



Editorial

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The Educational Scene

APART from the unsettled conditions in the highest seats of learning in the country, high rate of failures in S.S.C. and H.S.C. examinations and mass-copying have been in the news for quite some time. The report appearing in a Bengali daily based on elaborate statistics that the programme of universal primary education is going to end in failure and a front page picture appearing in another daily of open-air class being held in a government primary school due to delay in repairing of the damaged school building fit well into the texture of the unedifying story of our education. An interview of some educationists on the causes and cure of the high rate of failure in examinations and the poor standard of education published in another daily puts the blame mainly on what have been described as poor standard of coaching in the classroom, teachers' eye on the income from private tuition, defective syllabus and curriculum and faulty system of education. The educationists interviewed have suggested creation

of proper climate for teaching in educational institutions, employment of adequate number of properly qualified teachers, supply of text books and other teaching aids in time and stricter test examinations.

All these rhyme well with some of the recommendations of the Committee on Examination Reforms which include employment of adequate number of qualified teachers, regular training of teachers, improvement of socio-economic status of teachers, creation of congenial atmosphere in educational institutions, instilling of a sense of discipline in students and a sense of responsibility in teachers.

The highest common factor that emerges from these stories is the premium put by both teachers and the taught on money and instruments of making money. The students are eager nowadays only to have a certificate by any means and the teachers are eager to earn more and more through private tuition and other dubious methods. But neither the teachers nor the students can be blamed solely for this when money has become the sole criterion of value elbowing out all other values due to the prevailing socio-political conditions. The remark made by a speaker at a recent seminar to the effect that high living and no thinking has become the go of the day constitutes a telling commentary on the inversion of the value-system in

our society. Adding 'no action to this formulation will perhaps complete this aphorism. Ways of making quick money with almost no labour and through questionable means must be plugged and reward for honesty and hard labour ensured for rectifying the situation. This is a tall order no doubt. But a beginning has to be made somewhere. As it is always wiser to begin at the beginning, the battle for restoring the health of the social ethos is to be begun on the educational front. A sound system of education with the major thrust on science and the moral values along with the development of agriculture and employment generating agro-based industries is an imperative which we can ignore only at our own peril.