

Schools keep outsourcing question papers

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TEACHERS of most of the junior-secondary and secondary schools across the country continue to buy question papers for exams from teachers' associations, clearly flouting the rules.

New Age has found and government investigation affirmed.

Against the backdrop of corruption and chaos over preparation of question papers, the ministry issued an order making it mandatory for all secondary and junior

secondary schools to have their question papers prepared by the teachers of the respective schools.

If a school buys question papers from the syndicates controlled by regional or district level teachers' associations along with

printing houses, it can save nearly 50 per cent on the cost.

Question papers in no way will be bought from outside. Teachers of the respective schools will have to prepare the question papers.

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said the education ministry order issued on December 31, 2012.

However, spot visits by the officials of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) have found that there is a syndicate comprising a section of leaders of non-government teachers' associations and owners of printing presses who are engaged in the business to make money.

It found that most of the schools had outsourced question papers in the half-yearly exam for financial gains. Most of the schools started giving the exams in the second week of the current month.

Abdur Rahman, head-

master of Mukta Hossain High School at Netrakona sadar, said, 'The school has 936 students and needed to pay only Tk 12,000 for getting the questions printed from teachers' association.' But the cost was nearly 20,000 in the past year's annual exams when all the question papers were prepared and printed by its own initiatives,' he said. However, he kept silent when asked whether it had clearly flouted the directive.

Sometimes, the government needed to face embarrassing situation when a question paper contains controversial elements. And in such cases we cannot take action against teachers as the question paper is found

to have been outsourced,' said professor Sajal Kanti Mandal, director (secondary) of the DSHE.

'Besides, the government has introduced new curriculums and syllabuses and the teachers need to get used to preparing new types of questions for its own students,' Sajal said adding, 'Show-cause notices will be served soon against the heads of the institutions for violating the order.'

On June 13, the religious study exam was held for class X students of Pioneer Girls' High School in Khulna city. The question paper contained a controversial issue causing embarrassment to the government. Some guardians had reacted sharply. The question pa-

per was bought from a local printing press.

When asked the headteacher said, 'As the syllabus is new, it would have been difficult for the teacher of the subject to prepare the questions, we decided to outsource the question paper.'

All secondary schools in Khulna city had bought the pre-test questions from outside, the headteacher claimed.

According to government statistics, there are 19,070 secondary and junior secondary schools that offer education to students from class VI to class X. These schools have over 2.23 lakh teachers with above 75 lakh students.