

ENGLISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS

Most schools dodge registration, VAT

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The government is being deprived of huge revenue income from thousands of unregistered English medium schools...

According to the education ministry, there are around 18,000 English medium schools across the country with more to be launched. But only 625 such institutions have been registered...

Primary Education (DPE).

Taking the opportunity of authorities' apparent indifference and lack of specific rules, three types of English medium schools -- kindergartens or nurseries, junior Cambridge, and Cambridge or senior Cambridge -- are rapidly growing in urban areas throughout the country.

The government has several times tasked the school authorities to get registered, but most of them did not pay any heed to it. Many schools even did not bother to apply for registration.

However, no schools have ever been handed down any kinds of

penalty.

Pijush Kanti Nath, first VAT secretary of National Board of Revenue (NBR), said it will be easy for them to collect VAT from English medium schools if the ministry and other authorities concerned send them a list of such institutions.

The education ministry, seven education boards, DSHE and DPE, however, are yet to prepare a list as a large number of schools did not register willingly to avoid different types of restrictions.

"Most of the schools don't want to register even after receiving letters to that end several times.

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English Medium Schools

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The authorities did not register willingly in a bid to avoid registration fees and newly imposed VAT," said M Abbas Uddin, senior assistant secretary of the education ministry.

NBR Rayerbazar circle Superintendent Officer Humayun Kabir said they are facing a lot of troubles in making the list of English medium schools. A great number of authorities have a tendency to avoid the procedures, he added.

In Rayerbazar circle -- Dhanmondi, Lalmatia, Rayerbazar and Zigatala -- we've found out around 30 English medium schools and some of those paid VAT in the month of July," Humayun said.

But a latest list prepared by ward commissioners includes 51 English medium schools in Dhanmondi and Zigatala alone.

Many other local circle NBR offices also could not figure out the number of all schools and officials admitted they are yet to make a full list of those institutions under their jurisdiction.

"We can easily collect revenue from English medium schools in time if we have a complete list," said Arifa Begum, superintendent officer of Dhanmondi circle. She added that only one English medium school under her Katabon, Panthapath, Science Lab and Hatirpool jurisdiction has paid VAT.

The caretaker government has imposed 4.5 percent VAT on English medium schools and private educational institutions from the current fiscal year.

Following the budget, school authorities are increasing their fees, including some 500 monks. The director for the UN World Food Programme, said he was concerned at reports that the detained or are missing. Myanmar's military junta eased arrested or are missing.

nursery preparatory schools from standard I to V. Regional education offices of DSHE monitors the junior Cambridge schools from standard VI to VIII. Secondary and higher secondary education boards supervise Cambridge and senior Cambridge schools for O and A levels.

All kinds of educational institutions are to be registered under the Education Control Act, 1962. But English medium schools do not fall into the Act, as there were no such institutions in 1962.

Later, the Act has been amended several times but no specific rules for English medium schools were included in the Act.

The Ministry of Education in August 2004 decided that unregistered English medium schools would be asked to register under the Registration of Private School (Amendment) Act, 1989, and the Non-Government School (English Medium) Registration Regulations, 1999.

Top officers of seven education boards said English medium schools should be brought under proper accountability for containing "mismanagement" and "irregularities" of the authorities.

"Formulation of strict guidelines for the English medium schools is very much needed, but the school mismanagement should also be given certain freedom," said Prof Abdul Wadud, examination controller of Dhaka Education Board.

The government is going to establish a regulatory rule to oversee the activities of these schools but the process is advancing slowly due to the presence was scaled back yesterday, as the suffocating security on the main city of Yangon Myanmar's military junta eased arrested or are missing. and ordinary civilians who were

son eased