



Staff Reporter

The Cabinet on Monday approved the draft of the Metro Rail Bill, 2014 to give a legal framework to the overall activities of the proposed Metro Rail Project, including its operations, control and regulations.

The proposed law kept provision of Tk 1 crore penalty and 10 years' imprisonment for operating metro rail without license or illegal handover of license for operating Metro Rail.

The approval was given at the regular weekly meeting of the cabinet held at the Secretariat with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Cabinet Secretary M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan briefed the reporters after the meeting. He said that the law also kept provision of five years' imprisonment or Tk 50,000 fine for creating obstructions in running metro rail.

The cabinet secretary said Metro rail or Mass Rapid Transit Development Project (Line 6) is a priority project of the government.

A public limited company named Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL) will operate the Metro Rail while the DMTCL will be supervised by the Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority.

The law will cover the supervision authority of MRT projects in six districts of greater Dhaka as well as similar MRT projects would come under the purview of the law.

The Cabinet Secretary said that the proposed route of the MRT Line-6 is Uttara 3rd Phase to Bangladesh Bank via Pallabi-Rokeya Sarani-Khamarbari-Farmgate-Hotel Sonargaon-Shahbagh-TSC-Doel Chattar- and Topkhana Road.

There will be separate committees for issuing licenses of metro rail and fixing the fares. Executive Director of the Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority will be the head of the committee for issuing license. The proposed law also kept provision for constructing and operating the metro rail under PPP basis.

The cabinet also gave nod to the draft of the Public Private Partnership Bill, 2014 aimed at expediting the economic development of the country through implementing big infrastructure projects under PPP basis.

Under the proposed law there would a PPP Advisory Council headed by the Prime Minister. The Finance Minister would be its vice chairman while Principal Secretary will work as member

secretary.

The proposed law defined the various terms and conditions including process of determining private partners, cancellation and extension of the agreements and negotiation process and scope for accepting unsolicited proposals.

The draft of the Financial Reporting Bill, 2014 was also approved by the cabinet aimed at improving qualitative standard of the financial reports to take it to international standard.

Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan said there would be a 10 member council for setting the standard and looking after other issues of financial reporting.

The council would be selected through a search committee of financial experts headed by the Comptroller and Auditor General of Bangladesh.

The cabinet also approved the " SAARC Framework Agreement for Energy Cooperation (Electricity) aimed at paving the way for enhancing cross border electricity trade among neighboring countries.

M Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan said the agreement is expected to be signed during the 18th SAARC Summit in the Nepalese capital Katmandu on November 26-27 next.

Besides, the SAARC Regional Railways Agreement for SAARC Member States finalized by the fifth inter-governmental group on Transport was approved by the cabinet.

In the agreement, a number of railway links between Bangladesh- India-Pakistan, Bangladesh -Nepal- India and Bangladesh-Bhutan-India are proposed.

This agreement is also likely to be signed during the upcoming SAARC Summit.