

SCHOOL COMMITTEES

# 62pc political appointees

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 62 percent members of the school managing committees (SMCs) are politically nominated, and this is one of the key reasons for anarchy in the education sector, said a Dhaka University (DU) professor quoting a World Bank study which is yet to be released.

"These members have connections with ministers. The teachers or educators concerned remain helpless before these SMC members," Dr ASM Amanullah, professor of DU Sociology department, told a dialogue at Dhaka Reporters' Unity yesterday.

Amanullah, a researcher involved with the study on school management last year, said it is nothing but the sickness of society and the state. Unless the state addresses the problem, it is not possible to overcome it, he said.

The Department of Applied Sociology of ASA University Bangladesh organised the dialogue on morality and the lack of it of teachers and way forward.

Other academics at the dialogue also said political interventions and irregularities in teachers' recruitment had led to a degradation of morality among teachers, many of whom then get involved in irregularities.

Speakers at the event identified some major drawbacks in the education sector, including teachers' lack of

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

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FROM PAGE 20

interest in teaching in schools, thriving private coaching business, excessive fees or donations for students' enrollments, lack of teachers' skills and low salary structure for teachers.

"An MP [lawmaker] becomes the chairman of seven to eight schools. If this continues, how will the standard of education go up? Educationists should hold the post of governing body chairmen," said Khalilur Rahman, professor of DU Biochemistry department.

There are many cases of teachers not giving the right marks if the students don't go to them for private coaching, he said, suggesting a stop to private coaching.

Dr Shah Kawthar Mustafa Abululayee, professor of DU Philosophy department,

questioned how morality could be expected from a teacher who is recruited in exchange for bribes.

Citing an example, he said a teacher was enlisted in the MPO (monthly pay order) in exchange for Tk 4 lakh. Political decision is imperative to stop such major anomalies, he noted.

ASA University professor Dr Helal Mohiuddin said an alliance headed to be formed for social activism to help upgrade ethical standards of education of the country.

DU Philosophy department professor Anisuzzaman, Journalism department professor Robaet Ferdous, law department teacher Hafizur Rahman Curzon, National Academy for Educational Management's Director General Dr Shamsur Rahman, ASA University

Vice Chancellor Prof Moinuddin Khan and Prof Dr Iqbal Hossain also spoke at the dialogue.