



Editorial

The New Nation

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Copying in examinations

COPYING in examinations, which has been almost a regular feature for the last decade and a half, has surpassed all previous records in scale and has taken on new and disquieting dimensions in the current SSC examination. Thousands of students have been expelled and action has been taken against hundreds of teachers and invigilators for aiding and abetting the adoption of unfair means. Dozens of bags of copies have been seized and burnt by the law enforcing authorities. Trained crows have been used as suppliers of copies as a novel and ingenious and at the same time highly disconcerting method of unfair means this year. To cap it all, a headmaster of a high school has been found guilty of allowing his son to sit for the examination in the cocooned comfort of his own house!

The causes of copying in examinations are so many and so varied that it will be too simplistic an answer to put the blame on one single factor. Poor quality of class room teaching, lack of congenial atmosphere in educational institutions, the system of examination, departure of teachers from the age-old ideals and values and, last but not the least, the

sick socio-political and economic ethos have conjoined to create an atmosphere of corruption that is all pervading.

Teaching in classroom is neglected by most of the teachers who are found somehow to spend their duty periods in idle gossip or perfunctory discussions for conserving their energies for the more profitable and rewarding job of private tuition in these days of high cost of living! The sky-high prices of things and the value-system turned topsy turvy have in their turn induced the teachers or ideal mentors to shrug off all idealistic scruples. The atmosphere in the educational institutions is anything but conducive to learning and teaching and is full of the miasma of factionalism and indifference to duties and values.

The attempt to attain prosperity quickly through devious by-ways without the necessary labour and industry which has become the ruling passion since independence through a curious quirk of history has thrown the value system upside down. In the prevailing uncertainties in the institutions and absence of any regard for values in society, the students get the idea that it is a certificate and not knowledge that counts. The lack of gainful prospects before the students, coupled with the emergence of jobbery or 'tadbir' as instruments of securing a job have fortified such false beliefs of students. The present system of examination encourages cramming and copying.

At a recent seminar on "Copying in examination and how to resist it," the Deputy Prime Minister in Charge of Information held the present system of examination mainly responsible for mass-copying and said that it will be soon replaced by a new system. But a change in the system of examination in favour of objective type questions and examinations at shorter intervals can solve the problem only partly. The real remedy lies in restoring the health of the socio-political ethos of society. That is a very complex and difficult task, no doubt. But a beginning has to be made somewhere. And the philosophy of education is the ideal area of beginning because it has the potentials to change the philosophy of life of society which must needs realise sooner or later that chicanery and imposture can not prove paying forever. For all its guile the crow has to feed on garbage. The sooner this realisation dawns on all the better.

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