

Unfair means in Higher Secondary Examination was widespread in the last public examination particularly in the rural centres. Out of a total number of three lakh 15 thousand 889 examinees of four boards, 78,452 candidates came out successful in HSC examination and the pass percentage was slightly over 24. Regarding lower percentage of pass, we cannot say that it was due to adoption of stringent measures to check unfair means at the examination halls. The measures to thwart malpractice might have been taken place particularly in the urban areas but the situation in the rural centres had become so alarming that the candidates were practically free in adoption of unfair means. It has been reported that in some centres, the examinees were allowed four or more hours to write down their answer scripts. In some cases, the teachers performing their duties as invigilators stood as silent spectators and did not risk their lives for obvious reasons. Even where unfair means was checked, the teachers were subjected to harassment and threat. This state of affairs cannot go for long and it has to be stopped for the sake of education.

In eradicating malpractice in

the examination centres, the role of teachers are of great importance. There is no denying the fact that the teachers teach not in congenial academic atmosphere and they are on the firing line. It is true to those who took up teaching as a passion not as a profession to earn money. It is a pity that some teachers collaborate with the students in their nefarious activities and pledge support in the examination halls. Moreover, a section of teachers resort to private tuition and indulge in giving them licence during the examination which helps create unhealthy situation in the educational institution. Furthermore, private tuition is a brisk business for commercial minded teachers.

The students are being used as their raw materials for exacting money as fees for tuitioning. Sometimes, they use college compound and class rooms for coaching centres. So entails bargaining point between the teachers and the examinees just before the commencement of the public examination. Educational

institutions are not business centres and we should not barter away with the lives of students. Again, the teachers teach less in the classrooms and spend energy and time at home for coaching the boy in groups. On the otherhand the teachers who try innovation, reforms in teaching are scorned at by their fellow colleagues. It has also been observed that some teachers are aligned with political parties and they consolidate their existence through political influence and not on teaching experience or wisdom.

I have cited numerous points why the students adopt unfair means. Here in my short but brief key-note, I suggest some remedial measures for eradicating this menacing stigma from the educational arena. The foremost deterrence to unfair means is the introduction of semester system for 11th and 12th classes in Higher Secondary stage. In semester

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system, the two years course can be divided into two academic sessions. The first part of academic session will be so planned so as to make the students ready for public examination.

If the students do not pass out in the first part of the academic session they will be barred from appearing in the second part of the session. This process is an effective safeguard against large-scale copying and it ensures regular attendance of students. In this context, the Board's directive is necessary. This system was in vogue in the late sixties.

The creation of too many examinees. The most of the centres are located in the remote part of the country and these centres encourage migration of so-called examinees from urban areas to rural centres and they find room for unfair means.

The imposition of Sec. 144 around the examination centres

and other restrictions remain inoperative in the face of hoodlums hired by the examinees. The invigilators on duty stand helpless and they are found reluctant to risk their lives. Otherwise, they have to submit to sheer brute force.

This scenario is common in many centres. In order to curb out malpractices, strong action must be taken against the centres and the performance of the centres must be assessed and evaluated before fresh affiliation is given. The vigilance team of the Board should make spot enquiry of the centres during the examination and report submitted for action must be adhered to by the centres.

The change of pattern of question is no less important for wiping out unfair means. The students generally follow selective questions to pass the examination. It is, therefore, imperative for setting up of objective type of question preferably multiple choice question (MCQ) covering all chapters of text books. The question setting of MCQ should not be sterio-

type and every year new pattern be evolved to make students realize that success is achieved only through hard labour and regular study of the text books.

Enforcement of discipline, law and order is essential inside and around the examination centres. It refers to internal control and orderliness in the centres. We have long recognized the need for discipline within the centre. Since most discipline problems are students caused, the Officer in-Charge of the examination centre should seek help of the members of the law enforcing agency when immediate action is needed or if any vandalism is detected and when unfair means is detected. In this connection, we bear in mind that the examinees pass their time in the examination hall in nervous and in complex state.

Any kind of intimidation, or enforcement of rigorous punishment may carefully be avoided for the sake of orderliness of the centre. The seizure of answerscript for a few minutes or administration of warnings, vigilance of the invigilators co-ordination with the law enforcing agency will serve as a deterrence to unfair means.