



Editorial

# The New Nation

## NORMALISING ACADEMIC ROUTINE

**CHITTAGONG** University is arranging for additional classes to cope with "session jam". The Vice-Chancellor of the University, according to a newspaper report, has said that decision to hold extra classes was taken following recommendation by the four-member session jam cell appointed earlier by the university administration. The VC further said that both the education ministry and the university grants commission have assured necessary financial assistance and other logistic support for arranging the additional classes.

The backlog of uncompleted university sessions called 'session jam' is currently one of the biggest educational problems of the country. All concerned students, guardians, teachers and the educational authorities—are manifestly eager to straighten up the

sessions tangle and restore the academic routine but the problem is proving difficult. What is worse, it is spreading in newer institutions like BUBT. Long and unscheduled closures, strikes (not only by students), repeated deferments of examinations have led to a situation where a four-year course in the university takes about seven years to complete. This not only entails wastage of time and money but the student loses interest, his performance falls, consequently he is tempted to cheat in examinations, and the whole academic atmosphere in the university is affected.

The holding of additional classes can no doubt greatly help in ending sessions jam. However, it is necessary to determine how many classes per week are the normal workload of a teacher beyond which any number of classes would be regarded an "additional". We say this because some university teachers, it is learnt, have an extremely lean roster. Along with revising the workload, other measures are to be taken. The unscheduled closures which are avoidable should be avoided. Apart from closures of the institution itself, classes are sometimes suspended for the flimsiest reason, like the holding of a freshers'

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reception and victory in a cricket match.

Examination schedule should also be strictly maintained. Students are no longer demanding postponement of examination with the same frequency and vehemence. The awareness that has evidently grown among a section of the students can be of great help in coping with the session jam.

Actually the step that Chittagong University has taken should have been taken long ago by all the affected universities. But that does not mean it is too late. If determined and concerted efforts are made, it will be possible to normalise the academic calendar in the universities.