

No JSC exams this year

Dipu Moni announces

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Dipu Moni yesterday announced that there will be no Junior School Certificate and equivalent Junior Dakhil Certificate exams this year.

She also said during a press conference that she saw no reason to hold the exams in 2023 as well, as the exams for class-8 students were not part of the new curriculum, which does not propose public exams before class 10.

JSC and JDC exams were not held in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid restrictions. The government decided to scrap this year's JSC and JDC exams as education boards would not get enough time to conduct the exams due to the delayed holding of SSC and HSC exams, officials said.

SSC and HSC exams are set to take place after a four-month delay due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We don't have enough time to conduct JSC exams this year," Dipu Moni said at the press conference held at her Secretariat office.

Since no JSC and JDC exams will be held, students will get certificates based on evaluations by their educational institutions, she added.

The new curriculum, which is set to be implemented in phases from January 2023, will be fully implemented by 2025.

Dhaka education board acting chairman Tapan Kumar Sarkar, said this year, SSC exams will begin on June 19 and HSC exams are likely to begin in late August and conclude in October. "So, it will not be possible to complete all preparations by November to conduct JSC and JDC exams," he said.

Since introduction in 2010, JSC and JDC exams usually take place in November.

Many educationists have criticised the exams, calling them unnecessary and a source of stress for students.

Dipu Moni at the press conference also said the government will announce inclusion of more non-government educational institutions in the government's Monthly Pay Order (MPO) scheme within this week.

She said roughly the same number of new schools will be brought under the scheme as in 2019, when 2,730 non-government schools were included.

Dipu Moni also said the government is considering appointing principals, head teachers and assistant head teachers, through the Non-Government Teachers' Registration and Certification Authority (NTRCA).

Now assistant teachers of non-government schools are being appointed through the central examination under NTRCA.



Pilgrims offer prayers before they depart for Saudi Arabia to perform hajj. The photo was yesterday taken inside a Biman aircraft, the first hajj flight of this year.

PHOTO: PID

UP chairman held over murder of AL activist

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Police yesterday arrested Nagdemra Union Parishad Chairman Hafizur Rahman in a case filed over the hacking to death of an Awami League activist in Santhia upazila.

The victim is Abdul Motin, 42, a relative of former Nagdemra UP chairman Harunur Rashid, also the union AL secretary.

Harun's younger brother Jewel Rana was injured in the incident and is currently undergoing treatment at Pabna General Hospital, the former chairman told The Daily Star yesterday.

Harun filed a case accusing Hafizur and 18 others with Santhia Police Station yesterday.

Komol Kumar Debnath, inspector (investigation) of Santhia Police Station, said police arrested Hafizur and one Abu Sayeed after the case was lodged.

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Australia accuses China of dangerous interception

AFP, SYDNEY

Australia yesterday accused the Chinese military of putting an Australian Defence Force flight crew at risk when their plane was intercepted late last month over the South China Sea.

Defence Minister Richard Marles revealed a Chinese strike fighter on May 26 intercepted an Australian P-8 surveillance craft, flying close and releasing flares.

Inflation creating

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households were surveyed, the fifth such survey since the onset of the pandemic.

The per capita daily income among the surveyed households was Tk 117 during the pre-pandemic period. It dropped to Tk 83 during the second shutdown in August last year.

Although the per capita income increased to Tk 105 in January this year, it came down to Tk 99 in May for the inflation.

The income of non-poor and vulnerable non-poor has fallen much sharply compared to their poorer counterparts and has recovered more slowly, particularly for the vulnerable non-poor, the survey found.

In April, inflation hit an 18-month high of 6.29 percent.

Due to the price hike, most of the surveyed households have drastically reduced or stopped consumption of major food items such as fish, meat, milk and fruit since February.

As of May, one in five urban slum households had to skip at least one meal in the last month due to lack of money.

The survey found that 38

percent of the households needed to borrow money but could not, mostly because of their inability to repay existing large debt burdens.

Since February, two-thirds of the households cut back on their non-food expenditure, including medical and children's education. Besides, they were buying less and lower quality goods to cope with the price hike.

Since February, 38 percent of the households were buying essentials from the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh's food trucks.

More than half of the households viewed the price hike as a governance issue and want the government to punish the syndicates and corrupt businesses.

There should be targeted scaling up of social protection programmes and governance reforms focused on market management to contain price rise, Rahman said.

The government's actions for the informal sector and the poor will be critical at this time, and this needs to protect both their consumption and production capabilities, said Imran Matin, executive director of BIGD.

Govt hikes gas tariff by 22.8pc

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in the transport sectors cash in on it. We want to keep this sector stable now as the people are already suffering."

For captive power plants, the hike in tariff will be 15.5 percent, which is higher than the rate recommended by BERC's technical evaluation committee.

Earlier, in March, the committee recommended an 11.9 percent hike for the sector.

Probed, Faruque said: "The committee didn't count some expenditure in their calculation but we found those logical."

The gas tariff for power plants has been increased by 12.8 percent, for large-scale industries by 11.96 percent, for medium-scale industries by 10.09 percent, for tea estates by 11.5 percent and commercial users like hotels and restaurants by

15.83 percent.

In his immediate reaction, Jashim Uddin, the president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries, thanked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for keeping the gas prices "rational" amid the global turmoil caused by the Ukraine-Russia War and the rising trend of LNG price.

Consumers' rights activists and some political parties had given alternatives to raising the price.

"BERC didn't accept any of our recommendations," said Shamsul Alam, vice-president of the Consumers Association of Bangladesh.

The country is already in an unstable situation due to the price hike of commodities, inflation and devaluation of the exchange rate.

"People are gasping. At this time, the government

could increase their subsidy in the energy sector instead of increasing the price."

The new tariff will have a far-reaching effect: gas is a strategic product, so every sector will be affected, he added.

Earlier in January, all six gas distribution companies -- Titas, Bakhrabad, Jalalabad, Pashchimanchal, Karnaphuli, and Sundarban -- had asked the BERC for an average of 117 percent hike in tariffs.

The state-owned Bangladesh Oil, Gas, and Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla) also placed a separate proposal asking to increase the bulk price of natural gas.

BERC held a public hearing on the proposals from March 21 to 24, where its technical evaluation committee had recommended a 20 percent price hike on average.

Of valour and selflessness

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So badly were their bodies burnt in the explosions that they were hard to recognise. Parts of the uniform they held so dear and wore with such pride lay strewn about the spot along with their body parts.

Eight of the heroes were identified as Rana Mia, Moniruzzaman, Alauddin, Shakil Tarafdar, Mithu Dewan, Nipon Chakma, Ramjanul Islam and Salaududdin Kader Chowdhury. It was not possible to identify the other uniform-clad body, according to the media cell of the fire service.

Just over a month ago, Moniruzzaman had become the father of a precious girl. In April, he joined Kumira Station, leaving his wife and daughter in the capital. He left with a promise to his wife that he would be back to visit them shortly.

That hope was shattered on Saturday night by the blast at the BM Container Depot.

Moniruzzaman was killed in the chemical explosion while on duty along with other firefighters at the depot.

"It's not death; it's patriotism, self-sacrifice..." wrote Shahidul Sumon,

a station officer at Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence, on his Facebook page.

"A few days ago, when I had a high fever, Moniruzzaman put his hand on my head and said, 'Sir, nothing will happen to you, you will get well soon'. Although I recovered quickly, Moniruzzaman did not come back ... How many memories, how many times we extinguished fires together! May God bless the families of all the victims."

Mashroof Hossain, an additional superintendent of police, wrote on his Facebook page: "If there are any unsung hero among the emergency services in Bangladesh, they are our firefighters. In my 12 years of service, I have seen how they work with the utmost dedication, courage and self-sacrifice."

Hailing their valiant efforts, many on Facebook wrote that the firefighters are the real heroes, and that heroes never die.

A total of 25 units of the fire service were working to control the deadly fire as of last night.

A fire service official said 22 firefighters were sent to the spot as part of the first response team. One of the reasons behind the huge

casualties is that the fire service was not informed about the chemicals in the containers, he said.

Shariful Hasan, a columnist, wrote in a Facebook post: "Salute to the firefighters. They went to control the fire and got injured. But they were not informed about the huge amount of chemicals there. I don't know if the fire service has ever lost so many people in one incident. I pay tribute to these people."

Talking to The Daily Star, Fire Service and Civil Defence Director General Brig Gen Md Main Uddin said there have never been so many deaths of firefighters in one incident.

"I've been working with the fire service for almost 25 years. In all these years, I have never seen so many deaths in a fire incident."

Since 1981, at least 17 firefighters have died while on duty, with at most one firefighter perishing in a single incident, according to the media cell of the fire service.

But Saturday's explosion produced a grim new record, claiming the lives of nine courageous men who did not think twice before laying it all on the line for the safety of others.

Putin threatens

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blown-out windows near one of the sites that was targeted.

Leonid, a 63-year-old local resident who used to work at the facility, said he heard three or four explosions. "There is nothing military there but they are bombing everything," he said.

Vasyl, 43, said he heard five blasts. "People are afraid now," he said, walking back to his damaged home with two loaves of bread.

"The Kremlin resorts to new insidious attacks. Today's missile strikes at Kyiv have only one goal -- kill as many as possible," Ukrainian presidential adviser Mikhailo Podolyak wrote in a tweet.

Meanwhile, in the east of the country, the battle for control of Severodonetsk raged on.

The city is the largest still in Ukrainian hands in the Lugansk region of the Donbas, where Russian forces have been advancing gradually after retreating or being beaten back from other parts of the country, including Kyiv.

Lugansk regional governor Sergiy Gaiday said

that Russian forces had lost ground in the city and it was now "divided in two".

"The Russians were in control of about 70 percent of the city, but have been forced back over the past two days," he said on Telegram. "They are afraid to move freely around the city."

Tens of thousands of people have been killed, millions forced to flee and towns turned into rubble since Putin ordered an all-out assault on his pro-Western neighbour on February 24.

Apart from the human toll, the conflict has caused widespread damage to Ukraine's cultural heritage.

On Saturday, Ukrainian officials reported a large Orthodox wooden monastery, a popular pilgrim site, had burnt down and blamed Russia shelling.

Moscow continues to prove "its inability to be part of the civilised world," Culture Minister Oleksandr Tkachenko said in a statement.

Russia's defence ministry blamed "Ukrainian nationalists" for the blaze.

No legal bar

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Sheikh Hasina's government does not take action against anybody out of vengeance.

The investigations into the corruption cases filed against Khaleda and her sons, during the caretaker government regime in 2007, were completed by the Anti-Corruption Commission and the trial

proceedings were finished in line with the law, he said, adding that blaming the AL for the cases and trial proceedings is baseless.

Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana, director general of JATI, presided over the meeting where Md Golam Sarwar, secretary of the law and justice division, also spoke.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director (SE), RHD
Panguchi Bridge Construction Project
Sarak Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka
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Request for Expression of Interest

1	Ministry /Division	: Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges Road Transport and Highways Division
2	Agency	: Roads and Highways Department
3	Procuring Entity Name	: Project Director (SE), RHD Construction of Panguchi Bridge Project
4	Procuring Entity Code	: N/A
5	Procuring Entity District	: Dhaka
6	Expression of Interest (EOI) for Selection of	: NGO Services for implementing 'Resettlement Plan' for Construction of Panguchi Bridge at Morrelganj over the river Panguchi at 17th km of Signboard-Morrelganj-Rayenda-Sharankhola-Bogi Road (R-773).
7	EOI Reference No.	:
8	Date	: 06 June 2022
KEY INFORMATION		
9	Procurement Sub-Method	: QCBS
FUNDING INFORMATION:		
10	Budget and Source of Funds	: GOB
11	Development Partner (If applicable)	: N/A
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
12	Project/Program Code (if applicable)	: N/A
13	Project/Program Name (if applicable)	: Construction of Panguchi Bridge at Morrelganj over the river Panguchi at 17th km of Signboard-Morrelganj-Rayenda-Sharankhola-Bogi Road (R-773).
14	EOI Closing Date and Time	: 05 July 2022, 12:00 BST
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT		
15	Brief Description of the Assignment	: The Non-Government Organization (NGO) shall primarily assist the PIU of Roads and Highways Department (RHD) in resettlement and land acquisition, particularly for assisting affected and entitled persons claiming their compensation from Deputy Commissioner (DC) offices, as per Resettlement Action Plan (RAP). The general scope of work and key tasks of the NGO shall include but not limited to: 1. Review, Update and Finalization of Resettlement Action Plan; 2. Implementation of Resettlement Action Plan; 3. Assist in collecting Cash Compensation under Law (CCL) from DC offices; 4. Assist in land acquisition and utility shifting activities as well as provide logistic support during the survey/ field verification conducted by DC office and other relevant government organizations; 5. The NGO will carry out, where needed, additional census and Inventory of Losses (IOL), if required for verification; 6. Prepare supplementary LAP during implementation for any "left out" land/plots or disputed area required for project implementation; 7. Assist in computerization and copy of DC office data (calculation sheet, DC Award, share determination etc); 8. Identification of entitled persons (EPs) and render assistance to EPs to participate in grievance redress committee (GRC), preparation of EP file, preparation and issuance of entitlement card, preparation of payment statement etc; 9. Disbursement of resettlement benefits; 10. Provide any resettlement-related technical services required by the Executing Agency (EA); 11. Preparation of monitoring and supervision reports to EA as agreed in the contract; 12. Submission of Project Completion Report (PCR) and detailed statement of expenditure against payment to the affected persons (APs) and EPs; 13. Dissemination of information on the project and resettlement policy to the Project Affected Persons (PAPs) and others (community groups, local administration, etc.)
16	Experience, Resources & Delivery Capacity Required*	: The NGO must have experience in land related survey, land acquisition and implementation of resettlement action plan in large-scale completed development project(s). The NGO must be registered in Bangladesh under the NGO Affairs Bureau or the Department of Social Welfare. The NGO must have experience in implementation of at least 3 (Three) Resettlement Programs in Highway Bridge/Road development Project in the last 7 (seven) years in Bangladesh. Experience of working in resettlement program under Roads and Highways Department or in any other government agency will get preference.
17	Other Details	: The EOI shall include: 1. Profile of the NGO (e.g. representatives, address, number of staff, history and other information to introduce itself). 2. General experience of the NGO in brief. 3. Copy of updated/renewed registration certificate with NGO Affairs Bureau or Department of Social Welfare. 4. Copy of audited financial reports of NGO for last three years. 5. Provide information on each assignment completed for which your firm and each associate (JV member only) for this assignment, was legally contracted either individually as a corporate entity or as one of the major companies within an association for carrying out consulting services (i.e. land survey, land acquisition, resettlement plan and monitoring) similar to the ones requested under this assignment. The firm will provide the similar experience information in the format. 6. The EOI will include such similar experience information which has been completed within in the last 10 (ten) years. The information will be supported by the copy of experience certificate and contract document (with salient feature for identification only). The NGO will not provide information of other assignments which are not similar to this assignment 7. Nature, size, employer location and type of input for contracts in hand (in tabular form); 8. Summary of permanent professional and technical employees (no consultant or temporary staff) with key qualifications (in tabular form). 9. Interested NGO may obtain additional information from the office of the undersigned. EOI with all supporting documents must be submitted at or before 12:00 BST by 05 July, 2022 in sealed envelope, marked with "NGO" Services for implementing "Resettlement Plan" for Construction of Panguchi Bridge at Morrelganj over the river Panguchi at 17th km of Signboard-Morrelganj-Rayenda-Sharankhola-Bogi Road (R-773). and delivered to the address of the undersigned. 10. The EOI shall be submitted in one (1) original, two (2) copies, and one soft copy in USB in a sealed envelope. 11. The final selection of NGO shall follow Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) procedure in accordance with the Public Procurement Rules 2008. procurement process of NGO selection. 12. N/A
18	Association with foreign firm is)	: N/A
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
19	Name of the Official Inviting EOI	: Md. Shakilul Islam
20	Designation of the Official Inviting EOI	: Project Director (SE), RHD Construction of Panguchi Bridge Project, Sarak Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka.
21	Address of the Official Inviting EOI	: Room-402, Level-04, Part-01, Sarak Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
22	Contact Details of the Official Inviting EOI	: Project Director (SE), RHD Construction of Panguchi Bridge Project, Sarak Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka Room-402, Level-04, Part-01, Sarak Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208. E-mail: pdpanguchi@gmail.com
23	The PE reserves the right to shortlist or not to shortlist any or all of the applicant(s) without mentioning any reason whatsoever.	:

(Md. Shakilul Islam)
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