

PHOTO OF THE DAY

PRABIR DAS

PM says no to Demu train

Scraps procurement proposal at Ecneec meeting; 8 projects involving Tk 5,142 crore okayed

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday rejected a proposal to buy more diesel electric multiple unit (Demu) trains, saying they are not viable for operation in the country.

She said this at the weekly meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec).

Planning Secretary Muhammad Nurul Amin briefed reporters afterwards.

He said when a project proposal to purchase Demu trains to operate from Dhaka to Bangabandhu Hi-Tech Park came to the fore, the PM asked the railways ministry not to procure Demu trains but to go for other options.

She said people did not get desired service from the trains, which were purchased earlier, meeting sources told The Daily Star. Many, she said, of the trains remained inoperative and there is no workshop to repair those.

Demu trains were introduced in the country in 2013. A total of 20 trains were imported from China as per a US \$58.31 million deal signed in 2011. According to railway sources, at least half of the trains are inoperative.

The prime minister, however, recommended to resubmit the proposal with other viable options. She also suggested introducing a dedicated and direct train service between Dhaka and the hi-tech park at Kaliakair in Gazipur.

At yesterday's meeting, Ecneec approved eight projects involving Tk 5,142.06 crore,

said the planning secretary, reports UNB. Of the total cost, Tk 4,129.81 crore will come from the government fund, while Tk 1,012.55 crore from foreign sources as project assistance, he said. Among the approved projects, six are new and two are revised.

Nurul Amin said the PM also issued some directives to the authorities concerned, including formulation of a "master plan" by the Cox's Bazar Development Authority before taking any development project there.

Hasina directed the deputy commissioner of Cox's Bazar to frame a separate plan so that buildings and other infrastructures cannot be developed haphazardly.

She emphasised creating more "jhaubon" (coastal forest) in areas of Cox's Bazar to protect the tourist town from natural disasters.

Among the projects, the planning secretary said, a project involving Tk 2,606 crore will be implemented to improve important roads under various unions and upazilas of Dhaka division by June 2024.

According to planning commission officials, the local government division will implement the project in 67 upazilas out of 88 in 13 districts.

The main project operations include development of some 1001.51km of roads and 240 intersections; construction of 5,857 metres of bridges and culverts; 30km of drains and some 12,000 square metres of slope protection.

Referring to the approval of the construction of supporting infrastructures for the Bangabandhu Hi-Tech City-2 Project

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Four-year-old Tanjil Bin Hossain is going to Mecca to perform hajj along with his grandparents. He has only one wish -- to see his mother. Tanjil's mother passed away last year and his grandmother told him that she is with God now. Since then, he has been adamant about visiting Kaaba -- the House of God. Tanjil lives with his grandparents in Cumilla and his father is an expatriate. The photo was taken at Ashkona Hajj Camp yesterday.

ICC delegation in town to hold talks over crimes against Rohingyas

UNB, Dhaka

A delegation of the International Criminal Court (ICC) arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a weeklong visit to talk to senior government officials and representatives of international organisations over the Rohingya issue.

The delegation, led by ICC Deputy Prosecutor James Kirkpatrick Stewart, landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport around 8:54am.

ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda considers that there is a reasonable basis to proceed with an investigation in relation to the alleged deportation of members of the Rohingya community from Myanmar to Bangladesh and related crimes committed in context of the 2016 and 2017 waves of violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State.

The ICC delegation is scheduled to hold a meeting with Foreign Secretary M Shahidul Haque at state guesthouse Padma at 9:30am today. The same day, they will meet Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan

at his Secretariat office at noon and Law Minister Amir Huq in Gulshan at 3pm.

The delegation will have an internal meeting tomorrow and leave for Cox's Bazar on Friday afternoon. They will visit Rohingya camps and meet government officials on Saturday.

The next day, the delegation will hold talks with Cox's Bazar DC; refugee, relief and repatriation commissioner; regional heads of Rab and BGB, and acting police superintendent in Cox's Bazar.

They are scheduled to leave Dhaka on July 22.

INVESTIGATION INTO ATROCITIES

The ICC prosecutor has already requested its judges to authorise an investigation into alleged crimes like deportation and other atrocities committed against Rohingyas.

Myanmar is not a State Party to the Rome Statute, but Bangladesh is, it is important to keep in mind that the authorisation to investigate, if granted by judges, would not extend to all crimes potentially committed

in Myanmar, but will focus on crimes allegedly committed in part on the territory of Bangladesh, according to the ICC.

Investigating deportation will, however, mean taking a close look at the alleged violence that left the Rohingyas with no choice but to flee Myanmar.

The request seeks authorisation from the court's judges to open an investigation into alleged crimes within its jurisdiction, in which at least one element occurred in the territory of Bangladesh and within the context of two recent waves of violence in the Rakhine state, as well as any other crimes which are sufficiently linked to these events.

The requested authorisation to investigate the situation covers the period from October 9, 2016 and the recent waves of violence in Rakhine State.

The request follows a thorough preliminary examination by the ICC prosecutor's office. It concluded that the legal conditions required under the Rome

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Law enforcers neutralised terror risk post-Sri Lanka attack

CTTC chief says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The impact of carnage in New Zealand and Sri Lanka raised the risk of terrorist attack in Bangladesh; however, law enforcers have managed to neutralise that, Monirul Islam, chief of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of Dhaka Metropolitan police (DMP), claimed yesterday.

He said terror-related activity cannot be foiled through implementing law alone, rather it needs a comprehensive strategy and awareness in all levels of society.

"The risk [of terror attack] was higher during Ramadan, [and] we have neutralised it," Monirul said in his speech as chief guest at a prize-giving ceremony for winners of a debate competition on anti-terrorism at Lalmatia Women's College.

Debate for Democracy (DFD) organised the competition in association with SAMPRETI, a project of Manusher Jonno Foundation.

Sixteen colleges and madrasas participated in the competition. Lalmatia Women's College won the champion's trophy. Tamirul Millat Madrasa secured the runner-up and Government Bangla

College earned the third position.

Monirul also spoke of how misinterpretation -- propagated on internet -- of religion, especially Islam, is misguiding the youth towards militancy.

"The actual teachings of the religion have to be disseminated among them. As some people are committing this [terrorism] in the name of Islam, they [the youth] must have actual knowledge of the religion. Such violence has no relation to it," he said.

Stressing on the importance of debate, he said, "Helping students score 'Golden A+' is not the only duty of the teachers, they should also encourage students to be logical and mindful."

Referring to the tradition of coexistence of different religions in Bangladesh, Hasan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron, chairman of DFD, said, "Arrangement of dialogue among religious leaders at regional and national levels is urgent."

Kiron also handed over a cheque worth Tk one lakh to the principal of Lalmatia Women's College, Prof Rafiqul Islam, on behalf of DFD.

At the end of the programme, top three winning teams were handed over crests and certificates.

DHAKA TODAY

DISCUSSION
Skill strategies for jobs
Organiser: BYLC
Venue: The Daily Star Centre
Time: 9:30am

CELEBRATION
50th anniversary of moon landing
Organiser: Bangladesh Biggyan Jonopriokaran Samity
Venue: Sheltech Niribili (1st Floor), Elephant Road
Time: 9am

RALLY
Demanding relief for flood victims across the country
Organiser: Left Democratic Alliance
Venue: Jatiya Press Club
Time: 4:30pm

SEMINAR
Accession to Madrid Protocol System by Bangladesh & Promotion of Trademark Use by Business
Organiser: WIPO
Venue: Cirdap, Tophkhana Road
Time: 9:30am

BOOK FAIR
20 years of Oitijhya publication
Venue: Central Public Library, Shahbagh
Time: 9:30am

STUDY CIRCLE
Humayun Ahmed and his readers
Organiser: Alokhortika
Venue: ECE Building, BUET
Time: 5pm

SEVEN DU-AFFILIATED COLLEGES Students take to streets with four-point demand

DU CORRESPONDENT

Students of seven colleges affiliated with Dhaka University once again took to the streets yesterday, to press home their four-point demand -- including promotion of students who failed their honours first year final examination.

The agitating students started their demonstration at 10am, blocking the Nilkhet intersection.

This resulted in suffering for commuters on the route, who were stuck in long tailbacks because of the blockade. Many people were seen walking to their destinations.

The students' other demands include re-evaluation of answer scripts to prevent mass failures; arranging re-examination for students of 2017-2018 session to promote them to the next year; and publishing results within three months.

They withdrew their blockade at 1:30pm, after some teachers of Dhaka College went to the spot and assured them of discussing their demands with the DU vice-chancellor.

Talking to The Daily Star, Shrabony Sarker, a student of Eden College, said, "Since the seven colleges got affiliated, there is no academic calendar, no syllabus and authorities do not issue any prior notice before publishing results. We are passing our academic life through acute mismanagement. Why did they affiliate us if they cannot take responsibility?"

"Except for some departments, results of most departments are yet to be published, although the examination of 2017-2018 session was held nearly eight months ago. Also, a large number of students were shown failed in the published results.

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Students of several colleges blockade the New Market-Nilkhet-Azimpur intersection.

Bangladeshi scouts taking on the world Over 200 selected for 24th World Scout Jamboree in USA

SHOAB AHMED SAYAM

Scouting has been popular in Bangladesh since the 1970s. What started out as a voluntary movement founded by British army officer Robert Baden-Powell in early 1900s has reached schools and colleges all over the country. Bangladesh regularly participates in international scouting events -- giving students an opportunity to become global members of society.

Over 200 scouts have been selected to represent Bangladesh at the 24th World Scout Jamboree to be held from July 22 to August 2 in West Virginia, USA. The jamboree is a social and educational event where scouts will be able to hone their skills and exchange viewpoints with members from other countries. The Daily Star sat with some of the selected scouts and discussed their journey so far.

The selected members are definitely excited to be able to attend the global event. "Around 40,000 scouts and leaders from around the world will participate. We'll have the opportunity to observe and learn from each other's culture and tradition," said Sheikh Redwanul Islam, a student of Ideal School and College.



Afzal Hossain, head of Bangladesh contingent for the 24th World Scout Jamboree, with some of the selected scouts heading to USA to attend the event. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

"This is going to be my 10th jamboree. I was selected for the world jamboree in 1963 but couldn't go as a scout due to illness," said Afzal Hossain, head of Bangladesh contingent for this year's jamboree. "These children are extremely lucky to be able to go there. When a scout goes to a world jamboree, the experience will benefit them for the rest of their life."

In an era when global integration is constantly increasing, all agreed that thinking in a global perspective is important. "We not only want to serve our country but also contribute positively around the world, strengthening the scouting movement in the process," Redwanul said.

But how can scouting benefit someone

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ACC sues Basir, DIG Mizan in bribery case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a case against suspended Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Mizanur Rahman, and suspended ACC director Khandaker Enamul Basir, for a transaction of Tk 40 lakh as bribe.

Sheikh Mohammad Fanafilya, director of the anti-corruption watchdog, lodged the case with its Dhaka district coordination office-1 under the Money Laundering Prevention Act, said ACC Secretary Dilwar Bakht.

Mizan is now in jail in connection with a graft case while Basir is at large, he told reporters.

According to the case statement, in May last year, ACC launched an enquiry into alleged accumulation of illegal wealth by Mizan, who came to spotlight after a marital scandal. He was later withdrawn as additional commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

The commission assigned Basir

to carry out the enquiry. Basir took Tk 40 lakh bribe from Mizan in two instalments -- on January 15 and February 25 this year -- with promises of exonerating Mizan of the charges.

Mizan recently brought allegations in media that Basir took bribe from him, and produced audio clips of conversation between them.

Basir has been denying the allegations, saying the audio clip was fabricated.

ACC later removed Basir from the enquiry, and formed a committee to verify Mizan's claim. The committee, led by Fanafilya, found the allegations to be true and the audio clip genuine. Basir was suspended from his post by ACC on June 10.

Earlier, ACC filed a case against Mizan for amassing Tk 3.28 crore illegally by taking bribes and committing corruption. Between 1998 and 2018, Mizan earned Tk 4.63 crore, but only Tk 1.35 crore of it came from legal sources, ACC said.

HSC results out today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The results of this year's Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and equivalent examinations will be published today.

Examinees can get their results from respective centres, websites of their respective boards and on mobile phones through sending short message service (SMS) from 2pm, officials said.

Education Minister Dipu Moni will formally announce the results at a press conference at the ministry's conference room at 12:30pm.

Before that, she will hand over a summary of the results to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at 10am at her Gono Bhavan residence.

Examinees can also get their results directly from educationboardresults.gov.bd.