

PEACE SCHOOLS

**Many closed, some declare leave**

*Schools to take students' responsibility: Nahid*

**Staff Correspondent**

FOLLOWING the government's Tuesday order to close Peace Schools, authorities of many schools on Wednesday closed their institutions, while some others declared holidays and at least one kept on functioning by changing its name.

The education minister Nurul Islam Nahid, at a programme in the city's CIR-DAP auditorium on Wednesday said the forces having anti-liberation ideology were involved in running Peace Schools and that the authorities would have to bear the students' responsibilities.

At least 28 schools in Dhaka and other districts

are allegedly being operated in line with the controversial Islamic preacher Zakir Naik's ideals.

The word 'Peace' has been added prior to the school names, education ministry officials said on Tuesday.

New Age found a Peace School at Malibagh in the city on Wednesday afternoon shut.

Our Correspondent in Rajshahi reported that the Peace School and College, housed at Gazi Bhaban at Terakhadia in the city, has been renamed as 'Legend Academy.'

However, the identity cards of the students, their schoolbags, calendars, notebooks and school dresses were still bearing the name

of Peace School.

New Age Correspondent in Barisal reported that police on Wednesday noon closed the Barisal Peace School and College that had started functioning in 2015 on College Avenue in Barisal city. Police also seized some books that the schoolchildren were using.

The principal of the institution, professor Syed Moajjem Hossain, resigned from his post very recently after some media reports linked the school with controversial Islamic pundit Zakir Nayek in India and Jamaat-e-Islami and its front organisation, Islami Chhatra Shibir, in Bangladesh.

Our Correspondent in Bogra reported that the au-

thorities of Bogra Peace School and College, situated in the town's Jamalnagar and run by some Jamaat and Islami Chhatra Shibir people, had announced suspension of classes for a week, until August 9.

The director of the school, Atiqur Rahman, however, claimed that the school had no connection with any political party.

The School's governing body chairman Hamida Khanon said they suspended the classes, watching television news and that they did not receive any official memorandum from the government.

A Peace School in Thakurgaon declared holidays for an unidentified period.

While speaking at a programme of Young Change Makers' Coalition in Bangladesh, in the capital, the education minister said, 'no institution could exist by misguiding children and providing them with wrong information.'

He said these schools were aiding to spread extremism in the country.

Education ministry abruptly shut all 'Peace schools' on Tuesday.

Youth and sports secretary Kazi Akhtar Uddin Ahmed, women and children affairs secretary Nasima Begum and health ministry additional secretary Subhash Chandra Sarkar also spoke at the programme.