

## Teacher recruitment for higher secondary level is a must

THE fact that nine government schools that introduced higher secondary education eight years ago have not yet had in hand any teachers to teach at that level is a pointer to the government's apathy to the education sector as a whole. As New Age reported on Saturday, the government introduced higher secondary courses in 11 schools between 2007 and 2009; but two of those schools were forced to close the programme because of inadequate number of teachers. The unpalatable fact is that in those schools which are still continuing with the programme, school teachers are now giving lessons to the students of XI and XII besides discharging their regular duties. According to experts, the higher secondary curriculum is vast and more descriptive than that of the secondary level and if the teachers are not well qualified and competent, they will not be able to present the courses with clarity before the students. The victims of the unpleasant situation owing to the absence of qualified teachers are certainly the students.

Teachers lay the foundation of formal education, at the primary, secondary and the higher secondary levels. Qualified and competent teachers lay that foundation in a solid manner so as to make it act as a bulwark in the academic arena so that students can pursue higher education without any difficulties whatsoever. With good and qualified teachers being put in place, classroom teaching improves, which in turn leaves students not to depend on rote learning and not to fall back on private tuition and the guide books. But here things are exactly the opposite. Many students who score the highest grade point average 5 in their previous public school and college examinations fail to qualify for admission in different universities when they appear for admission tests. This reinforces the idea that their foundation in education still remains weak-kneed and wobbly because of the foot-dragging by the government in implementing some of its important decisions. The condition worsens further when the government forgets to appoint qualified and competent teachers for teaching the newly introduced higher secondary level courses in some schools. Since its assumption of office in January 2009, the Awami League-led government has repeatedly professed its commitment to improving the quality of education at every level. The facts mentioned above, however, tend to suggest that the incumbents may not have lived up to their words, especially when it comes to education. Such indifference is unfortunate, to say the least. After all, proper education for all citizens is essential for a nation striving for prosperity.

The government, at the moment, is well advised to appoint qualified and competent teachers to teach the students of higher secondary level students in these nine government schools. But it needs to do it at the earliest, ensuring transparency in the recruitment process.