

MPs barred from heading school committees

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THE High Court on Wednesday scrapped a government regulation that empowers a lawmaker to become ex-officio chairman of the managing committee, or the governing bodies of a maximum four non-government school and college in Dhaka of his or her choice.

It also scrapped another regulation that empowers the government and board of intermediate and second-

ary education to form special managing committees or governing bodies, headed by local MPs, on certain circumstances, without holding any election.

The court also declared illegal a local lawmaker-led seven-member special managing committee of Viqarunnisa Noon School and College and ordered the authorities to immediately constitute an adhoc committee to hold elections there.

An unelected special

managing committee has been running the Viqarunnisa School and College since December 2015, said lawyers.

With this judgment, the MPs of Dhaka would lose the authority to chair managing committees or governing bodies of four secondary schools or colleges in their constituencies.

The court however said that the members of existing governing bodies of schools

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MPs barred

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and colleges led by lawmakers will continue till their two-year tenure expires.

The court said the Sections 5 and 50 of the Regulation for Managing Committee and Governing Bodies 2009 was contradictory to Articles 7, 26, 27, 28, 31, 59, 60 and 61 of the constitution, as well as the Intermediate and Secondary Education Ordinance, 1962.

The bench of Justice Zinat Ara and Justice AKM Zahirul Haque pronounced

the judgment after hearing a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Eunus Ali Akond challenging Section 5 and 50 of the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Dhaka (governing bodies or managing committees of non-government schools and colleges) Regulations 2009.

Section 5 (1) stipulates that a lawmaker can hold office of chairman of managing committees or governing bodies, not more than maximum four schools and colleges of his constituency

while section 5 (2) stipulates that a lawmaker will be deemed as the chairman of four schools and colleges' governing bodies, if he expresses a desire to be so through a written application to the education board's chairman.

Section 50 stipulates that special managing committee or governing bodies could be formed with the approval of the government and the education board under special circumstances. The committee includes a chairman, two teachers, three guardians

and a member secretary.

The petitioner, Eunus Ali Akond, told reporters that MPs could no more become ex-officio chairman of the managing committee or the governing bodies following the verdict.

Eunus said that now schools and colleges which have unelected committees have to hold fresh elections to form new committees.

Deputy attorney general Israt Jahan Shantona said the verdict disqualified MPs from becoming chairmen of the managing committees.