

ENGLISH VERSION EDN AT SCHOOLS

Number of students soars

Lack of trained teachers, mistakes in textbooks are hurdles to overcome

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THE number of students in English version of the national curriculum has increased, in some cases even doubled, when there are few trained teachers and the books for the version contain too many mistakes.

Most of the teachers of English version do not have any training in how to use the books and make them interesting and interactive to classes.

Being so the case, many teachers impart lessons in Bangla for lack of required efficiency in the English language, guardians have alleged.

These teachers are not skilled enough to set up question papers and deal with the whole examination process very efficiently, which is also yet another major setback for English version students, they think.

Academics and educationists are of the opinion

that wider job opportunity and easy access to higher education are the main props for the growing popularity of the English version.

The number of students taking Primary Education Completion Examinations in English version has doubled in the past five years, while the number of estimated students in secondary level increased to 54,200 in 2016 from 33,000 in 2011, according to officials.

Educationists say that

guardians prefer the English version education to keep pace with the 'fast growing demand' for English knowing people.

Besides, many guardians who used to send their children to English medium schools are now sending their kids to the English version of reputed schools as it is less costly.

This is another reason why the number of students in English version is increasing. 'Guardians' preference

for the English language explains the increase in the number of English version students,' said Professor Siddiqur Rahman.

Rahman was one of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board's chief consultants to head the team which developed the existing curriculum.

'The number of students pursuing the English version is increasing but the quality of class room teaching is still

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a matter of concern. Many teachers cannot communicate with the students in English. They do not have the training, so they are failing to impart lessons in the classroom,' he added.

When asked for their comment, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education director general SM. Wahiduzzaman and DPE director general Abu Hena Mostofa Kamal both said that they could say the reasons for the increasing number of English version students only after analysis.

There is a worldwide demand for the English language, so many guardians send their children to English version out of the thought that their children will find higher education easy, says Wahiduzzaman.

Sending children abroad for higher studies is others reason also for choosing the English version, he adds.

'We are going to take necessary steps to provide training to English version teachers,' he said.

Cashing in many guardians' preference for giving their children over to the English version, many

schools started opening English version in the cities, which has now spread to some district towns.

DPE officials said that a total of 10,573 students took the PECE in English version this year while 4,751 such students took the exam in 2012.

In 2016, a total of 7,747 students from Dhaka division took the exam in English version while the number was 2,379 in 2012. From Chittagong division 1,574 students took the exam in English version this year against 1,148 students of 2012.

A total of 804 students from Sylhet division took the exam pursuing English version while the number was 495 in 2012.

From Rajshahi division 403 students took the exam in the English version this year while the number was 242 in 2012.

A total of 6,255 students in 2013, 7,012 in 2014, and 8,908 in 2015 took the PECE following English version.

The DSHE director general said that they did not have the accurate statistic of how many students of secondary level were fol-

lowing English version.

But NCTB sources said that the DSHE sent to them order for books for 54,200 students in 2016 and 33,000 in 2012.

Capital's reputed educational institutions like Vigarunnisa Noon School and College, Rajuk Uttara Model College, Monipur School and College, Scholars Schools, Ideal School and College, Motijheel, Milestone School, Mohammadpur Preparatory School, Faizur Rahman Ideal School, BIAM School and College, South Point School, Willes Little Flower School, Dhaka Residential Model College and Khilgaon Model School have English version beside the Bangla version.

Ideal School and College, Motijheel principal Shahan Ara Begum said that her schools had about 3,000 students in English version in 2012, which swelled to 5,000 in 2016.

'Many guardians who used to send their children to English medium schools are now sending their children to English version,' she said.

'In some cases we find it difficult to find teachers