

Tale of misappropriation by 251 madrassahs

Star Report

Two hundred fifty-one madrassahs whose government affiliation and Monthly Pay Order (MPO) were cancelled due to various irregularities had been misappropriating Tk 28.8 lakh public money every month, official sources said.

The cancellation followed detection of the irregularities through investigations by the Ministry of Education in 1994, 1995, 1997 and 1998. The 251 madrassahs include 126 Dakhil, 69 Alim, 53 Fazil and three Kamil Madrassahs.

Due to the action, teachers and employees of those madrassahs will not get government contribution for their salaries and allowances.

The government grants Tk 34 thousand for a Dakhil Madrassah, Tk 39 thousand for an Alim madrassah, Tk 78 thousand for a Fazil madrassah and Tk 1.6 lakh for a Kamil madrassah per month.

The irregularities detected by the education ministry include failure to meet primary requirements for MPO, employing more teachers than the requirement on the basis of number of students, inadequate bank deposit, payment of salaries and benefits to teachers and employees showing inflated number of students and opening of upper classes in junior madrassahs without meeting the requirements.

In July 1998, the government formed a three-member committee in each of the 460 thanas in the country to detect 'fake' madrassahs and those violating rules. Each committee was headed by the Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) and included Thana Engineer (Facilities) and Thana Education Officer (TEO).

The committees gave their reports mentioning gross irregularities in madrassahs al-

most in every thana.

Besides, different special committees were formed 1994, 1995 and 1997 to look into alleged corruption in madrassahs. Action against the madrassahs followed the probe reports.

When contacted, an education ministry official said that it was a temporary action and the madrassahs will again get all benefits including those for the period for which MPO was not given. The madrassahs can apply to the ministry for restoration of MPO on condition of regularisation of things, he said.

Another official said Primary and Mass Education Department recently cancelled registration of some 100 non-government primary schools and stopped government financial assistance for them.

Meanwhile, the education

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ministry recently decided to consider applications from the 251 madrassahs. "Government affiliation or MPO of the Madrassahs will be restored if the institutions can fulfil the conditions they were lacking," said a senior official.