

Staff Reporter

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) on Tuesday approved four development projects involving TK 720.70 crore, including one to save river banks in Ramgati and Kamalnagar upazilas of Laxmipur district and adjacent areas from erosion by the Meghna River with TK 198.02 crore.

The approval came from an Ecneec meeting held at the NEC Conference Room with Ecneec chairperson and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal said, "Of the total project cost, the government will provide TK 564.70 crore from the national exchequer while TK 156 crore will come as project assistance."

Bangladesh Water Development Board will implement the river bank protection project in Laxmipur by June 2019 aiming to protect the left embankment of the Meghna River in that coastal area as well as protecting the lives and natural resources and thus increase crop production.

The Ecneec meeting approved another project titled 'Breed Up-gradation Through Progeny Test (3rd Phase)' involving TK 44.13 crore, which aims to increase annual milk production rate to 10 percent from 3 percent towards ensuring daily 150 ml milk for per person by 2021.

Department of Livestock Services (DLS) will implement the project by June, 2019.

Mustafa Kamal said the Ecneec approved another revised project titled 'Rural Electrification Expansion Activities in Barisal Division-I (1st Revised)' project involving TK 331.80 crore.

Planning Ministry sources said the project was launched in July, 2010 involving TK 267.72 crore and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) was supposed to provide US\$ 20 million for it. But, the project could not be implemented by June 2013 due to fund constraints as the IDB did not reach any agreement with the government by the time.

Later, on June 24, 2014, the government signed an agreement with the IDB for the financing.

And the project implementation period has been extended to June, 2016 with the revised project cost of TK 331.80 crore.

The Planning Minister said the project cost has been increased due to rise in the currency exchange rate and price hike in international market.

Under the project, nearly 2200 km new transmission lines will be installed while 300 km lines would be renovated.

Another revised project that got Ecneec nod is the Construction of 19 Regional Passport Office Buildings (1st revised) with TK 146.75 crore.

Replying to a query, AHM Mustafa Kamal said another project titled 'Palli Janapad' was dropped from the day's Ecneec meeting and it will be placed again after incorporating some suggestions of the Prime Minister.

The project will be undertaken initially on pilot basis where four-storey buildings will be built in rural areas ensuring the facilities of urban areas.

Ministers, State Ministers, members of the Planning Commission, Secretaries and high officials concerned were present at the meeting.