

Students of 3 blacklisted private universities in uncertainty

No disciplinary action has yet been taken against the eight universities recommended for closure

CITY CORRESPONDENT

More than 3,000 students of the city's three private universities are in uncertainty over their academic career as the education ministry is dilly-dallying in taking disciplinary action against the eight errant private universities.

The three universities are Green University of Bangladesh, Central Women's University and America Bangladesh (AMBAN) University.

The rest are Queen's University, Comilla University, Southern University in Chittagong, Pundra University of Science and Technology in Bogra and BGC Trust University. Among these only Queen's University has stopped its academic activities.

Sahin Mahmud (not his real name), a BBA student of Green University, said he is feeling very anxious as a probe committee has recommended closure of his university. "My parents are also concerned about my career. We are all confused whether I could continue my studies in this institution or not," said a

frustrated Shahin.

A nine-member committee, headed by the chairman of University Grants Commission (UGC), evaluated the standard and performances of 52 private universities in the country and recommended the closure of eight institutions for violating the guidelines and rules.

The committee submitted its report to the prime minister on October 17 last year.

Students and guardians questioned why the government has not yet taken action to close down the universities after the submission of the report.

"The government should have taken action against the universities after receiving the recommendations," said a guardian whose daughter is studying at Central Women's University of Bangladesh. The student is totally frustrated about her studies.

"I didn't waste time and got admitted to another university which is not blacklisted," said a former student of AMBAN University at Farmgate.

When asked how do they continue their academic activities, Prof Dr M Yusuf Ali, vice-chancellor of Green University of Bangladesh, said: "We haven't yet received any letter from the government to stop our academic activities."

Sources said The Association of Private University of Bangladesh representing 10 to 12 institutions has been lobbying against the amended Private University Act. They want the removal of the UGC chairman to protect the errant universities from closure. However, officials of the association denied the allegation.

On November 2 last year, the education ministry formed a one-member judicial committee with a retired judge of the Supreme Court to probe the allegations against private universities as per provisions of the Private Universities Act.

Article 16(1) of the Act of 1998 provides for formation of a judicial probe body if there is any allegation against a private university.

The committee submitted its 43-page report on January 16 this year, excluding the BGC Trust University in Chittagong from the list. But it upheld the recommendation for closure of remaining seven institutions, sources at the education ministry said.

The judicial committee's allegations have already proved and all follow-up actions have been completed. So the government should take necessary action without delay, said Prof Dr M Asaduzzaman, the chairman of UGC.

"Though it has been a year since a high-powered committee submitted an evaluation report on the standard and performance of the private universities, the government is yet to act against the errant institutions," said a UGC official requesting anonymity.

However, a high official of education ministry said the report of judicial probe committee will be sent to the Prime Minister's Office for final review.



One of the universities in Dhaka recommended for closure.

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