



STREAMLINING EDUCATION SYSTEM

153

We have not as yet been able to establish a stable education system. As a result, the education sector is plagued with chaos and confusion. There is, however, no dearth of awareness about the urgent need of streamlining the education system. There also exists complete national consensus on the imperative of improving the quality of education. And the authorities, since the independence, have been carrying on experimentation on all aspects of education—ranging from textbooks to institutional structure. The present government is poised to undertake certain reforms.

Addressing a conference of the BCS General Education Cadres Association, Education Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud on Friday touched upon three items of contemplated educational reforms—examination system, higher education and position of English.

Examinations are the only means of testing the talent and accomplishment of the students. When the examinations are spoiled by unfair means, the quality of education is bound to suffer. In our case, examinations have been fouled up to such an extent that certificates are increasingly losing credibility. Of late the authorities have tightened up security measures in and around examination centres and have also introduced stricter supervision. Mass violence and mass cheating, which were universal in the recent past, have stopped. But reports of violence and widespread cheating from quite a large number places during any examination, including the current Degree examination, indicate that much more need to be done. The Education Minister on Friday disclosed that the government had decided to introduce a new system of examination with a hope to check cheating in the examination halls. Students will be required to answer questions, 60 per cent of which will be of objective-type, and the rest the conventional essay-type. We want to emphasise that the best anti-dote to cheating in examinations is discipline among the teachers as well as the students.

Establishment of an open university and two affiliating universities will evidently reduce pressure on the existing six universities of the country and will also expand scope of higher education. These should not, however be achieved at cost of standard of education. We sound this note of caution, because our experience with ill-planned and ill-equipped colleges in the post-independence period has been very bad.

The Minister deplored what he termed Hypocrisy with the position of English in our education. This should end and there should be a clear policy in this regard.