

Textbook protesters want minister, NCTB chief to quit

Announce they will besiege education ministry Jan 31

STAR REPORT

Five socio-political organisations yesterday demonstrated in front of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) Bhaban in the capital, protesting "errors" and "communal contents" in the new school textbooks.

They held a sit-in for more than two hours chanting slogans and carrying placards reading "Stop using the textbook cover as the party's leaflet", "Why low quality paper for textbooks", "Stop communalisation and gender disparity".

Earlier, Bangladesh Chhatra Union brought out a procession from Modhur Canteen at Dhaka University and headed towards NCTB and joined the protesters there.

BCU President Lucky Akhter demanded resignation of the education minister and NCTB chairman.

She also announced that the five organisations would besiege the education ministry on January 31 if the new textbooks were not corrected and redistributed.

"Printing the textbooks on substandard paper will keep the children away from reading, and communal and sexist content is against the spirit of liberation," she said.

Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigoshthi President Prof Shafiuddin Ahmed and Jubo Union General Secretary Hafiz Adnan also spoke, among others, at the programme.

Kendriyo Khelaghar Asar and Progati Lekhak Sangha were among the five organisations which organised the demonstration under the banner of "Progressive Organisations".

Demanding the same, the Chittagong chapters of four of the five organisations held a protest rally in front of Chittagong

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District Primary Education Office in the city. At the programme, the protesters said the textbooks were communalised and anti-women. A "communal education system" has been introduced through them, they said.

Udichi's Chittagong city unit Vice-President Prabal Dey, Chhatra Union's district unit President Md Golam Sarwar, and Khelaghar's city unit Vice-President Ashish Sen, among others, spoke at the rally.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Chhatra Federation will lead a procession towards the education ministry from the Aparajeya Bangla sculpture at DU from 11:00am and demonstrate in front of the ministry today as per their pre-scheduled programme over the same demands.