chairmen and upazila chairmen can run the country's administration.

Presided over by Janatar Sangsad President Engr M Enamul Huq, the meeting was addressed by Dhaka University teachers Prof MM Akash and Sheikh Hafizur Rahman Karzon, Citizens' Rights Movement leader Tushar Rahman, Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon leader Mihir Biswas and Nagorik Sanghati Parishad leader Sharifuzzaman Sharif.

At the meeting, Janatar Sangsad General Secretary Engr Sardar Amin presented a written 'Statement' on the proposals recommending

division of every police station of the country into two parts.

One part will be kept under a judicial magistrate so that none is arrested without permission of the magistrate and small disputes can be settled instantly at the court of that magistrate.

The other part of the police station will remain under an assistant superintendent of police to discharge other duties speedily, he added.

The statement said political influences will have to be eliminated from all stages so that the politics cannot be turned into business.

Besides, necessary laws will have to be enacted to implement Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Treaty and establish rights of the indigenous people on their land, it added.



Students display their science projects at Teletalk-Dhaka Residential Model College Science Festival-2009 on the college premises in the city yesterday. The three-day festival ends today.



## Audit Officer-II

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