

Internet backbone

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was approved by the board of directors--whereas the deal itself was officially signed on March 19.

The Info-Bahan project was verbally approved at the BTCL's ninth board meeting held on February 19. The board members decided to reach a solution at the next meeting.

The next board meeting on March 11 approved Khabiruzzaman's appointment as the BTCL MD and decided to re-examine some documents of the project but the KT deal was not ratified as it was not on the meeting agenda. The matter was not raised even at the next two meetings.

Sources said the meetings did not have any agenda for issuing a letter of intent to KT Corporation. The deal was signed completely bypassing the board's final approval.

Later, at the April 2 board meeting the board ratified all activities of Khabiruzzaman from February 22 to March 10.

"Before placing the deal before the board finally, the agreement signing with KT Corporation is nothing but overconfidence showed by the BTCL managing director," said a board member. "We do not know why he was so confident that the board will ratify the deal."

The BTCL floated tender for the Info-Bahan project on 24 September 2008. As the project was taken under a loan agreement between Bangladesh government and South Korean government, only Korean companies took part in the bidding.

Korea Electric Power Data Network Consortium (KDN) and KT Corporation submitted tenders for the project.

As per the bidding conditions, the bidder's benchmark testing certificate for all equipment offered for the project must be issued by telecommunication Technology Association in the bidder's country.

If any bidder does not provide the required documents including that certificate, the BTCL evaluation committee shall declare the bidder non-responsive and shall not continue with further evaluation of its bid, according to the tender paper.

KT's bid was accepted although it provided the benchmark testing certificate it obtained from China instead of its own country.

Alternative route

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by the Escap commission at its 48th session in 1992. The ALTID is comprised of Asian Highway, Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) and facilitation of land transport projects.

Agreements have so far been signed by 32 countries to allow the highway to cross the continent and reach Europe. A significant part of the funding comes from the larger more advanced nations as well as international agencies such as the Asian Development Bank. The project is scheduled for completion in 2010.

At least 15 countries, including Pakistan became founding members by signing the agreement when the idea was conceived in 1959. In 1971, Bangladesh automatically became a founding member but its status was later lowered to observer after it missed the December, 2005 deadline for signing the agreement.

In his suit, Saydee mentioned that the defendants had earlier filed a suit to declare him and 35 others war criminals and to disqualify them from contesting the general elections. It had tarnished their image and reputation nationally and internationally. Moreover, it caused a loss of Tk 100 crore in monetary terms, Saydee stated.

The three advocates filed a civil suit on November 13 last year against Saydee and 35 others to declare them war criminals for their role in 1971 Liberation War.

The 36 defendants included Jamaat's former Ameer Ghulam Azam, its incumbent Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami, Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid, and the party's senior central leaders Abdus Subhan, AKM Yousuf, Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, Abdul Quader Molla, Delwar Hossain Saydee, Mir Kasem Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, barrister Korban Ali, and advocate Ansar Ali, and BNP lawmaker Salauddin Quader Chowdhury.

After the hearing, Judge Iftekhar Ahmed of the 9th Assistant Judge's Court on May 11 took the matter for trial and issued the summons on them to appear before it on July 20 and to explain why they would not be declared war criminals for committing crimes against humanity in 1971.

Six rivers, including the Buriganga, Turag, Dhaleswari, Tongi Khal, Balu and Shitalakhy, encircle the capital city with around 110 km length, he said, there is no other capital in the world with such fantastic circular waterway.

Khandker suggested water flow augmentation in the rivers and setting up wastewater treatment plants.

There are many laws against environmental pollution and destruction of rivers and wetlands but hardly those laws have been enforced, WDB Additional Director General Kamrul Huda said.

The board, under the water resources ministry, organised the seminar, chaired by WDB Additional Director General Wali Md. Kamrul Huda.

Government's high officials and engineers of WDB attended the seminar.

One lakh data entry operators to get job

Says CEC

A CORRESPONDENT,
Madaripur

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday said he would recommend to the prime minister for employing one lakh data entry operators who were earlier engaged in voter list and national ID card programme.

He said this in a meeting with the journalists at Madaripur circuit house on a visit to the proposed site for server station and permanent district election Commission office.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shashi Kumar Singh proposed a land of 20 decimal opposite to his office for primary selection.

Replies to a question the CEC said that server stations set up programme at every upazila would help the people to get voter list and national ID cards facilities locally.

Huda said the Commission was thinking to provide high quality national ID cards for free and admitted that the distributed national ID cards were below international standard.

Dhaka Divisional Deputy Election Commissioner Biswas Luther Rahman, Police Super M Khurshid Hossain and Additional DC (revenue) Md Kabir Hasan were present at the meeting.

War criminals

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ensuring fairness and transparency of the trial. We have already referred the law to the Law Commission for expert opinion to update it," he told a press briefing at his ministry.

The trial of war criminals will start after updating the act, he said adding that it would be published both in Bangla and English versions for maintaining international standard.

The minister, however, said there is no difficulty in carrying out investigation into the incidents of war crimes before amending the act.

He said the government is taking time to start the trial process as it is working for appointing an investigation agency and prosecution team, setting up court and office rooms as well as arranging other logistic supports in this regard. The tasks are near completion, he said.

Asked whether the government is targeting any political party in the name of trial of war criminals, the law minister said the government would not hold the trial considering anybody's political identity.

Only those who were involved in the killings, arsons, rapes, lootings and offences against humanity during the liberation war will be brought under trial after carrying out investigation, he said.

He said if any political party opposes the government's move to try war criminals, it will be considered that the war criminals are remaining in that party.

Replies to a question, Shafique said the government has been giving equal emphasis on both issues of Pilkhan carnage and trial of war criminals.

Asked whether the killing were not part of their original plans, still, they took place as some of the mutineers went beyond the control of the leaders, the sources continued.

In its report, the committee recommends that those responsible be tried under the military act for speedy trial. It also suggests that BDR personnel should not be engaged in programmes like 'Operation Dal-Bhat', which was introduced to contain price hike of essentials during the caretaker government rule.

It advises further inquiry into the claims of foreign links.

Earlier at around 4:00pm, the 12-member inquiry committee headed by former secretary Anisuzzaman Khan turned in the 309-page report at the home minister's office in the secretariat.

State Minister for Home Tanjim Ahmad Sohel Taj, Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder, and members of the probe committee were present.

"We have prepared the report on the basis of facts and realities. There is nothing speculative," Anisuzzaman told reporters afterwards.

Asked what the main reason behind the bloodbath was, he said, "Mutiny."

Declining to elaborate, he said they were assigned to probe the incident and now it is the government's duty to evaluate the findings.

Sahara Khatun said the government would soon publish the report.

"We are committed to making the findings public," she said seeking the media's help to ensure the culprits are brought to book.

Pressed further, she said, "We have yet to read it. We will let you know the findings soon."

Sahara said she hopes the report would come in handy for the agency tasked with investigating the case in connection with the carnage that left 74 people including 57 army officers dead.

Sri Lanka to resettle Tamils in six months

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka plans to re-settle most of the 250,000 Tamils displaced by the war within six months, two Indian envoys said yesterday.

On the first day of the new year, the government has outlined a plan to resettle the Tamils.

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Cops' job

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Usually he attends the DC (north) office in the morning at Uttara and then he reaches the DC (MT) office at Rajarbagh at around 1:00 pm where he has lunch and work for about one and a half hours and then rushes to the DC (Discipline) office at Minto road.