

Pvt univs hedge research

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ELEVEN private universities spent nothing on research in 2011, a feature that does not go with such institutions as there is no alternative to conducting research for maintaining the standard of tertiary and higher education, said the University Grants Commission.

The UGC in its yet-to-be-published report for 2011 also said research in many private universities was limited to just one to three research projects. But under Section 9(6) of the Private Universities Act, 2010, a private university is bound to

spend a significant portion of its budget for conducting research.

Many private universities have very limited scope for research as they lack the required infrastructure, library facilities, etc, said UGC officials.

UGC chairman professor AK Azad Chowdhury said no university would be allowed to run without conducting necessary research work, because it is essential for tertiary and higher education.

The Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh vice-chairman Abul Quasem Haider said it was

tough for private universities to conduct research as they lacked the funds required.

There were 54 private universities in 2011 and now the number has increased to 71, with 16 set up in 2012 and one this year.

According to the UGC report, the universities that did not spend a single penny on research are Darul Ihsan University, the People's University of Bangladesh, Sylhet International University, South East University, IBAIS University, City University, United International University, the University of

Continued on page 4 Col. 4

Pvt univs

Continued from page 1

South Asia, the University of International Technology and Science, the Royal University of Dhaka, and Central Women's University.

The report says six universities conducted just one research project that year, two of them two, and two others three.

It shows that the remaining 41 universities together spent around Tk 25.91 crore, or on average Tk 63.20 lakh, on research in 2011.

The UGC chair said they were continuing with pressing the universities to increase research activities.

Because of the continuous pressure for the last two/three years from the UGC, several renowned private institutions have started spending significant amounts for carrying out research projects. And we surely will pressure the rest into doing that,' he added.

Abul Quasem, however, has a quite different view of the picture. He said as tuition fees were the main source of funding the operations, maintenance, and expansion of the universities, 'it is really tough for them to allocate funds for research'.