

All publishers may be allowed to print, market textbooks

The Education Ministry, under fire for its failure in supplying textbooks, is likely to allow shortly all publishers to print and market books, particularly of class six and nine, reports UNB.

Official sources said Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman yesterday wanted to know from the Education Secretary the reasons for the scarcity and high price of textbooks of class VI and IX in the market.

Secretary A H M Abdul Hye blamed an 'artificial crisis' on the failure of concerned publishers to fulfil their respective commitments to print and market the books on schedule.

Most of the students of different classes, particularly of classes VI and IX, failed to procure their textbooks even after a quarter of their academic year elapsed, causing jittery among the students and their guardians.

A tripartite meeting between the ministry, textbook board and publishers — at the beginning of the year — decided to publish all the textbooks of class VI and IX by first week of April. But the publishing companies failed to keep their schedule.

According to the Text Book Board, the task for printing and publishing the textbooks of the Board has been given to some select private publishing companies upon the decisions of the Education Ministry.

But the publishers said failure in timely supply of necessary material — papers, manuscripts and positives — by the Board was mainly to blame for the delay in printing books this year.

Showcause

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Rahman, Faruq Sobhan, Syed Ahmed, Wahid Islam, Alamgir Faruk Chowdhury, Azizur Rahman, Sirajuddin, Saiful Alam, Shahjahan Siddiqui, Bir Bikram, Shah Alam, Abdul Mannan, Serajul Huq, Abdul Hye, Enamul Kabir, Khan Mohammad Nurul Huda, Abdus Satter Khan, B Karim and Abu Alam Shahid Khan violated the provisions of rules 25 and 29 of the Government Servants (conduct) Rules, 1979, by attending meetings on March 25. In the Secretariat premises and by joining the political podium called 'Janata Mancha' created by Bangladesh Awami League in front of the National Press Club from March 28 to March 30, making speeches and expressing solidarity with the non-cooperation movement of the opposition political parties.

The petition further said that they had acted in gross violation of the rules by exposing themselves as 'supporters of the Awami League.'

The rule is made returnable in one week and the matter will come up for hearing on 14.

Additional Attorney General Gul Wadud Bhuiyan and Assistant Attorney General Mirzah Ali appeared for the state.

Tough contest

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Dhaka-9 (Dhamondi-Muhammadpur): Makbul Hussain (BNP), Begum Khaleida Zia (BNP), Kazi Firoj Rashid (JP), Dhaka-10 (Tejgaon-Ramna) HBM Iqbal (AL), Major (r) Abdul Mannan (BNP), Mr. Small Hussain Bengal (JP), Utt-11 (Mirpur-Pallabi) Karna Ahmed (AL), S A Khalq (BNP), Mr. Habibur Rahman (JP).

Directive

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law and order situation and press in the recovery of illegal arms, the chief adviser also asked the task force and the special team for recovery of illegal arms to gear up their activities to create a clean ground for the June 12 elections.

He also directed the Deputy Commissioners to review the licences of firearms issued earlier and take necessary steps in this regard.

Home Secretary Syed Rezaul Hayat apprised the chief adviser that a total of 1,286 illegal firearms and some 7,169 explosives had so far been recovered from different parts of the country.

He informed that 17,535 people had so far been arrested on charges of possessing illegal arms and explosives, murder, dacoity, extortion and other criminal activities. Of them, 815 have been arrested in arms-related cases.

The Chief Adviser also had detailed discussion with Education Secretary A H M Abdul Hye on the scarcity and high price of textbooks of Class VI and IX in the market.

The secretary apprised Rahman that an artificial crisis of these textbooks had been created due to the failure of the concerned publishing houses to fulfil their successive commitments to print and market the books on schedule.

In view of the situation, the education secretary said, the ministry was actively considering making the publication of all textbooks of Class VI and IX open to all publishers immediately.

Cabinet Secretary Muhammad Ayubur Rahman, Information Secretary Syed Amirul Mukul and Establishment Secretary Dr Shawkat Ali also met with the Chief Adviser and discussed different issues.

Pre-polls irregularities CEC asks judicial officials to be vigilant

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Mohammad Abu Hena yesterday asked the judicial officials to keep a vigilant eye on pre-election irregularities, reports UNB.

Electoral inquiry committees have been formed with judicial officials as people have confidence in them, he said while inaugurating a three-day workshop for judicial officials, organised by the Commission's Election Training Institute here.

The CEC directed the officials to inform the Election Commission of any pre-polls irregularity after an immediate investigation. In this regard, he told the judicial officials to apply their conscience in the light of the existing law and rules.

Abu Hena said all political parties should abide by the Election Code of Conduct to ensure a free, fair and neutral election.

"Adhering to the Code of Conduct will mean improving the law and order situation and creating a congenial atmosphere for the election," he added.

Election Commissioner Mushtaque Ahmed Chowdhury and Secretary of the Election Commission Secretariat Muhammad Faizur Razzak also spoke on the occasion.

Call to include farmers' demands in polls manifesto

Eleven peasants and farm labourers union yesterday urged political parties to include farmers' demands in their respective election manifesto to save the country's agro-economy from destruction, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, two persons received bullet injuries when two groups of musclemen clashed at Lalimata in the city yesterday afternoon.

The victims identified as Aminul Islam, 25 and Mostafizur Rahman, 35 were sent to the DMCH.

A minor boy was also injured when a bomb exploded at Katasur under Mohammadpur thana yesterday.

BNP leaders meet CEC

BNP leaders yesterday assured Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena that they would not give shelter to illegal arms holders and 'mavons' (hoodlums), reports UNB.

The delegation comprised M Shamsul Islam, Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia and Barrister Aminul Haque.

WP demands ban on religion in electioneering

The Workers Party yesterday demanded ban on the use of religion in electioneering steps to haul up illegal arms and specific policy about the bank loan defaulters, reports UNB.

The demands were placed before Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman during a meeting with the Workers Party leaders at the Tejgaon office yesterday afternoon, said a party press release.

In a memorandum submitted to Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman, the Workers Party said the caretaker government would have to take steps to hold a meaningful election.

The left party argued that the Code of Conduct prepared by the Election Commission was being violated from the very beginning and no steps had been taken to stop it.

JP interview

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Barisal division, the JP parliamentary board will meet incoming candidates from Chittagong and Sylhet division, the official added.

JP acting chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, who presided over the meeting of the board, told a group of journalists at the Banani office that the party is likely to complete the interviews within the scheduled time.

Mizan Chowdhury also said that the final list of candidates is likely to be announced on May 10, two days prior to the last date of submission of nomination papers for the coming general elections.

The party is expected to complete interviews of the nomination seekers by Thursday, after meeting the candidates from Dhaka division.

Talking to the journalists, Mizan Chowdhury said that the party demanded the release of its chairman H M Ershad on parole to exercise its constitutional rights, preside over the meeting of the parliamentary board and put forward its programme before the people.

The JP has also sent a letter to the Chief Advisor requesting him to grant an interview with them, he added. The senior JP leaders have also requested the Home Ministry to grant them permission to meet Ershad in jail to finalise the party's nomination list.

2 Juba Dal

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injuries at the Jessore General Hospital.

The Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal activists in protest damaged a number of houses and set fire to the house of a leader of a rival party.

Five persons were arrested by Kotwali police.

According to another report, Siddik Joarder, 26, an outlawed party activist, was shot dead by an unknown assailant at Saminashgachha of Keshabpur last night. Police recovered the body and sent it to Jessore Hospital for autopsy.

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Mohammad Abu Hena yesterday asked the judicial officials to keep a vigilant eye on pre-election irregularities, reports UNB.

In the northern districts of the country, students had to pay Tk 600 for a set of textbooks for class VI against their actual price of Tk 190 only.

In view of the situation, the Education Ministry is considering opening to all publishing houses immediately the publication of all textbooks of class VI and IX in the market.

The CEC directed the officials to inform the Election Commission of any pre-polls irregularity after an immediate investigation.

In this regard, he told the judicial officials to apply their conscience in the light of the existing law and rules.

Abu Hena said all political parties should abide by the Election Code of Conduct to ensure a free, fair and neutral election.

"Adhering to the Code of Conduct will mean improving the law and order situation and creating a congenial atmosphere for the election," he added.

Election Commissioner Mushtaque Ahmed Chowdhury and Secretary of the Election Commission Secretariat Muhammad Faizur Razzak also spoke on the occasion.

Check black money, terrorism: GF

By Staff Correspondent

Dr Kamal Hossain addressing a press conference in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

Check black money, terrorism: GF

By Staff Correspondent

Gano Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday urged the caretaker government to ensure strict control over the use of black money and to contain terrorism before the coming election.

Unless black money and terrorism are checked, the upcoming election may bring a 'dark future' for the nation, he said at a press conference in the city.

The big political parties lack morality in selecting candidates. Many leaders who had long been opposing a certain party had now joined that party, Dr Kamal pointed out.

He urged the radio and TV to play a "better role" in the society by airing political debates, voter awareness programmes and giving in-depth reports on political swindles.

Criticising the Tk 3 lakh limit on election expenses as a means to control flow of black money, he said, "an effective approach involves taking immediate measures to use the law and law enforcement agencies to identify and deal with black money at different strategic points."

According to Dr Kamal the strategic points are: imposition of a legal limit on expenses of political parties, maintenance of accounts of expenditure by the parties and filing of expenditure returns and disclosure of contributions received by the parties.

The press conference was also attended by party leaders Md. Golam (retd) Khalilur Rahman, Pankaj Bhattacharya, Ziaul Haq, MA Hakim and Mostafa Mohsin Mantu.

He met Gano Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain at his residence and formally joined the party.

Fifteen leaders and workers of different front organisations of Tongi BNP and Awami League also joined the Forum, party sources said.

The Radio and TV should also help creation of public opinion against use of arms, armed cadres and black money through its programmes.

Commenting on the prospect of her party's winning in the coming polls, she hoped that people would re-elect BNP.

The election manifesto of BNP would be announced soon, she said.

Replies to another question about the ultimate goal of politicians was to serve the country and the people and that the BNP, during its five years in power, had proved that anybody in the party could serve the people.

Replies to a question, she hoped that Alaudin's long political experience would strengthen the BNP and he would be able to serve the country under the banner of BNP.

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