

# ‘We overcame challenges in executing metro rail’- PM

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**The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk:** Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Monday said that her government overcame several challenges in implementation of metro rail and different development projects in the country. “There had been challenges when we went for any work, but we completed all those projects overcoming all hurdles,” she said. The prime minister said this in her introductory speech in the weekly cabinet meeting held at her office (PMO), reports UNB.

Talking about the metro rail project, she said that in the initial feasibility study the metro rail route was designed to go through Bijoy Sarani. “In that case we would have to close down our Tejgaon airport which has a 9000 feet long runway. I was dead against that closure proposal,” she recalled. She mentioned that during the 1998 floods all the relief goods were transported through this airport as Kurmitola Airport went under flood water. She also said that while the government designed for the planetarium the tomb was much higher. “We reduced that height. If the height crosses 60-70 feet then it will come under the air funnel (of the Tejgaon airport),” she said.

She told the meeting that if the old alignment was used then the government would have to demolish 22 buildings. “I proposed the new route using the Khamar Bari area,” she said. She also said that she extended the metro rail route up to Kamalapur station from Bangladesh Bank station. “At that time it was proposed to demolish Kamalapur station for metro rail for its turning and landing space,” she added.

The PM asked the officials concerned that it would not be wise to demolish such a big station and construct another.

“I told them how could we do that keeping that station intact. If necessary metro rail will go over the station or find another site for its turning. Now it is done that way,” she said. She also mentioned that the metro rail project was obstructed at Dhaka University area by the students terming that it would destroy the academic atmosphere of the university. “I assured them that there will be no disturbance due to the Metro Rail as it will go through a corner of the university area,” she said.

Later, she said it was stopped after the Holey Artisan attack where seven Japanese involved with this project were killed. “At that time all Japanese people went back to their homeland, I expressed condolence at once to the then Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and while visiting Japan I met the family members of the seven deceased Japanese officials,” she said.

Later, she recalled, it was stopped again during COVID-19 pandemic. “But that time the work progressed slowly using the videoconferencing system through the internet,” she added. Hasina urged all to use metro rail carefully as this has the most modern technology. “I will request all to use the rail with utmost care as this is the asset of the whole country and its people,” she said. She said that the government is constructing an underpass to go from airport railway station to the airport with modern facilities for the convenience of the passengers and hajj pilgrims.