

FF's kids, poor students denied legal rights by pvt univs

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ALL but a mere handful of the country's private universities are violating the very law under which they operate by choking off access of freedom fighters' children to get enrolled, let alone free-of-cost education, and not fulfilling the 3 per cent admission quota set for poor but meritorious students.

The Section 9(4) of Private University Act, 2010 stipulates that the universities are required to reserve at least 6 per cent of the total admissions in every academic year for freedom fighters' children (3 per cent) and poor but meritorious students coming from remote, underdeveloped areas of the country (3 per cent).

The law also requires the universities to offer them education free of cost and submit lists of such students every academic year to the University Grants Commission.

UGC officials said many poor but meritorious students and freedom fighter's children lodged complaints with the commission after failing to get enrolled in the private universities, most of which were registered as non-profit organisations.

UGC member (private university) Prof Atful Hye Shibly told New Age that

they were collecting detailed information on the issue.

UGC chairman Prof AK Azad Chowdhury admitted to have received from many students complaints against the violation of legal provision and said, 'We are monitoring the issue and will take stern action' if the complaints were found true.

According to the yet-to-be-published UGC annual report 2011, out of the 280,882 students enrolled in 54 private universities in the year only 6,043 students comprising 4,539 poor students and 1,510 freedom fighter's children were enrolled under the quotas.

The figures mean the private universities in the academic year enrolled only 2.15 per cent against the legally required 6 per cent or 16,853 students under the quotas.

According to the UGC report, the International University of Business Agriculture and Technology, East West University, United International University, Central Women's University, and the Victoria University of Bangladesh in the year did not enrol a single student under the quotas.

City University, the University of Information Technology and Sciences of Chittagong, Royal University,

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Utora University, Millennium University, and Southern University did not offer any freedom fighters' children to study free of cost.

Green University allowed 10 freedom fighters' children to study free of cost, Presidency University nine, the State University of Bangladesh and the Independent University of Bangladesh eight each, Primeasia University six, Darul Ihsan University five, East Delta

University four, and Comoro Bishwavidyalaya three.

Sylhet International University and the Asian University of Bangladesh in the year did not offer free-of-cost education to any poor student.

The Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology offered the facilities to only one poor student, Royal University to two, East Delta University, three, and Primeasia University to six.

When asked, The Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh vice-chairman Abul Quasem Haider went so far as to term reserving 6 per cent seats for freedom fighters' children and poor, meritorious students impossible.

no government grant. When the cost of a bachelor in business administration course stands at Tk 5 to 7 lakh, how can a private university offer it to a student free of cost, he wondered.

However, if the financial scenario is as grim as Abul Quasem portrays, why did 16 more private universities join the bandwagon in 2012, raising the number of private universities in the country to 70, questioned a UGC official.

run as it is, when they get