

Creative system clicks

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those questions.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid thinks introducing the creative system in five new subjects coupled with several measures taken by his ministry helped gain the good results.

"A positive impact has been apparent in the examinations thanks to taking tests in the creative method," he said.

Echoing the minister, Chairman of Dhaka Education Board Prof Fahima Khatun said now the students are compelled to study textbooks as it is not possible to answer the questions without having thorough knowledge of the texts.

Similarly, the teachers are also giving emphasis on going through textbooks now as they have to make questions out of those books, she told The Daily Star.

"With the help of our upazila and district education officials we have ensured close monitoring on classroom activities and provided extensive training to the teachers which contributed greatly to this success," said Prof Fahima.

Besides, she said the students and guardians are now more conscious about their studies.

Chairman of Barisal Education Board Prof Dr Bimal Krishna Mazumder also gave the same view, saying the education boards paid more attention to the schools and conducted training of the teachers to make them efficient in teaching under the creative system.

"In the past students had to memorise large answers to questions but now they to have an idea about the entire text to answer," he told The Daily Star.

The teachers have also come out of the traditional attitude of evaluation of answer sheets when 60 marks out of hundred was understood as good marks and now they are liberal in evaluating the answer scripts, he added.

However, education ministry sources and board officials say there was a verbal instruction to the examiners to be more liberal in giving marks.

Prof Kundu Gopidas, chairman of Comilla Education Board, the board which has topped in terms of pass rate, told The Daily Star they have motivated the teachers to take special care in English and mathematics.

Last year, around 40 percent students flunked in mathematics, while 35 percent failed in English, he said, adding, "Taking this into consideration we called up all teachers and asked them to teach the students with extensive care so that they come out successful in these two subjects."

"To check whether the teachers are doing their job perfectly, we engaged school inspectors and upazila education officials to monitor their activities," he said, adding, that is why the rate of failed students came down to 10 and 12 percent respectively in mathematics and English.

Rajuk Uttara Model College Principal ASM Mushfiqur Rahman thinks distribution of textbooks in due time has

contributed to the good results as the students now get more time to study.

On the huge increase in the number of GPA-5 scorers in the past ten years, he said the grade of the fourth-optional subject is now counted which did not happen in the first two years.

The teachers are also examining the answer-scripts more liberally now, he observed.

CONCERN OVER COLLEGE ADMISSION

The big success in the SSC exams also causes concern for many as a large number of successful students now have to compete harder to enrol at reputed colleges.

There are 92,386 seats in government and around 3.7 lakh seats in private colleges across the country. In Dhaka, the number of colleges stands at 135 with 39,000 seats, said education ministry officials.

About three lakh students obtained between GPA-5 and GPA-4, while the number of seats in reputed colleges is nearly 40,000.

The education minister said it is true that there will be a pressure on the reputed colleges as there is a shortage of standard educational institutions in the country.

"We are making our efforts to ensure quality education at all institutions," Nahid added.

"But we have to consider that seats in many colleges in the rural areas remain unfilled as everyone wants to get admitted in the reputed colleges," he said, adding that last year some one lakh seats remained vacant in the colleges across the country.

Nayeem

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He also refused to talk to the reporters, when approached at his SC chamber yesterday.

President Zillur Rahman on May 11 appointed Justice Md Muzammel Hossain, a senior Appellate Division judge but junior to Justice Nayeem, as the 20th chief justice of the country.

The first time Justice Nayeem's seniority was ignored was in appointment of outgoing Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque in September last year.

The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), dominated by pro-BNP lawyers, at an urgent general meeting yesterday strongly protested the appointment of the new chief justice, and decided not to offer felicitations to him.

SCBA President Khandker Mahbub Hossain told the meeting that they will, however, accord farewell to Justice Khairul Haque.

Some senior counsels yesterday told The Daily Star that this is the first time in the history of judiciary that an SC judge resigned in protest against violation of seniority in appointment of chief justice.

Senior jurist barrister Rafique-ul Huq, after a meeting with Justice Abu Nayeem at his SC chamber, told The Daily Star that he [Nayeem] stepped down as he was passed over twice in appointment of chief justice.

He said although Justice Shah Abu Nayeem is younger brother of BNP leader Brig (ret'd) ASM Hannan Shah, the government could have appointed him as chief justice.

There is no possibility of his being the chief of the next caretaker government following the SC verdict on 13th amendment to the constitution, he added.

Rafique-ul Huq said the SC in that verdict opined for excluding judges from the caretaker government.

Eminent jurist barrister Rokanuddin Mahmud and Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told The Daily Star that a number of SC judges were passed over in the past, but none of them protested.

The president of the republic appointed the new chief justice as per constitutional provisions and there is no violation of law in the appointment, Rokanuddin Mahmud said.

The attorney general said Justice Shah Abu Nayeem has created a political issue for pro-BNP lawyers by resigning from the office.

Justice Shah Abu Nayeem did not take part in the judicial work for over seven months, although the SC has given historical verdicts in a number of cases in this period, he added.

On April 25, Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque in a letter termed Justice Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman's keeping himself away from judicial work is seriously contemptuous of the chief justice, sources said.

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Mega power

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mentioned Aziz adding, these projects would be implemented on schedule and perhaps even before.

Being the lowest bidder, Summit won the tenders for the projects back in October-November last year.

Presently the country's load shedding is hovering between 1,000MW and 1,500MW.

Besides, North-West Power Generation Company, an enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board, also inked a power deal yesterday with Spanish company Isolux Ingenieria SA to generate an additional 150MW of electricity in Khulna within next two years.

The total cost of the Khulna plant is estimated at Tk 15,422.37 million.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith, prime minister's Energy Adviser Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, US Ambassador to Bangladesh James F Moriarty, among others, were present at the signing ceremony.

82pc pass SSC

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creative question method in five new subjects, training to teachers and proper monitoring helped students achieve good results.

A total of 2,31,269 examinees under 10 education boards failed this year.

About 13.07 lakh students from 26,225 institutions appeared in this year's SSC and equivalent examinations and of them, 10.75 lakh have passed. The pass rate for boys and girls are 83.76 and 80.76 respectively.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid officially announced the results at a press conference at the ministry yesterday around 1:30pm. Earlier, he handed over the results to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina around 11:00am.

Apart from the schools, the SSC results were also made available on the education board website and via SMS on mobile phones.

Comilla Board has secured the top position among all the 10 education boards with a pass rate of 85.85 percent while Dinajpur the lowest position with 77.48 percent success rate.

In Dhaka board, Rajuk Uttara Model High School and College topped the list of 20 best institutions for the second consecutive time.

Viqarunnisa Noon School, Ideal School and College, Motijheel, and Dhaka Residential Model College ranked second, third and fourth respectively position wise based on five academic standards.

The five criteria are: the number of students registered with a school, percentage of regular students among those registered, percentage of successful students, the number of students who scored GPA-5, and the average GPA of an institution.

The results under Madrasa Board, which has been dominating the success chart for the last few years, came down to fourth position this year. The pass rate in this board is 83.23 percent with the number of GPA-5 achievers dropping to 12,756 from last year's 20,755.

On the other hand, the pass rate of Technical Education Board is 81.37 percent with a significant rise in the number of top graders. Some 1,122 students got GPA-5 against last year's 72.

Six out of eight centres abroad saw cent percent success with 59 out of total 246 students achieving the highest grade.

Eight out of the 12 cadet colleges in the country secured 100 percent pass

TOP SCHOOLS

DHAKA EDUCATION BOARD

Rajuk Uttara Model School and College
Viqarunnisa Noon School
Ideal School and College, Motijheel

RAJSHAHI EDUCATION BOARD

Pabna Cadet College
Joypurhat Girls Cadet College
Bogra Govt Girls High School

COMILLA EDUCATION BOARD

Comilla Zilla School
Feni Girls Cadet College
Comilla Cadet College

JESSORE EDUCATION BOARD

Jhenidah Cadet College
Police Line Secondary School
Sheikh Akizuddin High School

CHITTAGONG EDUCATION BOARD

Fauzdarhat Cadet College
Collegiate School
Ispahani Public School

BARISAL EDUCATION BOARD

Barisal Cadet College
Barisal Zilla School
Barisal Govt Girls High School

SYLHET EDUCATION BOARD

Sylhet Cadet College
Blue Bird High School, Sylhet
Sylhet Govt Pilot High School

DINAJPUR EDUCATION BOARD

Rangpur Cadet College
Cantonment Public School and College,
Rangpur
Amena-Baki Residential Model School,
Dinajpur

while 555 of the total 560 students of the colleges have scored GPA-5 this year, says a press release of Inter-Services Public Relations.

Students of science group have marked a major progress with 90.76 percent pass rate while the rate is 74.19 percent for humanities group and 86.37 for commerce group.

Like other years, schools in urban areas, especially in metropolitan cities, dominated the GPA-5 category and 100 percent pass record.

PRESS CONFERENCE
At the press conference, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said this year's pass rate is the highest in the history of the country's

secondary education. The number of students increased while the number of students failed and institutions with zero pass rates decreased, which is a positive achievement for the education sector.

Introduction of creative questioning method has also put a positive impact on the results. The method would help bring a qualitative change in the education system of the country, he said, adding that the trend of schools of rural areas lagging behind the urban ones has started to change.

About Madrasa results he said although the result in madrasa stream slightly dropped down, it was not much behind compared to the national average.

Verdict

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fatwa as the SC verdict termed it legal.

"It's an extremely positive verdict," former caretaker government adviser Sultana Kamal tells The Daily Star.

But women's rights activist Maleka Begum said: "Regardless of what the full verdict says, the first part, which terms fatwa legal, will undoubtedly have a negative impact."

"Following this verdict I hope Imams and other Islamic professionals who normally give fatwa will be more aware and the torture in its name will scale down significantly," said Abdullah Maruf, one of the five Islamic scholars who requested the SC to cancel a High Court verdict that declared fatwa illegal.

Sultana Kamal, however, said there are confusions on the definition of "properly educated persons," who can issue fatwa, and the "religious matters," based on which fatwa can be given.

"But we're happy that there are safeguards in the verdict which says that fatwa cannot be issued to violate rights or harm reputation or dignity of any person, which is covered by the law," said Sultana, executive director of Ain o Salish Kendra.

But much of the success will depend on its implementation by the law enforcers, she observed.

Maruf suggested the government specify the eligibility of the scholars to deliver fatwa in line with the apex court judgement. Saying their opinions to the SC have been reflected in the verdict, he opined that anyone misusing fatwa should be immediately arrested.

Also hailed the verdict is Dhaka University Vice-chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique. According to him, the judgment will definitely reduce punishments and other brutality in the name of fatwa.

Karmojibi Nari founding President Shirin Akhter and general secretary Sharmin Kabir in a statement expressed satisfaction over the verdict but said everyone needs to be vigilant so that none can misuse the fatwa to resort to violence against women.

"The government must ensure the verdict will be implemented accordingly," the statement read.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, believes scopes of misusing fatwa remains, which could increase violence against women.

"Although it [the verdict] says that fatwa cannot be forced, in reality, it is being forced," she said, adding that this will be fuelled by the fact that many people will not read the full verdict; all they will see is that fatwa has been declared legal.

Maleka Begum fears that things will become worse for women now that fatwa has been declared legal.

Undoubtedly, people who mean to misuse it will go on to misuse it, she says, for we live in such a country where even the constitution is violated.

"It would have been better had the court specified the cases where fatwa would not be allowed," she notes.

No visitors

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press secretary, briefed reporters after the meeting.

Previously, the secretariat was closed to the visitors on Thursday.

As the prime minister holds the cabinet meeting on Monday, the law enforcement agencies remain very busy to ensure foolproof security for her and other cabinet members and it is difficult for them to provide security of the visitors.

"So the cabinet fixed Monday to be non-visitors' day," Azad said.

Around 2,000 visitors come to the building every day.

Yesterday's meeting also approved a proposal on management, conservation and collection of fish in the Bay of Bengal, allowing maximum of 30 trawlers for fishing.

It also approved sending a Bangladesh delegation to Vietnam for signing a Memorandum of Understanding to import rice from the country.

Appointment of SEC boss

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The minister said the appointment may be made next Sunday.

On April 30, after publishing the probe committee report on the share market scam, Muhith said the SEC would get a new chairman in a couple of days.

He yesterday said the appointment could not yet be made for some unavoidable reasons.

The minister said the government has to seek out a person suitable for the post. "The prime minister will go abroad on May 15, and I hope the appointment of new SEC chairman would be made before that."

The government had selected a person for the post but allegations of irregularities were raised against him in a Bangladesh Bank report, he said. So, the appointment was cancelled.

Meanwhile, the Banking Division of the finance ministry forced two SEC members to resign when Muhith was abroad.

The minister at yesterday's briefing also said some new members will be appointed to those positions.

The government will continue taking measures to regain the confidence of investors of the share market, he noted.

The anti-corruption commission has been requested to

investigate the irregularities mentioned in the probe report.

National Board of Revenue has been working to see whether the persons named in the report pay income tax regularly.

The NBR has already asked banks to provide it with the statements of transactions of the bank accounts of 15 people including the SEC chairman.

The minister, however, expressed dissatisfaction over publishing the names in the media and said, "I am surprised how these became public. The intelligence unit is behind this. This practice should be stopped."

Prof Yunus resigns

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my colleagues and our 80 lakh members, and owners of the bank, are not subjected to any difficulty in discharging their responsibilities."

"Since the board of Grameen Bank is my appointing authority, it may take appropriate steps," he said.

His resignation is the culmination of months of torment inflicted upon him through propaganda by government high-ups and a section of the media, particularly after a Norwegian television documentary accused him of mishandling aid fund.

Although the issue dates back to 1998 and was settled amicably, his opponents seized the opportunity to launch an all-out attack on him.

In the statement, Prof Yunus also said he has still not received the copy of the Supreme Court's full order that rejected appeals he and nine directors of Grameen Bank filed, challenging the central bank's order removing him as Grameen managing director.

"I hope Grameen Bank will continue to operate maintaining its independence and character under the Grameen Bank ordinance and move towards even greater success," he said.

On March 2, Bangladesh Bank through a letter removed the Nobel Prize winner from the post of managing director, on claims that Yunus was holding on to his post way past his retirement age.

The central bank move triggered a legal battle but Prof Yunus lost in courts. His review petition was turned down by the Supreme Court, ending his glimmering hopes to remain in the bank he founded three decades ago.

Before Prof Yunus made his resignation public, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said the deputy managing director of Grameen Bank is to act as the managing

director until a committee finds his successor.

He said they would look for other arrangements if the deputy managing director refuses to take over the charge. He said finding another managing director could take three months.

Muhith claimed they want a respectable transition of leadership to the new managing director. Measures will be taken for a dignified transition of the bank's helmsmanship from the nation's only Nobel laureate, who is the pride of the country.

"We will determine the way of transition after discussing it with him [Prof Yunus]," the finance minister told journalist at his secretariat office yesterday after formally publishing on a website the government review committee report on Grameen Bank.

He said after the Supreme Court's rejection of Prof Yunus' petition, future steps regarding Grameen Bank would be taken after consulting legal experts.

The bank has 22,000 employees across the country and serves four crore people, mostly poor.

After questions were raised about the use of a Norwegian fund by Grameen Bank, the government formed the review committee led by Prof AK Monowar Uddin Ahmed of Dhaka University Economics Department on January 11. The committee submitted its report to Muhith on April 24.

The finance ministry has been published without any editing, which is available at www.mof.gov.bd

On the demand of Grameen Bank staff to appoint Prof Yunus as the chairman of the bank for a smooth transition in leadership, Muhith said it is not acceptable.

He added the government appointed the present chairman following procedures

and he will continue in his position.

Replying to a query, the minister said Prof Yunus is the founder of the bank and the government never exerted any control over him.

Referring to Prof Yunus' statement that Grameen Bank is not like other state-run banks, the finance minister said, "I differ with him on this point."

He said Grameen Bank is completely a government bank, as it was established through a government ordinance.

The finance minister said they respect and honour Prof Yunus like all others in the country. "After the High Court rejected his petition, Prof Yunus continued to attend office, but we did not say anything as he is an honourable person."

Since he was the managing director it will take time for him to get all his papers and documents out of his office, Muhith said.

Khaleda

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government.

Former prime minister Khaleda is scheduled to meet with political leaders and government officials in the UK and the USA during her tour.

In London, she will meet her elder son Tarique Rahman.

After staying for one week in London, she will leave for the USA on May 21.

The BNP chairperson will stay in the USA for about a week and is scheduled to return home on May 29.

BNP Vice-chairman Shamsur Mobin Chowdhury, Khaleda's advisers Osman Faruq, Sabihuddin Ahmed and Abdul Awal Mintoo, her Press Secretary Maruf Kamal Khan, Special Assistant Shimul Biswas and journalists Shafiq Rehman, Mushfiqul Fazal Ansari and Nuruddin Ahmed will accompany the opposition leader.