

Screening improved

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been scanning cargoes and passengers at the Dhaka airport since March 21. It has also been giving suggestions on how to ensure foolproof security.

During validation audits, experts assigned by European countries mainly see whether countries operating flights to EU nations maintain European security standards at the airports and airlines.

If Bangladesh fails to meet the requirements this time too, it may face tougher measures in future as the expert team was not satisfied while checking the functions of Biman Bangladesh and the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (Caab) last time, according to an exporter who is familiar with the validation.

Bangladesh's failure in meeting the UK validation standards may influence other European countries to ban direct cargo carriers or passenger flights from Dhaka to those nations, the exporter said on condition of anonymity.

VALIDATION CERTIFICATE EXPIRES

The validation of security at the Dhaka airport expired yesterday.

It will, however, have no impact on Bangladesh as direct cargos from Dhaka to the UK have already been banned, said the ministry official.

The validation is a computer programme, through which an assessment is made of actions, decisions, plans and transactions to check if those are correct, complete, and being implemented as intended and whether those are delivering the intended outcome.

The British expert team was supposed to review the compliance with the EU standards by the end of December last year to re-issue or cancel the validation certificate.

But the validation was extended up to March 31 upon request by the Bangladesh government for additional

time to meet the standards.

According to EU validation standards, all air carriers flying from a non-EU country to the EU must be registered as "Air Cargo Carrier operating into the EU from a third country airport (ACC3)" by June 30, 2014 by a EU member state based on a valid security programme.

ACC3s must ensure that all cargoes and mails carried to the EU is physically screened or come from secure and validated supply chain.

From July 1, 2014, screening needs to be done according to the EU standards. For each carrier, ACC3 validation is required for each airport that serves as the "Last Point of Departure" before flying to the EU.

Following the EU regulation, Bangladesh Biman got ACC3 validation and the certification of "Regulated Agent Third Country (RA3)" required for dealing with cargoes on the ground, which allowed the national carrier to send cargoes directly to the EU.

Other carrier despite having ACC3 validation at the Dhaka airport was also allowed to send direct consignments to the EU over security issues.

Though Biman got ACC3 and RA3 validations, EU officials have always kept an eye on Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport's security standards.

Following the bombing and crash of a Russian jet over Egypt's Sinai desert in October last year, the UK Department of Transport prepared a list of 38 airports of 20 countries, including that in Dhaka, which have security issues.

US OFFERS ASSISTANCE

The US yesterday offered Bangladesh assistance in ensuring "standard security" at the airports here.

The offer came during a meeting between a seven-member US team led by Alan Bersin, assistant secretary for

US Department of Homeland Security, and Civil Aviation Minister Rashed Khan Menon at the latter's secretariat office.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Bersin said: "The visit...is to review the security measures Bangladesh has taken and indicates that when Bangladesh wishes to consult and seek assistance from the US, we can work together to improve security conditions."

Bangladesh has taken steps that are necessary to improve airport security and the direction is moving in the right area, he added.

"The minister [Menon] has indicated that he wishes for a committee to be established to work together with a number of nations led by Bangladesh and that is the way we are going to address the issue," said Bersin.

Civil Aviation Minister Rashed Khan Menon said every country in the world is now under a threat that particularly concerns aviation.

The US team was not satisfied with the steps taken in the US to counter security threats as terrorists have been developing new techniques which are under constant review to find ways to tackle the threats, the minister told newsmen.

The US delegation suggested that Bangladesh should make a work plan and set a time frame for implementing the suggestions made by different countries, including the US and the UK, added Menon.

Representatives of the Federal Aviation Administration, Transport Security Administration and US embassy in Dhaka were in the US delegation.

From Bangladesh side, top foreign ministry officials, newly appointed chief of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh and acting managing director of Biman Bangladesh Airlines were present.

MOGHBAZAR-MALIBAGH FLYOVER

JS committee forms body to probe flaws

BSS, Dhaka

The parliamentary standing committee on planning ministry yesterday formed a three-member sub-committee to determine whether there was any flaw in the planning of Moghbazar-Malibagh flyover.

"The committee has also been entrusted with the task of identifying the people responsible if any flaw is found," a parliamentary secretariat statement said.

It said the sub-committee was formed with standing committee member M Tajul Islam as its convener. Lawmakers Shamsul Haq Chowdhury and Muhibur Rahman are two other members of the committee.

The standing committee formed the probe body at its 22nd meeting, which also reviewed the progress in the implementation of decisions taken in the 19th and the 20th meetings.

The meeting was informed that six projects of the planning division, 11 of planning commission, four of IMED and 10 of statistics and information management division are under implementation.

The meeting recommended keeping civil servants posted in specific posts for a certain period to facilitate attaining efficiency and applying that efficiency.

Committee members Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal, Shawkat Ali, Maj (ret'd) Rafiqul Islam, M Tajul Islam and Nilufur Zafar Ullah attended the meeting.

21 killed

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Mamata Banerjee, the chief minister of West Bengal of which Kolkata is the capital, told reporters those behind the disaster would "not be spared".

"Negligence is a crime. The guilty won't be spared. Who is responsible? Those who got the tender, those who were constructing it," she said.

Banerjee later visited Calcutta Medical College and Hospital and inquired about the condition of the injured.

She said 17 injured were being treated at the hospital while the rest had been discharged. Of the 17, the condition of two was critical, while three bodies were still trapped in the debris and would have to be extricated with the help of gas cutters, she said.

Construction on the two-kilometre-long flyover began in 2009 and was supposed to be completed within 18 months but has suffered a series of hold-ups.

KP Rao, a representative of the Indian construction company IVRCL, which was contracted to build the giant flyover, called the disaster an "act of God".

The firm was given an 18-month deadline and a budget of nearly \$25 million to complete the project in 2009, but after seven years only about 55 percent of the work has been done.

In 2014 the company wrote to the city's development authority to say it was running out of funds to complete the project.

The disaster is the latest in a string of deadly construction accidents in India, where enforcement of safety rules is weak and substandard materials are often used.

The disaster came just days before the World T20 cricket final, which is set to draw thousands of fans to the city this Sunday.

Television footage showed one bloodied body trapped under a concrete slab, and also the hand of a person sticking out from under twisted debris.

An eyewitness at the scene described a loud bang "like a bomb blast and suddenly there was a lot of smoke and dust".

The accident also comes as the West Bengal government is about to face state elections, with voting scheduled to start in early April and run until May.

Suu Kyi

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year-old said he would be "faithful" to the people of Myanmar, also known as Burma.

Despite leading the NLD's decades-long democracy struggle and taking them to victory in last year's election, Suu Kyi cannot be president herself. The constitution bars candidates with foreign spouses or children. Her two sons hold British passports.

She has previously said that despite this, she would be "above the president".

The draft document makes clear the "state counsellor" post is for the next five years only, and names Suu Kyi as the best candidate, says our correspondent.

If approved by parliament, it will mean Suu Kyi is officially in charge of foreign affairs, the president's office, education, and energy and electric power in the new government.

The NLD won 80% of contested seats in the elections last year, ending decades of military rule.

But the army has kept considerable power. It retains a quarter of the seats in parliament, and will head three key ministries - defence, home affairs and border affairs.

Calyпсо rhythm rocks India

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The West Indies went into the last over needing eight to win and Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni handed the ball to talisman Virat Kohli, who earlier scored an unbeaten 89.

Simmons grabbed a single off the first ball before Andre Russell smashed a four and six as the Windies ended on 196 for three after India made 192 for two.

Simmons hit seven fours and five sixes while opener Johnson Charles notched 52, including seven fours and two sixes.

It was not meant to be that way for India after Chris Gayle's wicket was taken early for just five runs but the hosts were left to rue no-balls at crucial stages.

Ravichandran Ashwin thought he had taken Simmons when the batsman was on just 18 but the umpire ruled that it was a no ball as the Windies star made the most of his luck as he stepped on the accelerator.

Then in the 15th over Simmons would get lucky a second time when Hardik Pandya thought he had got him out for 50 when he was caught by Ashwin but the umpire ruled a no ball again.

"The points at which they were bowled was crucial," Dhoni said afterwards.

"I don't want to be too tough on them but when there is pressure you have to be at your best," the Indian skipper added.

Simmons, who was a late replacement for the injured Andre Fletcher, was given valuable support by Russell who hit an unbeaten 43 off 20 balls, including four sixes as the West Indies made a dash for the finishing line.

"I got a call after the Afghanistan

game and they asked if I was fit to play. I said 'yeah'. I slept the whole flight," said Simmons, nonchalantly.

"We're not just about Chris Gayle. We have 15 match-winners," he added. Ashwin endured some brutal punishment at the hands of the West Indies batsmen, going for 20 runs in his two overs.

His fellow spinner Ravindra Jadeja was also hit around the ground, conceding 48 runs in his wicketless four-over spell.

The Indian bowlers at times had trouble getting any grip in the heavy dew at the Wankhede.

Kohli had earlier hit 11 fours and one six in his 47-ball knock as India set a target of 193, regarded as a below par score on a pitch which has seen a feast of runs during the tournament.

Kohli injected much-needed life into the hosts' innings after a slow start from openers Rohit Sharma and Ajinkya Rahane.

Sharma hit three fours and three sixes in his 31-ball 43 while Rahane took 35 deliveries to reach 40, scoring only two fours and no sixes.

Kohli, who entered the fray in the eighth over after Sharma was bowled lbw by Samuel Badree, upped the tempo, to the delight of a packed crowd at the 33,000-seater stadium.

The defeat could spell the end of Dhoni's reign as India's captain in short form cricket although there was no immediate announcement from the 34-year-old about his future.

The skipper sidestepped a question about his future at his post-match press conference.

The West Indies will take on England at Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Sunday after Eoin Morgan's side defeated New Zealand, also by seven wickets, on Wednesday.

Labour abuse at Qatar WC stadium

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accommodation, which it claims amount to forced labour.

Seven workers at the venue, which will also host the 2019 World Athletics Championships, were even prevented from returning home to help their families after Nepal's devastating 2015 earthquake.

"This is a World Cup based on labour exploitation," said Amnesty's Mustafa Qadri.

The poor treatment of construction workers is one of the major issues that has dogged the Gulf state since the controversial decision to award it the right to host football's flagship tournament.

The 51-page report, "The Ugly Side of the Beautiful Game", is likely to increase international criticism of Qatar and put fresh pressure on FIFA and its new leadership, as well as World Cup sponsors.

The criticisms also extend to landscaping at the nearby Aspire Zone, a world-renowned sports complex where Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern Munich trained this year.

Amnesty said it carried out its research for a year until February and interviewed 234 men. It claimed 228 said the wages they received were lower than promised.

Many had no choice but to accept reduced salaries as they had paid debt-inducing recruitment fees of up to \$4,300 to enter the Gulf, even though such fees are illegal under Qatari law.

Qatar was uncharacteristically quick to respond to the report,

pointing out the steps it has taken to improve practices.

It said Amnesty's claims painted "a misleading picture" and were aimed at only four of the 40 companies working at the Khalifa Stadium.

'LIKE A PRISON'

One group of men told Amnesty that a labour supply company, Seven Hills, did not pay staff for months.

Workers at the 40,000-seater stadium and Aspire Zone were also initially put in sub-standard and overcrowded accommodation, said Amnesty.

"In one case, the main entrance road to the camp was flooded due to inadequate drainage and smelled of raw sewage," the report said.

Amnesty alleged most labourers had their passports unlawfully confiscated, and 88 men including Nepalese "were denied the right to leave Qatar".

One worker, Deepak, said life in Qatar was "like a prison".

"When I first complained... the manager said 'If you complain you can but there will be consequences. If you want to stay in Qatar be quiet and keep working'," he said.

Amnesty recognised the tournament's organisers, the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, had introduced safeguards, but urged Qatar to "fundamentally reform" its "kafala" sponsorship system, which restricts job changing or leaving the country.

Its report also criticised FIFA's "lack of meaningful action".

QATAR DEFENDS RECORD

Supreme Committee chief Hassan al-Thawadi admitted abuses occur and organisers did not "have a magic wand that could fix the matter" but said the commitment to reform was "clear and steadfast".

He reiterated that no workers had died on World Cup projects and said relevant reforms had been introduced to address concerns raised by the report, even before the committee knew about it, he said.

These included wage protection, improved accommodation, and sanctions against companies named in the report including the termination of Seven Hills' contract.

"We have always maintained this World Cup will act as a catalyst for change -- it will not be built on the back of exploited workers," the committee said in a statement.

"We wholly reject any notion that Qatar is unfit to host the World Cup."

Qatar's government said in a statement that it was "concerned by a number of allegations" made by Amnesty and would investigate.

FIFA responded by saying it was "fully aware of the risks" faced by workers in Qatar but said the World Cup was a "strong catalyst for significant change".

Qatar currently employs about 5,100 workers on World Cup sites. Their number will peak at 36,000 by 2018.

Netaji made three 'broadcasts'

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"broadcasts" on dates after he's thought to have died in a plane crash in Taiwan on August 18, 1945.

One file in particular, File No 870/11/p/16/92/Pol, contains the content of these broadcasts, supposedly from Netaji.

The content likely came from Governor House in Bengal. It's mentioned in the file that one PC Kar, an official there, claimed that a monitoring service had picked up the broadcasts on the 31-metre band. Kar apparently told then governor R G Casey about them.

The first broadcast, supposedly by Bose, was on December 26, 1945.

"I am at present under the shelter of great World powers. My heart is burning for India. I will go to India on the crest of a Third World War. It may come in ten years or even earlier. Then I will sit on judgment upon those trying my men at the Red Fort," the broadcast said.

The second broadcast was on January 1, 1946.

"We must get freedom within two years. The British imperialism has broken down and it must concede independence to India. India will not be free by means of 'non-violence'. But I am quite respectful to Mahatma Gandhi."

The third broadcast was in February 1946.

"This is Subhas Chandra Bose speaking, Jai Hind. This is the third time I am addressing my Indian brothers and sisters after Japan's surrender... The PM of England is going to send Mr Pethick Lawrence and two other members with no object in view other than let the British imperialism a permanent settlement by all means to suck the blood of India."

The declassified file also refers to a letter of July 22, 1946, from Khurshed Naoroji, one of Gandhi's secretaries, to Louis Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of the British Indian Empire.

"At heart, the Indian Army is sympathetic to the INA (Bose's Indian National Army). If Bose comes with the help of Russia, neither Gandhiji nor Nehru nor the Congress will be able to reason with the country," Naoroji writes to Mountbatten.

In addition, the file refers to the British government, on October 25, 1945, taking up the issue of Netaji having died in the air crash. It says the British prime minister was chairing a meet to consider, among other things, what to do with Bose in the post-war situation. The British cabinet discussed a confidential note sent by the Viceroy of India, Lord Wavell, regarding the "finalisation of a policy towards Bose".

The file says that the diary of Moutbatten - who was then the supreme commander of the Allied forces in Southeast Asia - indicates that he received a dispatch from the British directorate of military intelligence after the news of Bose's death in the crash.

The message said: "When Bose was preparing to leave Burma by plane, the Chinese intercepted a message from the Japanese asking him to remain in Burma. Bose subsequently escaped to Thailand."

HSC exams

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would take part in the tests.

Of them, about 5.65 lakh are female students.

Nahid said theoretical exams would begin on April 3 and end on June 9, while practical tests would be held between June 11 and 20.

Exams in the day's first half would start at 10:00am and continue until 1:00pm, while tests in the day's second half would begin at 2:00pm and end at 5:00pm, said the minister.

Education Secretary Md Sohrab Hossain, Director General of Directorate of Secondary Education Prof Fahima Khatun and high officials of the ministry were present at the press conference.