

Six organisations demand withdrawal of error-ridden textbooks

Countrywide sit-in programmes on Sunday

Staff Correspondent

SIX leftwing mass organisations on Wednesday announced a sit-in programme in front of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board for January 15, demanding immediate withdrawal of all textbooks with errors.

They also announced sit-in programmes in front of all district education offices in the country on the same day.

The leaders of Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigoshthi, Pragati Lekhak Sangha, Chhatra Union, Jubo Union, Ranesh Dasgupta Chalachitra Sangshad and Kendrio Khelaghar Ashor announced the programmes from a press briefing at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity.

They opined that some

of the changes in textbooks contents were aimed at nourishing sectarianism in the education system.

In the textbooks printed for the 2017 academic year, they claimed that the NCTB, yielding to the pressure from radical Islamists, was sowing sectarianism in the education system, through intentionally dropping secularist humanist writings.

Condemning dropping out texts authored by Rabindranath Tagore, Lalon Shah, Ranesh Dasgupta, Satyen Sen, S Wazed Ali and Humayun Azad from the books, Udichi general secretary Jamshed Anwar Tapon demanded exemplary punishment for the officials responsible for the anomalies and mistakes.

Lambasting insertion of prime minister Sheikh Hasina's image on the back-cover of the primary textbooks, Chhatra Union general secretary Zilani Shuvo said that such blatant political propaganda was unethical as the books were printed with taxpayer's money.

Udichi president Shafi Uddin Ahmed, Dhaka University teacher Matlub Ali, filmmaker Masiuddin Shaker, Vigarunnisa Noon School and College teacher Sangeeta Imam, Khelaghar general secretary Mokhlesur Rahman Sagor, among others, addressed the briefing.

The education ministry has so far punished three NCTB officials responsible for errors in textbooks.

Earlier on Tuesday, 85

eminent citizens in a joint statement demanded immediate withdrawal of all textbooks with errors. They also protested at dropping textbook contents of renowned writers and poets and distortion of poem, inserting picture of the leader of a political party at the back cover of the textbooks.

Admitting mistakes in the textbooks, education minister Nurul Islam Nahid on the day said that the people responsible for mistakes would not be spared. He also assured that they would rectify the errors soon.

Two probe committees - one formed by the education ministry and another by the NCTB - are working to find out the reasons behind the anomalies and mistakes.