

Two committees formed to review textbooks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has formed two committees comprising country's noted educationists to review the secondary-level textbooks and modify some to make them easier and more readable.

The committees were formed based on recommendations made at a workshop involving eminent academicians on the standard of secondary education in Cox's Bazar on November 25 and 26 last year, said an official order issued by the education ministry on Wednesday.

At the workshop, the educationists came up with a 15-point recommendation.

According to the ministry's official order, one committee will review the secondary-level curriculum developed in 2012 and come up with a report to make textbooks of different classes further readable.

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, founder and chief executive of Bishwo Shahitto Kendro, Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam, former teacher of Dhaka University (DU), Manzoor Ahmed, professor emeritus of Brac University, Prof Hosne Ara Begum, director of Institute of Education and Research of DU, and Prof Mahabubur Rahman, chairman of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board, Dhaka, are among the members of the 10-member committee.

The committee will submit its report in 60 working days, said the official order. It can invite subject-based teachers and experts to its meeting.

Another committee, which also has 10 members, will select some textbooks of class-IX and -X and modify those to make those easier and more readable.

For modification of the books, it will devise a "time-bound action plan" so that the new books could reach all educational institutions before January 1, 2018. These textbooks will be approved by National Curriculum Coordination Committee (NCCC).

The members of the committee include noted academician and writer Prof Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, DU Pro Vice Chancellor (administration) Prof Mohammad Akhtaruzzaman, DU Prof MM Akash, Buet Prof Mohammad Kaikobad, head teacher Shyamoli Nasrin Chowdhury of Uddipan School, and Director General of Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education Prof SM Wahiduzzaman.

Prof Narayan Chandra Saha, chairman of National Curriculum and Textbook Board, is member of both the committees which will be coordinated by Chowdhury Mufad Ahmed, additional secretary of secondary and higher secondary division of education ministry.

50 hurt as locals, police clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Nearly 50 people were injured in a clash between police and locals during a hartal over a demand for nationalisation of a college in Khansama upazila yesterday.

Tensions were already running high in the area since Saturday, after police attested seven people and detained around 50 others ahead of yesterday's shutdown called by Khansama Degree College Jatiyakaran Bastobayon Committee.

The clash happened in front of Khansama Police Station around 12:00noon when locals brought out a procession and marched towards the police station to demand the release of those picked up the previous evening.

The injured were admitted to Khansama Upazila Health Complex, police said.

During the clash, police fired rubber bullets and tear gas canisters, although most injuries were caused by beating, said locals.

Additional police forces were called in from neighbouring upazilas around 2:30pm to calm the situation. Two people were arrested from the spot at the time, they added.

Abdul Matin, officer-in-charge of Khansama Police Station, confirmed reporters about Saturday's arrests.

Nearly 40 bullets and tear gas canisters were fired during the clash, he said.

After the clash, law enforcers launched a massive drive and picked up around 50 people from nearby homes, creating panic in the area, locals alleged.

They added police also barred journalists from entering the area, but the OC denied this.

The five arrested on Saturday are among those who called the 6:00am-2:00pm hartal.

Locals under the banner of Khansama Degree College Jatiyakaran Bastobayon Committee had been protesting for the last couple of months, demanding nationalisation of Khansama Degree College.

Yesterday's programme was peaceful until police swung into action opening fire and beating the demonstrators, locals claimed.

In protest of the police action, demonstrators called a fresh hartal for today from 6:00am to 2:00pm. They also vowed to continue their protests until their demand is met.

Anisur Rahman, principal of Khansama Degree College, said the government did not nationalise the college though it met all the necessary criteria. It is also located in the upazila headquarters.

Beware, looks

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member accompanies them.

The person distracts his target by making comments like "sit properly", "please mind your leg" or "sit properly". At any convenient moment, he or his accomplice opens the zip or cuts the laptop bag and puts the laptop into their bag.

Rajib Al Masud, additional deputy commissioner (ADC) of Detective Branch of police, spoke about this trick of stealing laptops yesterday after primarily interrogating six members of a gang arrested in the last two days.

The gang also used motorbikes to snatch laptops from passengers of rickshaws and pedestrians.

They sold the stolen laptops online for prices between Tk 8,000 and Tk 20,000.

"We have made the arrests conducting drives in the city's Mirpur, Paltan and Panthapath areas in the last 48 hours until early yesterday," Rajib told The Daily Star.

He added that they have recovered 90 laptops from their possession and

would return those to the real owners after proper verification.

The police identified the arrestees as Khalil Gazi, Abul Kalam, Emdadul Haq, Hasibur Rahman Shuvro, Monir Bepari and Mushfiqur Rahman.

Detectives first arrested Khalil, Kalam and Emdadul in Mirpur area. Following information gleaned from them, the law enforcers arrested their ringleader Monir.

"Monir admitted that after snatching a laptop they give it to Shuvro, who sells it online," said Abdul Baten, joint commissioner of DB, while addressing a press briefing at the media and community centre of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Baten also said Mushfiqur is the owner of an electronics shop in Bashundhara City on Panthapath where he also used to sell the comparatively new stolen laptops.

The detective said they suspect the gang has more members and they are conducting drives in different areas to arrest them.

No changes

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At the bank's board meeting on Thursday, changes were made to the posts of the bank's chairman, managing director, heads of various committees and chief of the Islami Bank Foundation.

Arastoo Khan, a former bureaucrat and representative of Armada Spinning Mills Limited that owns 2 percent stakes in Islami Bank, was elected chairman of the bank.

The latest development didn't have any negative impact on the bank's share price. Each share of the bank, listed on the stockmarket in 1985, traded between Tk 30 and Tk 33 before closing at Tk 30.6 up by Tk 0.5 on Dhaka Stock Exchange yesterday, the first day of trading after the reshuffle.

On the reshuffle in the bank, he said, this is only a change in the management, not in the fundamental principles. "Changes can happen any time -- in the state, in the government and in the cabinet."

He said the bank will strictly follow the sharia law in its core banking operations.

"Fundamental principles will never change," he said.

The corporate social responsibility or CSR activities will also continue. The management and the board want to make sure that the money for the CSR or any other fund falls into the right hands, Arastoo said.

"No inappropriate or improper use of money for the CSR will be tolerated... we will not allow any inappropriate use of CSR money."

The size and profitability rate of Islami Bank reflect people's trust in the bank, he said, citing the bank's last year's profit of Tk 2,003 crore.

The new board has already assured its employees that their jobs are secured. But it would take the matter of "any inappropriate diversion of

resources very seriously", he asserted.

The new chairman said the bank will now follow "merit-based recruitment".

The bank is open to all. If people of other religions are willing to work at the bank, they can sit for recruitment tests, he said.

"We will hire them if they are meritorious and qualified."

Replying to a query, Arastoo said it's true that many don't know about Armada Spinning Mills Limited.

"It's a spinning mill with 36,000 spindles and it will continue to expand its production capacity," he said.

Asked about the company's financiers, Arastoo said he would share the details later.

Syed Ahsanul Alam, vice chairman of the bank, said the reshuffle in the bank board was aimed at freeing the first generation bank from the perception that it practised "political Islam".

He said the previous board had problems relating to "set up" and "mindset". "Political Islam" was practised within the organisation and there was an attempt to cash in on Islam.

"The question is not whether the previous boards were good or bad... they were good, but they had to face criticism... they were not respected. That's why the changes were brought," he said at the briefing.

The bank's new board is comprised of 16 members. Seven of them come from some little-known companies that own more than 12 percent stakes in the bank.

The companies include Platinum Endeavours Limited, Paradise International Limited, BLU International Limited, ABC Ventures Limited, Grand Business Limited, and Excel Dyeing and Printing Limited.

Asked whether S Alam Group has ties with these new companies, Ahsanul said the Group has no stakes in the firms.

BNP men not allowed

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election, which the BNP and some other parties boycotted.

The BNP observes the day as "democracy killing day".

POLICE OBSTRUCTIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

In Barisal, police foiled the rally organised by the district BNP and its front organisations, said Ebaydul Hoque Chan, president of the district (north) BNP.

After a meeting at the party office, leaders and workers tried to bring out a procession but police snatched their banners and stopped them from coming out of the office, he alleged.

Contacted, Barisal Metropolitan Police Commissioner (south) Golam Rouf Khan said, "We requested them not to bring out any procession. But as they [the BNP men] tried to block the city road ignoring the call, police foiled it."

Pirojpur BNP alleged they could not hold any programme as they were not allowed to take to the streets. Police also locked their office.

Some BNP men were inside the party office all day. Around 5:00pm some policemen asked them to come out, saying they had orders to lock it up, alleged Monirul Islam, co-convenor of the district Jubo Dal, a pro-BNP youth body.

Masumur Rahman Biswas, officer-in-charge of Pirojpur Sadar Police Station, denied the allegation.

In Rajshahi, a large contingent of law enforcers took position before the BNP office at Malopara and they did not allow the BNP and its front organisations to hold any programme.

Tofazzal Hossain Topu, president of the district BNP, alleged the police commissioner asked him not to bring out any procession.

Party men then tried to bring out processions in Kapasia and Kharkhari areas, but police stopped them, he said.

Iftekhar Alam, an assistant commissioner of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, said they created no obstruction and that they were simply maintaining law and order in front of the BNP office.

In Kurigram, BNP activists went to the party office in the morning. But

policemen took position before the office and stopped the party men from coming out for a procession, said Shohel Hosnine Kaykobad, joint secretary of the district BNP.

Rawshan Kabir, inspector (investigation) of Kurigram Sadar Police Station, said, "We took position on the BNP office premises, but we did not create any obstacle to their programmes."

In Mymensingh, as soon as the opposition men brought out a procession from their office at Natun Bazar, police forced them inside, alleged Abu Wahab Akanda, secretary of the district (south) BNP.

"Later, we had to hold a rally inside the party office," he said.

Kotwali Police Station OC Kamrul Islam claimed they did no such thing.

In Khulna, police cordoned off the BNP office at Thanar Mor area in the early morning. They did not allow the opposition men to gather there, party leaders alleged.

Later in the day, when the BNP men tried to bring out a procession from Royal Square, police foiled that too, they said.

In Chittagong, leaders and workers held a rally inside the party office at Nasimon Bhaban, but they were not allowed to bring out any procession.

Abu Sufian, vice president of the city BNP, said they held the rally at the party office to avert police harassment.

Jasim Uddin, OC of Kotwali Police Station, admitted they asked the BNP men not to bring out any procession.

In Sylhet, the district BNP sought permission from police for holding a rally but was denied.

Police took position around the proposed venue in the early morning and locked the entrance to the ground. BNP leaders and activists tried to gather there but police stopped them, party leaders alleged.

In Patuakhali, police picked up two BNP leaders from their homes.

[Our correspondents from Barisal, Pirojpur, Rajshahi, Kurigram, Mymensingh, Khulna, Chittagong, Sylhet and Patuakhali contributed to the report.]

Former

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Masud, 38, was a leader of pro-JSD Chhatra League in the upazila. He joined Jatiya Party in 2008 and was elected vice-chairman of the upazila parishad.

A local court yesterday placed Masud and six Jamaat men on seven-day remand each in the Liton murder case after hearing remand prayers from police.

Atiar Rahman, officer-in-charge of Sundarganj Police Station, said they arrested Masud at his Sundarganj home around 4:00am.

However, his wife Anjumanara Begum earlier told The Daily Star that some plainclothes policemen picked up her husband from their home Thursday night.

Golam Kabir Mukul, president of Sundarganj Swetchasebok League, said Masud desired to join an extended meeting of the upazila AL at the upazila parishad auditorium in 2010, but Liton opposed it.

Protesting the incident, Masud threatened Liton with serious consequences at the gate of the auditorium, he added.

The six Jamaat men placed on remand yesterday are Farid Mia, Hazrat Ali, Nabinur, Shamiul Islam, Hadsur Rahman and Ziaur Rahman. They were arrested in different areas of the upazila on Saturday. No lawyer represented them in court.

Yesterday, police also picked up Shahidul Islam Mandol, headmaster of Chengmani High School and amir of Sundarganj (east) Jamaat-e-Islami, for interrogation, said sub-inspector Abdul Wahed, in-charge of Kanchibari Police Investigation Centre.

Earlier, police detained 27 people from the upazila and showed 21 of them arrested under section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Armed assailants shot Liton inside his Masterpara home on December 31. He died at Rangpur Medical College Hospital that evening.

The following day, the lawmaker's sister filed the murder case with Sundarganj Police Station accusing unnamed people.

PROTEST CONTINUES

Locals yesterday formed a human chain in the upazila's Bamondanga area under the banner of Bamondanga Football and Cricket Club demanding immediate arrest of Liton's killers.

Among the protesters were locals, teachers and students of eight educational institutions. Later, a rally was held there.

Addressing the rally, speakers demanded the law enforcers arrest the MP's killers by January 10. They also threatened to enforce hartal and blockade of road and railway if their demand was not met by that time.

Locals yesterday set up Shaheed Liton Mancha near the Bamondanga Railway Station from where they promised to continue the agitation until the killers were arrested and police unravelled the murder plot.

Ankhi

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on Hindus in Brahmanbaria's Nasirnagar.

Police produced Ankhi, an alleged organiser of the attack, before the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court with a seven-day remand prayer for interrogation, said Mahbubur Rahman, a court inspector.

Ankhi's lawyer Mahbubur Rahman opposed the remand prayer, citing "sickness" of his client. Senior Judicial Magistrate Shoraf Uddin Ahmed rejected his prayer and placed Ankhi on a five-day remand.

On Thursday, a patrol team of Bhatara Police Station in the capital arrested Ankhi, also the chairman of Haripur Union Parishad in Brahmanbaria and a local ruling Awami League leader. Later, he was handed over to the detectives from Brahmanbaria.

On October 30, unruly zealots carried out a synchronised attack on the Hindus, vandalised around 100 homes and some 17 temples and looted valuables in Nasirnagar over an anti-Islam Facebook post.

Police have so far arrested 109 people in the eight cases filed for the attack, and six accused have so far given confessional statements in court.

ANKHI'S ALLEGED ROLE IN THE MAYHEM

After his arrest, Iqbal Hossain, additional superintendent of police in Brahmanbaria, told this newspaper that the arrest of Ankhi is a big success as they believe the motive, masterminds and main instigators would be found through interrogating him.

According to the ASP, Ankhi is "one of the key instigators and organisers" of the attack. Insiders in police and local Awami League said Ankhi mobilised the attackers as per the instruction of his political patrons in Brahmanbaria.

On November 29, police arrested Jahangir Alam, owner of Al-Amin Cyber Point and Studio at Horinber Bazar in Haripur, who allegedly played an active role in inciting locals against Hindus after the post appeared on the Facebook wall of Hindu fisherman Rasraj Das.

Police say someone else uploaded it using the account of Rasraj as part of a conspiracy.

In his confessional statement before a Brahmanbaria court on December 8, Jahangir said Ankhi ordered him to gather people and hire trucks for the attack.

T20Is follow

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Bangladesh in their chase managed 167 for seven.

The Tigers prospered when the Black Caps faltered, scoring 80 for one in eight overs thanks to a sublime 42 from Soumya Sarker. But the visitor stumbled for an umpteenth time after that, losing their way in a situation while their opponents excelled. Shakib Al Hasan scored 41 off 34 balls but his effort had more to do with reducing the margin of defeat. The 27-run defeat was Bangladesh's lowest in their six limited overs games but it did little to avoid successive 3-0 whitewashes after the ODI thrashing.

Black Caps captain Kane Williamson may have been extremely docile compared to what Anderson had done against a Bangladesh attack that suffered from real stage-fright in the face of a terrific assault. But his 57-ball 60 was the backbone of a spectacular turnaround. The fourth-wicket partnership of 124 off 72 balls between Anderson and Williamson was a classic case of the Kiwis thriving after an early wobble in the limited-overs series so far.

For the Tigers it was once again an inexplicable surrender after making early in-roads and on Sunday the bowling lost its composure after it reduced the Black Caps to 41 for three. The fielding, under pressure, simply caved in. Believe it or not Shakib Al Hasan dropped a sitter at midwicket off Mashrafe when Williamson was on 53. It was then the turn of Tamim Iqbal to drop Williamson at deep square-leg. On a ground where a miss-hit turned into a six due to the strong wind blowing across the ground, Anderson simply toyed with the Bangladesh bowlers.

In that mix Shakib bowled intelligently to finish with nought for 22 in

four overs. This is a figure any top bowler would be proud of on an absolute belter of a wicket. Rubel Hossain, understandably the lucky one to have bowled with the wind, was the most successful Bangladesh bowler with three for 31 in his four overs.

Mashrafe, who injured his right thumb while trying to stop the ball on his follow through and could not finish his quota of four overs, was the most expensive other than Soumya, conceding 42 runs in his 3.2 overs. He tried Soumya for one over and that simply backfired. His gentle medium pace cost 21 runs with Anderson hitting three sixes in that over.

Imrul Kayes also injured his left knee while fielding, leaving Soumya to come out to bat with Tamim Iqbal. And that was the best sign Bangladesh has had in this series so far. They put on 44 runs in 4.4 overs, a reminder of their exploits during their home dominance. But Tamim got out after scoring a 15-ball 24. Soumya was at his sublime best, caressing the ball down to the boundary. Bangladesh's hopes of making it a match actually hinged on Soumya. But he could not make it big as Anderson did. The left-hander top-edged an attempted sweep against leg-spinner Ish Sodhi, who took a brilliant running catch behind his shoulder. Sabbir quickly followed him, playing too far from the line of a straighter delivery from Williamson and was clean bowled. Mahmudullah Riyad was undone by a wrong-one from Sodhi, the most successful New Zealand bowler with two for 22 in his four overs.

Bangladesh will now get four days before embarking on an even more challenging series when the first of the two Test starts at Wellington on January 12.

Tragedy at Kaliakoir

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train reached Shonakhali Rail Bridge. The pieces of the car then fell from the bridge to the ground below.

Talha's father Shafiqul Islam Bidyut said his wife Tahmina was five months pregnant, yet she decided to take their son to school on his first day in nursery class.

Talha had awakened his father to say good bye.

Ripon Mia, father of Rizza, said, "As it was the first day of school for my daughter, my wife and daughter skipped breakfast and hurried to school, lest they be late."

A crying Ripon said he heard about the accident a little after they had left home.

He said he was not that eager to get his daughter in school at such a young age but his wife insisted on it.

The Shonakhali level crossing has become dangerous as there are a few shops near the level crossing which make it almost impossible for

approaching vehicles to see if a train is coming, locals said.

Asked why there was no gateman at the level crossing, Ashim Kumar Talukder, a divisional manager of Bangladesh Railway, said there were 78 level crossings between Joydevpur and Bangabandhu Bridge East. But recently new roads have been built and now there are 95 level crossings.

The train, heading for Kolkata, was eventually able to stop about 2km from the accident scene and one of its carriages had derailed.

Rail communication to west zone was suspended for six hours. Sirajganj Express, Sundarganj Express, Dhumketu Express, and Neel Sagar were stranded at different stations during this time.

New Guinness

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balls caught by a dog with the paws in one minute.

The goalkeeping pup expertly 'saved' 14 mini footballs thrown by Makoto.

The pooch also holds the record for the Fastest 10 metres travelled on a ball by a dog with a time of 10.39 seconds achieved in March 2016.

"Purin has become an unstoppable record-breaker and we can't wait to see what jaw-dropping trick she will amaze us with next," Guinness said.

The multi-talented beagle can also skateboard and walk on two legs.

Japan owns some of the strangest Guinness records, including the world's heaviest strawberry, tipping the scales at a whopping 250 grams, and the biggest ever baby crawling contest, set by 601 bawling toddlers in Yokohama last November.

1,050 women

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of statistics published by the parishad.

As many as 4,896 incidents of violence against women were reported in newspapers in 2016 and 4,436 such incidents were reported in 2015.

Rekha mentioned that the country saw gruesome incidents like Tonu being raped and killed "inside a cantonment", Khadiza was targeted for killing on a university campus while schoolgirl Risha was stabbed to death on a busy street in the capital's Kakrail last year.

"The government should take a zero-tolerance policy to stop violence against women," she said.

Speaking at the press conference, Mahila Parishad President Aysha Khanam said strong political will was required for improving women empowerment in the country.

She said there were number of steps taken by the state which contradicted fundamental women rights.

Replying to a query on the parishad's concern, she said there should not be any compromise with elimination of child marriage.

Replying to another query, Khanam said they would assist law enforcers to bring women, who have become militants, to book.

"We will laud good steps taken by the state while we criticise and remain vocal against initiatives which may

become obstacle to women empowerment," she added.

At the press conference, the parishad raised a 19-point demand.

The demands include increase of reserved seats for women in parliament, increase of nomination of women from political parties, and scraping of the special provision from the Child Marriage (Restraint) Act, 2016.

Mahila Parishad General Secretary Maleka Banu, among others, was present at the press conference.

Retired banker

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child marriage and dowry. Over the last five years, they have been able to prevent around 100 child marriages in surrounding villages.

Chairman of Dinajpur Education Board Ahmed Hossain visited Chadmoni home recently after hearing about its success. Other noted visitors to the place include Education Secretary Sahidul Islam, Editor of the daily Prothom Alo Matiur Rahman, and former cabinet secretary Saiful Islam. They appreciated Alam's efforts.

UNO of Jaldhaka Rasedul Huq Proddhan said he had visited Chadmoni and was very pleased to see its success.

"Pizurul Alam is a kind-hearted man and we would like to reward him soon," he said.