

Lessons on democracy, election in textbooks

EC seeks inclusion in books for class VI-X

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The Election Commission wants the education ministry to introduce new chapters on the election system and democracy in the textbooks for class-VI-X.

It also wants that similar chapters be included in the teacher's training courses.

Currently, there is a separate chapter on election and democracy in the textbooks of class-IX and X. Besides, there are some paragraphs on elections in the textbooks of class-VII and VIII.

But now the EC wants similar chapters in the textbooks of all classes from VI to X so that students can get a better idea about the importance of election, voting rights and democracy, said EC officials.

However, education and election experts say it is not necessary for children to acquire knowledge on political issues at such an early age.

Talking to this newspaper, EC officials said they have already sent a letter to the education ministry, expressing their wish that the ministry includes the chapters. An Education Committee, formed a four-member committee led by one of its deputy secretaries in this regard.

China admonishes US for visit to India-China border

REUTERS, Beijing

China admonished the United States yesterday for sending its ambassador in India to a contested stretch of land on the India-China border, warning that a third party's meddling would only complicate the dispute between Beijing and New Delhi.

The China claims more than 90,000 sq km (35,000 sq miles) of territory disputed by India in the eastern sector of the Himalayas. Much of that forms the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, which China calls South Tibet.

US Ambassador to India Richard Verma posted photos on his Twitter account on Oct 21 of his recent trip to Arunachal Pradesh, thanking Indian officials for their "warm hospitality" in calling the region a "magical place".

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said China was "firmly opposed" to the US diplomat's actions, which he said were "not in line with the equal peace and tranquility of the China-India border region".

"Any responsible third party should respect efforts by China and India to seek peaceful and stable relations through dialogue and confidence building," Lu told reporters briefing. "We urge the United States to stop getting involved in the China-India territorial dispute and do more to benefit this region's peace and stability."

China's Ministry of External Affairs described Verma's visit as "infringing on China's territorial integrity". The US ambassador visited Arunachal Pradesh, a state which is an integral part of the country to which he is accredited. MEA spokesman Vikas Swarup said in response to the Chinese statement. No comment was available from the US Embassy in New Delhi.

Disagreement between nuclear-armed China and India over parts of their 3,500-km (2,175-mile) border led to a brief war in 1962. The countries have moved to control the dispute, but repeated rounds of talks have failed to make much progress.

Nur, ex-Rab

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pleaded not guilty in writing. The court fixed October 31 for the other accused to defend themselves.

On April 27, 2014, Narayanangi paria major Nazrul Islam and his three associates and driver were abducted by criminals from Fattullah area.

At the same time, senior lawyer at the District Judge's Court Chandra Kumar said his driver were also abducted on their way to the capital.

Three days after their abduction, bodies of six men, including those of Nazrul and Chandan, were recovered from the Shiladaha. The following day, the body of Nazrul's car driver Jahangir was recovered from the river.

"We've already started work. After scrutinising necessary documents and conducting an elaborate research, we will submit a report to the election commissioners," said Farhad Ahmad Khan, head of the committee.

EC's Additional Secretary Mubshir Rahman said, "We want to make children aware of the country's electoral system, importance of election in democracy and other related issues."

About this initiative, National Curriculum and Textbook Board Member (Curriculum) Prof Muzossamman said they received a letter from the EC regarding the issue.

"We'll consider it during revision of curriculum next year," he told The Daily Star.

More discussions with stakeholders and experts are required to determine whether it [such chapters] should be included in secondary level textbooks," he added.

Besides, the commission also wants that similar chapters be included in the curricula of different training programmes of Primary Training Institute (PTI), National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM) and BED (professional) courses.

"We already have the curricula of these training programmes from the authorities concerned. Now we are studying those, and working on how we can include new chapters there," said Farhad Hossain, a member of the committee and also a senior assistant secretary of the EC.

About the initiative, eminent child education expert Prof Manzoor Ahmed said, "A new trend has emerged in our country that we incorporate all the issues in textbooks. Our children are already overburdened."

The government could take up separate projects or programmes to make children aware of democracy and elections instead of incorporating the issues in textbooks, he viewed.

Noted election and local government expert Tofiq Ahmed is of the opinion that there is no need to include chapters on elections in children's textbooks, as it is absolutely political issue.

"There are many issues which we need to teach children. For example, we should teach them how to be a good citizen with values. We can teach them about our history, culture and the Liberation War. Children should not be overburdened with such political issues," he told The Daily Star.

Israel's next Gaza war will be 'last': minister

AFP, Jerusalem

Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman said yesterday that Israel's next war with Gaza militants would be their last "because we will completely destroy them," but added he remains committed to a two-state solution.

Lieberman, speaking in an interview with Palestinian newspaper Al-Quds, said however that he did not want another war in Gaza, which would be the fourth since 2008.

The outspoken former foreign minister urged Palestinians to pressure Hamas, the Islamist movement that runs the Gaza Strip, to "stop your crazy policies."

"As minister of defence, I would like to clarify that we have no intention of starting a new war against our neighbours in the Gaza Strip or the West Bank, Lebanon or Syria," he told the Jerusalem-based newspaper.

"But in Gaza, like the Iranians, they intend to eliminate the state of Israel... If they impose the next war on Israel, it will be their last. I would like to emphasise again: it is not the next war, it's the last war because we will completely destroy them."

Lieberman is part of what is seen as the most right-wing government in Israeli history, with several prom-

inent members of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition openly opposing a Palestinian state.

But while he lives in a West Bank settlement and is known as a security-minded hardliner, Lieberman believes in a two-state solution to the conflict based on land swaps.

He reiterated that position in the interview, saying he sees the main settlement blocks in the occupied West Bank remaining part of Israel under a final peace deal.

He raised the possibility of trading Arab areas of Israel on the edge of the northern West Bank, such as the city of Umm al-Fahm, in exchange for settlements.

Settlements have long been part of proposals to resolve the decades-old conflict, but the two sides remain far apart on issues such as the status of Jerusalem and the return of Palestinian refugees.

Peace efforts have been at a complete standstill since a US-led initiative collapsed in April 2014.

"Today, I think the majority of our people do not believe it is possible to reach any agreement regarding the final status solution, and the same with the Palestinians," said Lieberman.

Quader pledges

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"We want to achieve victory in the next election by organising the grassroots," he said, adding the fight against communalism and extremism will continue as per the commitment made at the council.

Hassina, also the prime minister, on Sunday asked her party colleagues to meet on Sunday to prepare for the next general elections.

Quader, also minister for road, transport and bridges, expressed his gratitude to Hassina, saying he had achieved the best recognition in his political life. "I'm grateful to the Awami League president."

He also said, "If I fail to perform my duties, it'll be dishonouring the trust of the Awami League president."

Talking about the council, he said it was Syed Ashraful Islam, immediate past general secretary, who proposed his name for the position. "It's a big surprise and it's the magical power of Sheikh Hassina's leadership."

Thanking his predecessor, he said the experience of Syed Ashraf will help him perform his duties properly.

Responding to a query, Quader said there might be differences of opinions in the party. But, he said, no one can do anything without Hassina's permission as "she is the symbol of the party's unity."

Quader said the full committee of the party would be declared within a week. The council announced names of 21 office

bearers out of 81.

SYED ASHRAF ON LEAVE!

Outgoing Awami League general secretary and Public Administration Minister Syed Ashraful Islam is going to London for about two weeks.

He has applied for a 15-day leave to Prime Minister Sheikh Hassina as his wife is unwell in London, said a close aide of the minister. He will leave Dhaka for London on Friday.

Ashraf declined to talk to the media after the weekly cabinet meeting at the secretariat yesterday, a day after the AL National Council where Obaidul Quader was elected new party general secretary.

Rab picks

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Police Station on the same day, accusing Babu and some unnamed men of the attack.

The Rab official said during primary interrogation Babu admitted that he harassed and beat the girls for seeking help from students.

OC Anwar Hossain of Shah Ali Police Station said the Rab handed the arrestee over to them yesterday afternoon. Police would produce him before a court today.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, victims' father said his daughters were yet to resume classes as they were recovering from injuries.

He feared the two might be attacked again by Babu's associates.



An Indian resident of Gajanso border village points out damage to property from cross-border firing in Kanachak sector, about 25km from Jammu, yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

Tension again

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"The boy and the BSF soldier died during the intense exchange of small arms fire and mortars throughout the night along the border," Rana said.

Six other civilians were also injured during the exchange, said another Indian police officer speaking on condition of anonymity.

Relations between the two countries have plummeted in recent months, with India blaming Pakistani militants for a raid on an army base in its part of disputed Kashmir in September that killed 19 soldiers.

India later said it launched "surgical strikes" across the border in Pakistan on militant targets, prompting fury from Pakistan which denied the raids took place.

Indian and Pakistani troops regularly exchange fire across their de-facto border in Kashmir, but rarely send ground troops over the line.

The overnight incident comes days after Indian border security forces said they shot dead seven Pakistani soldiers in retaliation for a ceasefire violation, with Pakistan refusing the claims.

Muslim-majority Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan, but claimed in full by both, since the two countries gained independence from Britain in 1947.

Since 1989 several rebel groups have been fighting Indian forces deployed in the region, seeking independence or a merger of the territory with Pakistan.

North Korea lashes out at threat of more sanctions

AP, Pyongyang

North Korean officials yesterday lashed out at efforts in the United Nations to strengthen sanctions following the North's latest missile launches and nuclear test in September.

The officials told an Associated Press Television crew in Pyongyang that sanctions targeting the nuclear and missile tests are "criminal documents" and accused the United States of orchestrating the condemnation.

The United Nations has imposed sanctions on North Korea since 2006 for its nuclear tests and rocket launches. Last week, the UN Security Council called on members to "redouble their sanction efforts."

"The sanction resolutions of the UN Security Council are illegal criminal documents," Pang Kwang Hyok, vice director of the department of international organizations at the North Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told the AP TV crew in Pyongyang. The North's mission to the UN issued a similar statement that was distributed by North Korea state media yesterday.

These resolutions determined that our nuclear tests and satellite launches pose threats to international peace and security, but then the problem is why has the UN Security Council taken such actions with the nuclear tests, saying that with the nuclear tests and satellite launches conducted by other countries?" Pang said.

The issue has intensified since the United States and South Korea said they detected two failed North Korean missile launches this month, possibly of Musudan intermediate-range ballistic missiles.

The UN's most powerful body, in a statement approved last week by its 15 members, deplored all North Korean missile tests, saying they contribute to the country's "development of nuclear weapons delivery systems and increase tension."

Robot judges

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look through that information and make its own decision - which lined up with those made by Europe's most senior judges in almost every case.

The researchers say that the computer judge isn't likely to take the place of judges any time soon. But it could be used to help them out - prioritising cases that are clearly important or need to be heard, for instance.

Lead researcher Dr Nikolaos Aletras, from University College London, said: "We don't see AI replacing judges or lawyers, but we think they'd find it useful for rapidly identifying patterns in cases that lead to certain outcomes.

"It could also be a valuable tool for highlighting which cases are most likely to be violations of the European Convention on Human Rights."

The researchers found during the creation of the programme that the European

Court of Human Rights judges tended to look more at non-legal factors than the strictly legal arguments made in the case. In fact, that puts the judges in the camp of "realists" rather than "formalists" and fits with other courts like the US Supreme Court.

The developers were able to use information like that to find that the court's decisions relied largely on the kind of language used, as well as what topics were mentioned in the court texts.

Co-author Dr Dimitrios Baratsanakis, a law lecturer from the University of Sheffield, said: "The study, which is the first of its kind, corroborates the findings of other empirical work on the determinants of reasoning performed by high level courts.

"It should be further pursued and refined, through the systematic examination of more data."

The findings are published in the journal PeerJ Computer Science.

Wave of strikes

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He said those strikes had tunnels 136 IS fighting positions, 18 trucks and 26 car bombs.

The offensive, launched on October 17, aims to retake towns and villages surrounding Mosul before elite troops will breach the city and engage die-hard jihadists in street-to-street fighting.

On the eastern side of Mosul, federal troops were battling IS yesterday in Qaraqosh, which used to be the largest Christian town in the country.

Army forces entered the town for the third day running but armoured convoys deployed around it were met with shelling from inside, an AFP correspondent reported.

Federal forces also scored gains on the southern front, where they have been making quick progress, taking one village after another as they work their way up the Tigris Valley.

On the northern front, Kurdish peshmarga forces were closing in on the IS-held town of Bashiqa.

Turkey, which has a base in the area, said Sunday it had provided artillery support following a request from the peshmarga.

The presence of Turkish troops on Iraqi soil is deeply unpopular in Baghdad and the Joint Operations Command yesterday vehemently denied any Turkish participation.

But AFP reporters near Bashiqa said artillery fire coming from the Turkish base had been visible on several occasions since the start of operations a week ago.

While an increasingly pragmatic IS has tended in recent months to relinquish some of its positions to avoid taking too many casualties, IS officials said the group was mounting a spirited defence of Mosul.

সূত্র নং-১০/১১৮/ তারিখঃ ১৭-১০-২০১৬ তারিখে দৈনিক ইত্তেহাদ ও The Daily Star পত্রিকায় ব্যবসায়িক সূত্র নং-১০/১১৮/২৫৬ তারিখঃ ১৬ অক্টোবর ২০১৬ মোতাবেক প্রচারিত বিজ্ঞাপন অনুযায়ী সকরকারী অফিসার পদে নিয়োগের ব্যাক ২৮-১০-২০১৬ তারিখে অনুষ্ঠিত লিখিত পরীক্ষার ফলাফল প্রকাশ করা হইবে।

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