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Who will bell the cat?

Unauthorised consultancy by DU teachers

By Abul Kalam Azad

Despite various steps and repeated warnings, the Dhaka University authorities have failed to stop consultancy services by a large number of teachers outside the university, harming academic activities.

The authorities had adopted a set of 'recommendations' for teachers, deans of faculties, chairpersons of departments and directors of institutes to ensure that teachers take classes regularly and stop consultancy without prior permission.

But despite repeated reminders, the 'recommendations' could not be implemented as none bothered to follow it, a highly placed source at the university told The Daily Star.

Pro-VC Prof. M. Shahadat Ali in a letter on June 26 di-

rected deans all faculties and chairpersons of departments to follow the recommendations, but to no result, the source said.

When contacted Vice-Chancellor Prof. A.K. Azad Chowdhury said the issue was discussing at different academic committee meetings and may be raised in the next meeting of the Academic Council.

Letters were issued to departmental heads and directors of institutes to monitor the academic activities of teachers. "Unfortunately, there are allegations against some teachers that they are not sincere in taking classes regularly and conducting research activities," the VC said.

"We are compelled to keep an eye on them as some teachers are reportedly violating rules

and showing lack of sincerity in their solemn responsibility." The VC however said things will be alright as the authorities are going to take strict measures.

As per the 'recommendations', teachers "shall have to take prior permission" from the authorities for doing jobs outside the university and the authorities will permit them if it does not hamper academic activities.

It said chairpersons of the departments and directors of the institutions will monitor the academic activities of teachers and if necessary they will inform higher authorities in this regard. Teachers must take permission before leaving the station.

As per the recommendations

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tions, chairmen and directors would submit lists of teachers engaged in consultancy to the deans who would forward those to the VC. The VC would then go for disciplinary action after consultation with the dean, chairperson or director concerned.

The university authorities in recent letters to chairpersons of departments and directors of institute directors asked them to monitor academic activities of teachers and to prepare a list of those were involved in consultancy work without permission.

But the authorities found that they were hesitant to prepare the lists, the sources said.

Early this year, the DU authorities decided to go for action following widespread allegations that many teachers were not sincere to their academic activities.

"These steps have been taken following widespread allegations about the falling standard of education and increasing involvement of university teachers in consultancy by neglecting their academic duties," Prof. M. Asaduzzaman, Dean of Social Science Faculty said.

Sources said no chairperson of a department or director of an institute feels interested in making a "genuine" annual confidential report (ACR) against his colleague as the posts rotate.

Prof. Asaduzzaman said, "It is very unfortunate that none (chairperson or director) bothered to obey the order."

Prof. Asad said a good number of teachers are now involved in consultancy and not giving due attention to their academic activities, which is violation of DU rules.

Talking to The Daily Star, a good number of DU teachers however praised the authorities' step to monitor the academic activities of teachers involved in consultancy. They emphasised proper implementation of the recommendations for improving the standard of education.

Arts Faculty Dean Prof. Dr. Kazi Shahidullah admitted that the recommendations were yet to be implemented. He however said the chairpersons of different departments are now discussing the issue.