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DHAKA-GAZIPUR BRT Shelved after spending Tk 2,800cr in 13yrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government will not proceed with the plan to launch the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service on the Dhaka-Gazipur route, as its implementation would require additional time and funding.

The project will be completed once the remaining work on a flyover and some stations is finished, after which the route will be opened to traffic. The next government will decide whether to introduce the BRT service.

Sheik Moinuddin, special assistant to the chief adviser on the road transport and bridges ministry, said this while exchanging views with members of Reporters for Rail and Road, a reporters' platform, at the Rail Bhaban yesterday.

The move comes over a decade after the project was undertaken in November 2012 to introduce the country's first dedicated rapid bus service aimed at reducing congestion on the busy corridor.

The project witnessed 97.43 percent progress till June this year and Dhaka BRT PLC, a state-run company formed to provide the service, has already floated tender for procuring buses. Long delay in implementing the project caused immense suffering to the passengers for years.

Around Tk 2,800 crore, out of Tk 4,268.3 crore project cost, has already been spent. Several elevated stations were built with escalator facilities. Twenty-two escalators were damaged during last year's uprising.

Moinuddin said it would require around Tk 6,000 crore to make the BRT service fully functional. Besides, it would take a considerable amount of time to procure the buses, by which the tenure of the interim government would end, he added.

The next government will have to procure buses and renovate the stations to launch the BRT service, he added.

Prof Hadiuzzaman of Buet's civil engineering department said poor planning, faulty design, and the selection of an inappropriate route made the project non-viable, forcing the authorities to abandon it midway.

He said the Dhaka airport to Gazipur stretch is part of the original plan, and implementing the project partially without connecting it to the main city would not make it economically viable.

Given this situation, further investment would not be wise, he added.

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Officials of last 3 polls will not be assigned for Feb election Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will refrain from assigning election duties to officials who served in the 2014, 2018 and 2024 polls as much as possible in the upcoming national polls, in a move aimed at restoring public confidence in the electoral process.

The move comes as part of the measures to ensure that the next parliamentary election is free, fair and peaceful, said Home Affairs Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury after a meeting of the core committee on law and order yesterday at the Secretariat.

According to the Police Headquarters (PHQ), some 1.93 lakh personnel are currently serving in the force, including 52,913 assistant sub-inspectors up to officers of the additional inspector general rank.

About 1.43 lakh members were deployed for election duty in 2024, and this year, 1.5 lakh members are being trained for deployment, The Daily Star has learnt from people informed with the proceedings.

After the government decided to exclude previously assigned officials, PHQ has managed to avoid reassigning about 30 percent of the earlier deployment, they said.

This includes 15,000 newly recruited during the tenure of the interim government.

It would be difficult to find enough officers if all those who served in the past three elections were excluded, said several officials at the PHQ on condition of anonymity.

Amid this situation, the shortage of officials required for election duties

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A member of the internal security forces loyal to the Palestinian group Hamas greets young bystanders in the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

PAK-AFGHAN BORDER TENSIONS Dozens killed in clashes

Several posts destroyed; clashes come days after airstrikes hit Kabul marketplace

REUTERS, Islamabad

Dozens of fighters were killed in overnight border clashes between Pakistan and Afghanistan, both sides said yesterday, in the most serious fighting between the neighbours since the Taliban came to power in Kabul.

The Pakistan military said that 23 of its soldiers were killed in the clashes. The Taliban said nine on its side were killed.

Tensions have risen after Islamabad demanded the Taliban take action against militants who have stepped up attacks in Pakistan, saying they operate from havens in Afghanistan. The Taliban, which came to power in 2021, denies that Pakistani militants are present on its soil.

Each side said it inflicted far higher casualties on the other side, without providing evidence. Pakistan said it had killed more

than 200 Afghan Taliban and allied fighters, while Afghanistan said that it had killed 58 Pakistani soldiers.

Reuters was not able to independently verify the figures.

On Thursday, Pakistan carried out airstrikes in Kabul and on a marketplace in eastern Afghanistan, according to Pakistani security officials and the Taliban, setting off retaliatory attacks by the

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A child receives a Typhoid Conjugate Vaccine (TCV) shot at the Nagar Shastho Kendro on Salimullah Road in the capital's Mohammadpur yesterday morning. Over 10 lakh children were vaccinated on the first day of a month-long nationwide campaign targeting 4.9 crore children aged between nine months and 15 years. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

BCL ACTIVIST MURDER All 114 Jamaat-Shibir men acquitted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A Rajshahi court yesterday acquitted all 105 accused linked to Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir in connection with the murder of Rajshahi University Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activist Faruque Hossain.

Judge Julfiker Ullah of Rajshahi Metropolitan Sessions Judge Court-1 delivered the order.

State counsel Ali Ashraf Masum said the court acquitted all the accused as the prosecution failed to prove the allegations brought against them.

Among the 114 accused, nine died during the trial proceedings, while the remaining ones were cleared of all charges. Only 25 of the 105 surviving accused were present in the dock during the verdict.

Faruque Hossain, a student of the Mathematics Department and an activist of the then-banned BCL unit at Rajshahi University, was killed

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Star INTERVIEW

Int'l standards for accountability must be upheld

Says global human rights activist Alice Mogwe during interview with Star

PORIMOL PALMA

An international human rights activist has reminded Bangladesh authorities of the international standards as the country goes through an accountability process in the aftermath of the July uprising.

"One word of caution would be to constantly remember that there are international standards and international obligations against which any instruments, laws or policies should constantly be checked to ensure that those are complied with," said Alice Mogwe, president of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH).

FIDH is a federation of 192 members around the world. In Bangladesh, rights body Odhikar is its member, which invited Mogwe for the visit to Bangladesh from October 4-11 for assessing the human rights situation.

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WE DEEPLY MOURN



Ashok Kumar Das

We deeply mourn the passing of Mr. Ashok Kumar Das, the beloved elder brother of Mr. Alock Kumar Das, Vice Chairman of Paramount Group.

We, the Paramount family convey our deepest condolences to the members of the bereaved family and pray to the God to give them the strength and resilience to bear and overcome this irreplaceable loss. May God with His infinite mercy bless the departed soul.

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