

ENGLISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS

Govt fixes highest admission, tuition fees

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GOVERNMENT has finalised a guideline for English medium schools by fixing the highest ceilings of the admission and tuition fees in a bid to rein in brisk business by the institutes charging exorbitant fees.

The final draft proposed Tk 30,000 as the highest admission and session fee for English medium schools in metropolitan areas and Tk 15,000 for those outside the metropolitan areas.

It proposed Tk 3,000 as the highest monthly tuition fee for schools in metropolitan areas and Tk 1,500 for those outside the areas.

The school authorities would be allowed to increase their admission and sessions fees highest 10 per cent each year, said the draft guideline finalised by the education ministry in third week of December.

'We have finalised the draft of guideline for English medium school,' said education ministry additional secretary Ruhi Rahman. 'We would soon issue the circular' she added.

Authorities of English medium schools, however, termed impractical the highest ceilings of the admission and tuition fees and allowing of 10 per cent increase in the fees and feared that most

of the schools would not be able to abide by the provisions.

Bangladesh English Medium School Association general secretary GM Nizam Uddin, also founder and managing director of Cardiff International School, said that the highest ceiling set by the government was impractical.

'English medium schools will face a lot of problems; they will not be able to maintain quality,' he added.

Education ministry officials said they were preparing the guideline in line with the orders of the High Court.

The High Court in separate

directives in April 2014 and in June 2012 asked the authorities to formulate a guideline setting fees for English medium schools.

Education ministry officials said that after the HC had issued its June 2012 order, they initiated the move to frame a guideline for English medium schools.

They were preparing a draft of guideline based on the Private (English Medium) School Rule 2007.

For the last four years, the government has been trying to prepare a guideline for English medium schools but failed to do so in the face of 'opposition' from the authorities of English medium

schools.

In the draft, the ministry has divided schools into three categories - category A having over 700 students, category B having 400 to 700 students and category C having less than 400 students.

The draft proposed the highest admission and session fee for A category schools in metropolitan areas at Tk 30,000 and Tk 15,000 for those outside the areas.

It proposed Tk 18,000 as the highest admission and session fees for B category schools in metropolitan area and Tk 7,000 for those outside metropolitan area.

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The draft also proposed the highest fees at Tk 8,000 for C category schools in metropolitan areas and Tk 4,000 for those outside the areas.

It also proposed the highest monthly tuition fee at Tk 3,000 for A category schools in metropolitan areas and Tk 1,500 those located outside the areas; Tk 2,000 for

B category schools in metropolitan areas and Tk 1,000 for those outside metropolitan areas and Tk 1,500 for C category schools in metropolitan areas and Tk 800 for those outside the metropolitan areas.

The draft made the proposals amid allegations that many such schools were charging the students exorbitant admission fees

ranging from Tk 50,000 to Tk 1.50 lakh.

Guardians alleged that the school authorities increased the admission, readmission and monthly tuition fees almost every year.

'English medium schools impart quality education by ensuring qualified teachers, better education environment, so their admission and tuition fees are high,'

said GM Nizam Uddin.

Education ministry officials or English medium school authorities could not say how many English medium schools were functioning in the country though Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics said that there were 159 such schools having 1,25,500 students.