

Why this lobbying for MPO?

Government should be insistent on fulfilment of criteria

AWARE that enlisting of schools that fulfil all the criteria to receive monthly pay order (MPO) from the education ministry is nearing completion, influential ruling party people, Members of Parliament (MPs) and their cronies are still creating pressure on the ministry to have their schools of choice enlisted.

They must let the education ministry to do its job.

MPO-listing being so crucial, a task that the government has restarted after six years of its suspension, the integrity of the exercise cannot be allowed to be compromised under any circumstances.

From experience we know, such lobbying for MPO-listing often leads to government recognition of such schools that hardly fulfil the necessary criteria. In such a case, fulfilment of certain criteria is pivotal as it would exclude the possibility of enlisting schools that exist only in name and have no qualified teachers and whose pass rates are deplorable.

At stake is not only the public money, the entire edifice of the nation's education is also dependent on how its schools at grass-roots level are being run. Here the issue of professional management committees assumes critical importance. So the non-government schools aspiring to get government recognition should, first and foremost, have proper physical structure in an environment congenial for learning, have a good number students and staffed with qualified teachers and supplied with other necessary facilities for education. A school that fulfils such criteria does not need any lobbying for its government recognition and enlisting.

Regrettably though, the influential people who often press the ministry for enlisting their favourite schools remain conveniently forgetful of these basic criteria.

We hope, the incumbent government will not commit the old mistake again. On the contrary, it should put its foot down in the matter, especially from its highest level so that party leaders or MPs desist from putting unnecessary pressure on the education ministry to have things their own way.