

..... ২৪ জানুয়ারী ২০১২

Extra admission fee issue Monitoring report should lead to corrective action

IT is, indeed, good news that the government committee probing allegations of extra admission fees charged by private schools has submitted its report in quick time. In December last year the education ministry for the first time stipulated Tk.5,000 as school admission fee and session charge in Dhaka and Tk.3,000 in other cities. The report has found 24 well-reputed schools out of 32 to have flouted the rule. The magnitude of the discrepancy in the ratio is appalling. We see it as disregard of a commendable government policy instruction.

However, we welcome the probe committee's recommendation for reassessing the stipulated amount considering the rise in school management costs what with the recent inflationary pressures.

We cannot but wonder how a school can charge seven or eight times higher than the amount stipulated in the policy especially when managing committees of many of those schools are headed by lawmakers who are likely to be respectful of the sensibilities and affordability of the parents or guardians of the pupils.

Although the government approves of a lawmaker to head the managing committees of four schools, we believe that these should be headed by educationists and professionals instead of lawmakers with known political credentials. How could a single MP handle the affairs of four schools with equal justice? This is an issue that cannot be brushed aside if we are to get the schools efficiently managed.

For all we know, all English medium schools are non-government and charge a lot more than the Bengali medium ones. Their costs too may be higher but that does not preclude the responsibility of keeping the fees at a reasonable level. Yet amid all the hullabaloo about admission fee hike, we did not hear anybody utter a single word about why a policy should not apply to English medium schools in consultation with the managements of such schools.