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## Govt probe body not for cancelling any exams

Mohiuddin Alamgir | Updated at 12:28am on March 13, 2018

The government committee has not yet recommended cancellation of this year's Secondary School Certificate examinations although they found several leaked multiple choice questions of one or two subjects to have matched those given to the examinees at exam halls.

The probe committee sent the report to the education minister's office on Monday and it did not recommend cancellation of any exams as they thought that the question leak did not impact majority of the examinees.

'We have submitted the report today,' the committee chief and madrassah and technical education secretary, Md Alamgir, told New Age.

Committee member secretary Abu Ali Md Shazzad Hossain submitted the report to the secondary and higher education secretary Sohorab Hossain in the afternoon, said officials.

The government on February 4 formed the committee amid widespread allegations of question leak in the first two SSC exams.

The committee was primarily responsible for finding whether the 'question paper leak rumours' were true and also for recommending whether the SCC exams would be cancelled.

An investigation committee member said that they in three meetings on February 11, 18 and 25 reviewed the allegations of question leaks.

The written part of this year's SSC exam, which witnessed the largest ever spate of question leaks in the history of country's public exams.

The question paper leaks started with beginning of the public exam on February 1. It continued till February 22 when questions of Bangla 1st and 2nd papers, English 1st and 2nd papers, religion and moral studies, general maths, physics, chemistry, Bangladesh and global studies, biology and higher maths were reportedly leaked at least one hour before the starting of the exams.

Examinees and their guardians said that the questions, mostly the multiple choice questions, were leaked and found posted in several Facebook and Whatsapp groups before the start of exams at 10:00am.

They also alleged that the leaked questions were sold for Tk 500 to Tk 3000, but later the questions were found free in social media.

Education minister Nurul Islam Nahid on February 1 said that if the allegation of question leak of any paper was proved, the exam would be retaken.

The government on February 4 announced a bounty of Tk 5 lakh on any person involved in question leak, following the allegations of multiple choice question leaks in Bangla 1st and 2nd paper exams on February 1 and 3.

Besides, law enforcement agencies, so far arrested 153 people including at least ten teachers, and 53 cases were filed in this regard.

When government efforts failed to check the malpractice, on February 15, the High Court for the first time appointed two five-member committees, including a judicial committee, to find out those involved in leaking papers.

At least two probe committee members told New Age that they did not recommend cancellation of exams as question look alike substances were available at the closed groups of social media sites which had 10 to 100 members, while total number of examinees was around 20 lakh.

A member said that as the impact of question leak was not that much, it would be unwise to cancel the exam of all examinees.

The members said that they got information that MCQ question of English second paper exam on February 7 and physics on February 13 were found on social media sites at 9:53am and 9:25am respectively. On both occasions, exams started at 10:00am.

Alamgir and member secretary of the investigation committee Abu Ali Md Shazzad Hossain both refused to talk about recommendations of their committee.

Prime minister Sheikh Hasina on February 19 said that question leak in the public exams was nothing new, rather it had been continuing for long — sometimes it became public.

At a press conference at Ganabhaban, she also backed education minister Nurul Islam Nahid, who was facing huge pressure from all quarters including some lawmakers in parliament for resignation for his failure to check widespread question leaks.



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