

Punish those who committed blunders

JS panel says on errors in textbooks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary standing committee has recommended ensuring exemplary punishment of those responsible for the blunders in this year's school textbooks.

The standing committee on primary and mass education ministry at a meeting yesterday also formed a sub-committee to look into the mistakes in primary textbooks published by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board.

Shamshul Haque Chowdhury was made the convenor while Ali Azam and Mohammad Ilyas were made the members of the sub-committee.

Talking to reporters after the meeting held at the parliament, AKM Zahangir Hossain, member of the

standing committee, said the media reported on the errors and that more mistakes would be found if the textbooks were examined carefully.

The director general of directorate of primary education was asked to collect information from the grassroots level and send letters to all district and upazila education officers in this regard, he said, adding the officers would find out the errors and inconsistencies in the textbooks and send the books, following corrections, to the primary and mass education ministry.

"The standing committee thinks the people responsible for the errors will have to be given exemplary punishment. Just transfers will not be enough," said Zahangir.

He said the committee meeting

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President Abdul Hamid, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and Inspector General of Police AKM Shahidul Hoque with senior police officials at the Bangabhaban yesterday on the occasion of Police Week 2017.

PHOTO: PID

National oil, gas committee's eight-hour hartal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports would enforce an eight-hour shutdown from 6:00am today in the capital to press home its demand for scrapping the Rampal power project.

The committee would also organise protest rallies across the country to raise public opinion against the plant, which they claim is harmful for the Sundarbans.

Rickshaws, bicycles, ambulances, firefighters, vegetable markets and pharmacies will be out of the purview of the strike, according to the organisers.

"We urge the people of all walks of life to extend their support to our demonstrations to save the Sundarbans from being ruined," Prof Anu Muhammad, member secretary of the committee, told The Daily Star.

Several political parties, including BNP, have voiced solidarity with the strike.

However, Dhaka Road Transport Owners Association in a statement said they would continue transport operation defying the shutdown.

In 2009, Bangladesh and India signed a deal to set up the power plant with a capacity of 1,320 megawatt of electricity in Rampal upazila of Bagerhat.

Several green organisations and activists have been protesting against the plant since then citing that it would severely affect the forest as it would be built only kilometres away from the Sundarbans.

But the government is rigid on its decision.

Bangladeshi

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He also worked as a visual effects coordinator in Captain America: Civil War (2016) and Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice (2016).

Wahid is currently working as a production manager (VFX) in Guardians of Galaxy Vol 2. He works for Method Studios in Vancouver, Canada.

Wahid, the only child of Mohammad Rezaul Kari, a former state minister, and Suraya Karim Munny, an advocate, completed his BSc in Mechanical Engineering from Buet and BFA in Film Production from the University of British Columbia.

Before moving to North America, he was a familiar face in the Bangladeshi entertainment industry.

He acted in various television films and television comedy series. He was a model and an anchor. He also worked with the legendary Humayun Ahmed and youth icon Mostofa Sarwar Farooki.

Behind the camera, Wahid worked as head writer for advertising firm Grey World Wide. He also wrote television films and television series for several local television networks in Bangladesh.

Currently, he is developing his first feature film.

DOCTOR STRANGE (2016)

According to the plot of the movie, arrogant neurosurgeon Stephen Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch) feels that he has lost his purpose in life when a car accident causes nerve damage to his hands. He travels from New York to Kathmandu, where he seeks help from a mystic who trains him to become a sorcerer who can protect the world from magical threats.

The Marvel Studios' American superhero based film has been nominated for VFX along with The Jungle Book and Rogue One: A Star Wars Story, Deepwater Horizon, Kubo and the Two Strings.

If Doctor Strange were to win, it would be Marvel's first Academy Award.

'I've found him at last, but dead'

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On October 9, Keraniganj police found a body floating in the river. They buried the unclaimed body with the help of Anjuman-e-Mofidul Islam, a voluntary organisation, after collecting DNA samples.

Amid desperate efforts to find Imran, police on December 18 last year collected DNA samples from Lutfar, a former manager at Ashuganj Power Station, and his wife Nadira Begum, which matched those from the body, proving that it was Imran.

"My son was abducted and killed brutally for ransom. The only thing now I want is justice," said the father, choking.

Like the sensational seven murders in Narayanganj masterminded by former councillor Nur Hossain, the name of the then councillor Alamgir Islam came up behind the abduction and killing of Imran.

One of Imran's friends, Golam Mostafa Adar, had taken him to the

office of Alamgir, councillor of ward no-17 at Baburail in Narayanganj City Corporation.

"Around 4:00pm [on the day of the incident], Alamgir called me over the phone and told me to visit him at his office in Baburail," Adar wrote in a letter to the superintendent of police in Narayanganj two weeks after Imran went missing, seeking legal steps to find him.

As soon as he and two of his friends, including Imran, went there, the councillor confined them. Alamgir and his six aides then started beating them.

"The councillor used to propose [us] to join him, help him in illegal grabbing and criminal activities." As they refused to do so, the councillor held and tortured them. All but Imran managed to flee.

Later when Imran's friends called Alamgir for their friend's release, he demanded Tk 5 lakh ransom, Adar said in the letter.

This correspondent repeatedly tried to reach Alamgir yesterday, but found his mobile phone switched off.

He earlier told police that he had released Imran that night.

Lutfar believes that all including Adar and Alamgir are members of a gang that abducts young boys and demands ransom from their parents.

During the incident, Imran's parents were in Saudi Arabia for Hajj. On return, the father filed an abduction case with Uttara Paschim Police Station on November 1, 2015 against Adar, his father Golam Mostafa Kalu, Alamgir and his nephew Reazul Islam Pritom.

Apart from these four, police earlier arrested five others. Six including Adar, Kalu and Alamgir are now on bail.

Surprisingly, Adar and his father Kalu filed at least three cases against Lutfar, bringing different charges, after they were released on bail in October and December last year.

In one of the cases, the plaintiffs said Lutfar had taken TK 25 lakh from their family for business purpose but didn't pay back.

Talking to The Daily Star recently, Adar claimed he had proof that Lutfar sent his son abroad and filed the abduction case to embezzle the money.

Nure Alam Siddique, officer-in-charge of Bangshal police, however, said police didn't find any evidence of the allegations brought against Lutfar.

Gazi Ataur Rahman, inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department, who investigated the case, said he suspected that Imran was killed by those who took him out to the councillor's office and confined him there.

"The DNA test results give a new dimension in the investigation." The CID will now appeal to the court for taking the accused on remand for interrogation, he added.



JUSTICE SYED MAHMUD HOSSAIN

He became a Justice of the Supreme Court's Appellate Division on February 23, 2011. He was appointed to the High Court Division on February 22, 2001, as an additional judge. Prior to that, Justice Mahmud acted as the deputy attorney general. He was confirmed as the judge of the HC on February 22, 2003. He was enrolled as an advocate of the District Court and the HC Division in 1981 and 1983 respectively. Born in December in 1954, Justice Mahmud obtained BSc, LLB and completed a six-month "Commonwealth Young Lawyers Course" from the School of Oriental African Studies and the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, both parts of London University.



JUSTICE OBAIDUL HASSAN

He was made an additional judge of the High Court Division on June 30, 2009, and he became a judge of the same division on June 6, 2011. He also served as member of the International Crimes Tribunal-2 and later as the chairman of the tribunal from March 22, 2012, to September 15, 2015. Born in 1959, Justice Obaidul obtained his BSS (Honours), MSS in Economics and LLB from Dhaka University. He was first enrolled as an advocate of the District Court in 1986. Later, he was enrolled as a lawyer of the High Court Division and the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court in 1988 and 2005 respectively.



MUHAMMED SADIQUE

He became the chairman of the Bangladesh Public Service Commission on May 2 last year. Before that, he was a member of the PSC. Sadique worked as secretary of Election Commission Secretariat and the Ministry of Education. He obtained his BA (Honours) and MA in Bangla Language and Literature in 1976 and 1977 and studied Personnel Management at the University of Manchester, UK, during 1994-95. Sadique got his PhD from Assam University in India. He was born in Sunamganj on September 19, 1955.



MASUD AHMED

Masud, who joined audit and accounts cadre of Bangladesh Civil Service in January 1981, has been serving as the comptroller and auditor general of Bangladesh since April 28, 2013. He was also secretary of Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs and member of Planning Commission. Masud also served as deputy secretary of Ministry of Shipping and Economic Relations Division, managing director of MuktiJodha Kalyan Trust and director general of Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training. He passed MA from Dhaka University's English department.



SYED MANZOORUL ISLAM

He is an academic, writer, novelist, translator, columnist and critic. Manzoorul was a professor of Dhaka University's English department and is now visiting professor of Brac University. He is a trustee board member of Transparency International Bangladesh. He passed BA and MA from English department of Dhaka University and later obtained a PhD in English Literature from Queen's University, Kingston, Canada. Manzoorul is a member of film censor appeal board and Jatiyo Protibondhi Unnayan Foundation, and a member of trustee board, Bangladesh National Museum. He was born on January 18, 1951, in Sylhet.



SHIREEN AKHTER

Shireen has been serving as the pro-vice chancellor of Chittagong University since March 28 last year. Born in Chittagong on May 1, 1956, she secured BA and MA degrees from Bengali Language and Literature from the university and obtained a PhD in 1991 from Jadavpur University, Kolkata. Shireen is a life member of Bangla Academy. She is also a member of Cox's Bazar Mohila Awami League, an associate body of the ruling AL. Her father late Afsar Kamal Chowdhury was a top AL leader of Cox's Bazar.

Search committee

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pro-vice chancellor of Chittagong University.

This panel will recommend two names for each post of election commissioner. One of the commissioners will be a woman, said a gazette notification, signed by Cabinet Secretary Mohammad Shafiqul Alam, yesterday.

It means the country is going to get its first female election commissioner.

The search committee will place its recommendations before the president within 10 working days, it said, adding that the presence of three members would make a quorum.

Later, the president, on the prime minister's advice, will appoint the chief election commissioner and other commissioners.

The ruling Awami League and main opposition Jatiya Party have welcomed the search committee, but the BNP says it is "frustrated" and "aggrieved".

Hamid formed the committee after talks with 31 political parties on the formation of the EC that would hold the general elections in 2019.

The talks began on December 18 last year and ended recently.

At the talks, the BNP proposed forming a search committee while most other political parties, including the AL, talked about framing a law for the constitution of the next EC.

president might go for the search committee because of time constraints.

In such a situation, the president opted to do what his predecessor Zillur Rahman did.

In 2012, the then president Zillur held talks with 23 registered political parties and formed a four-member search committee. The present EC was constituted following the committee's recommendations. Its tenure expires next month.

The Rakib-led EC drew a lot of flak for holding the January 5 "one-sided" elections where 153 lawmakers were elected unopposed in 2014.

The other members of that search committee were the then PSC chairman, CAG of Bangladesh and an HC judge.

This time, the committee includes two educationalists, and one of them is a woman.

Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakhawat Hussain, a former election commissioner, said the search committee looks promising as "most of its members are experienced".

Talking to The Daily Star last night, he said, "In the search committee, there are two neutral people apart from those holding constitutional posts. I hope they will propose names of some people acceptable to the president."

AL AND JP HAPPY
Welcoming the search committee, AL

presidium member and Health Minister Mohammed Nasim expressed hope that all political parties would accept it.

"We have full confidence in the honourable president and the search committee. He has given us a good panel," he told The Daily Star.

Nasim said the AL will accept the election commissioners proposed by the body.

Jatiya Party (Ershad) Secretary General ABM Ruhul Amin Hawlader echoed Nasim's views.

The president has showed prudence in forming such a committee, he said, adding that he hoped the members of the panel would not "disappoint the nation".

Hawlader also believed that the next EC would be acceptable and neutral.

BNP FRUSTRATED
Immediately after learning about the members of the search committee, the BNP said they were not only frustrated but also aggrieved.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir told The Daily Star that the PSC chairman, the CAG and the pro-VC were appointed during the tenure of this government.

"Again, Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain led the committee that had formed the Rakib-led commission. So it is clear what kind of commission is going to be formed [by this search

committee]," he said.

In 2012, when the BNP held talks with then president Zillur Rahman, it focused on the caretaker government system. The caretaker government system was abolished later and the party boycotted the January 5 elections.

But this time, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia floated the proposal to form the search committee for constituting the next EC.

The party also suggested some people as members of the panel but did not disclose the names.

SEARCH BODY MEMBERS
Contacted, Muhammed Sadique, chairman of the PSC, told The Daily Star, "I am yet to get the gazette notification. As a member of the committee, I will carry out my duties properly."

Masud Ahmed, CAG of Bangladesh, said, "It is a challenging task [to pick the CEC and other commissioners] because all the political parties are looking at the issue. I will try my best to recommend neutral, non-partisan and competent people [as EC members]. I will be honest and sincere."

Shireen Akhter said, "I feel honoured as the president has picked me as a member of the search committee. At first, we, all the members, will have a meeting, and then we will decide on the process of our work. I will do my best."

Trump acts fast

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The orders would restrict immigration and access to the US for refugees and visa holders from Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen, according to the Washington Post.

Citizens from those countries already face large obstacles to obtaining US visas.

But the move has prompted a fierce backlash even before it was announced.

"Donald Trump is making good on the most shameful and discriminatory promises he made on the campaign trail," said Trita Parsi of the National Iranian American Council. Iran was one of the countries that may be listed.

"He called for a Muslim ban and is now taking the first steps to implement one. This will not stand. The American people are better than this."

"I just signed two executive orders that will save thousands of lives, millions of jobs and billions and billions of dollars," Trump declared during remarks at DHS. He added, "By working together, safe borders and economic cooperation, I truly believe we can enhance the relation between our two nations, to a degree not seen before, certainly, in a very, very long time. I think our relationship with Mexico is going to get better."

The first executive order signed yesterday directs DHS to use existing funding to begin work on the border wall, although its completion will require an appropriation from Congress, White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said at the daily briefing.

"Building this barrier is more than just a campaign promise. It's a common-sense first step to really securing our porous border," Spicer said. "This will stem the flow of drugs, crime, illegal immigration into the United States. And yes, one way or another, as the president has said before, Mexico will pay for it."

Spicer did not elaborate on how Mexico will be forced to fund a project that is certain to cost billions of dollars.

In an interview with ABC News taped yesterday afternoon, Trump said construction would begin "as soon as we can. As soon as we can physically do it."

"I would say in months, yeah," he told ABC's David Muir. "I would say in months. Certainly, planning is starting immediately."

Trump's executive order, which begins the process of building the wall, also seeks to provide DHS more resources in general to stop illegal immigrants entering the US.

Spicer said the Trump administration will also seek to create more detention facilities for undocumented immigrants along the US border, centres that he said would allow for swifter and cheaper deportations.

The second executive order focuses on immigration enforcement away from America's borders. The press secretary said that "federal agencies are going to unapologetically enforce the law, no ifs, ands, or buts."

A programme to aid Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents in targeting undocumented immigrants for removal will be reinstated, Spicer said, and the State Department will withhold visas for nations who refuse to accept deportees being sent back to their home countries.

Federal grant money will be stripped from so-called sanctuary cities that harbour undocumented immigrants from the federal government, Spicer said, although he explained the particulars of how that will work have not yet been determined.

Absent from the directives is any mention of DACA, the controversial Obama administration programme that currently spares minors illegally brought to the US by their parents from the prospect of deportation. Spicer said more action related to DACA, the repeal of which remains a priority for conservatives, may come later in the week.