

GOVT COLLEGE AFFILIATION

# Public univs not yet empowered

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IMPLEMENTATION of a government decision to return the affiliation authority for 281 government colleges to public universities from the National University still remains in paper only even two years after the prime minister's order in this regard.

Prime minister Sheikh Hasina asked the education ministry on August 31, 2014 to return the authority to affiliate the 281 government colleges under the National

University to public universities to get rid of prolonged academic life of students of the colleges.

A committee formed by the University Grants Commission on December 7, 2014 submitted its report on the transfer of the authority in January 2016 although it was asked to submit the report in 30 working days.

The commission wrote to the education ministry in the first week of September to take necessary steps for creating the office of inspec-

tor of colleges at 17 of the 20 public universities who would get the authority to affiliate the government colleges, officials said.

The rest three universities - Dhaka University, Chittagong University and Rajshahi University - now have the office of inspector of colleges, they said.

The committee also recommended that 837 positions should be created for the offices of inspector of colleges at the public universities.

Commission chairman

Abdul Mannan said that the process was going on in a slow pace as they needed to do a lot of paper work.

'Returning the authority to affiliate government colleges to public universities is a daunting task,' he said, adding that they needed to sort out which colleges to be affiliated with which university and gather information on manpower and financial issues of the universities.

'We need some more time to finalise all the procedures,' he said.

The National University was established in 1992 taking over the authority to affiliate colleges from the public universities of Dhaka, Rajshahi and Chittagong. At that time it was said that the National University would help get rid of prolonged academic life and irregularities.

Educationists, however, alleged that the situation worsened.

About 22 lakh students are now enrolled at 2,200 colleges under the National University. The 281 govern-

ment colleges have about 12 lakh students.

A committee member said that they recommended that the power to affiliate the 281 government colleges should be transferred to the 20 public universities.

Of the 291 government colleges, 36 would be affiliated with Dhaka, 28 with Chittagong and 32 with Rajshahi universities, the committee member said.

Seventeen public universities other than Dhaka

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Rajshahi and Chittagong universities would need infrastructures as they do not have the office of inspector of colleges. Each university would need Tk 10-15 crore for the infrastructure.

The members said that they had recommended for budgetary allocation financing education of NU as till date the university did not

need any government budget for running the university as they earn money from tuition fees and others of the colleges.

The laws on the 17 universities need to be amended to empower them to affiliate colleges, said Mannan.

A committee member alleged that their works was progressing slowly as many

top National University officials were unwilling to hand over the power to affiliate government colleges to respective universities.

Although the move was taken to reduce prolonged academic life, the National University authorities argue that problem of prolonged academic life is also acute at some public universities and how they

would take the responsibilities for the government colleges,' the committee member said.

'Position has changed since 1992, as now many teachers remain busy in taking classes at private universities, consultancy, and university administration has to work more as number of students has increased,' said the member.