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Welcome Signs On Campus And More

Reopening on July 25th after an extended holiday of seventeen days Dhaka University is returning to normal. first year Honours classes under the faculties of arts, law, social science and commerce of the session 1988-89 beginning from August 8th and those in science and biology having done so from August first.

Among other signs of the hope that campus discipline is returning is the non-academic programme announced by DUCSU of what it calls an anti-terrorist fortnight from August 5th. Notably encouraging is the sight of assertion of student leadership at the highest academic level to bring peace to the campus off its own bat. As we have said in an earlier leader 'on campus' there is no policing education or the universities. It does little credit to the country or students/universities that police have to be deployed to ensure campus peace. With the police force reportedly already withdrawn from the Dhaka University campus both students and the university administration should see to it that there will not be another occasion for the police to move in to deal with fresh trouble.

Reports of some institutions e.g. in Chittagong closing from fresh eruptions and of clashes between rival factions in Rajshahi University, however, read ominously. But once Dhaka University has made a success of its peace mission by effectively performing its traditional example-setting role the rest of the country's university world is expected to line up. And the beginning in this turnabout may be with the announced peace-fortnight passing off with no incident whatever. And we hope it is an immensely feasible proposition that student parties of all denominations would agree with no reservations that in their own interest they have to keep party politics away from their studies.

Enough damage has been wrought to the latter and it is time this was understood clearly by the students themselves and their leaders in particular. Once the dividing line has been clearly drawn and all concerned—teachers, university authorities, political parties and the administration—helped with it there must emerge the new horizon the nation so concernedly has been looking for. For, there is and ought to be some issues on which no difference whatever can or should exist between the groups: The issue is that higher education must be saved from the collapse it faces because of repeated trouble in the universities and the serious dislocation it has meant for the academic programmes. No other country even in the third world, has let its politics so disastrously interfere with its education.

Hoping that peace on campus is returning it has to be peace with a purpose: a conscious reactivation of academic activity on a scale and with a momentum that will make non-academic pursuits most irrelevant to a student or a teacher. May be, such a changed student outlook will take some time to catch on. Much will depend on the teachers and the faculties running study courses and the extent of their involvement with them.

The popular question of teacher-student relations must be recast in terms of how much the teacher is giving to the student or how much the latter is receiving. Who will oversee this most essential trade or trade-off between student and teacher? It is time the overall question of recovery of university education was re-examined, particularly in the light both of its failures and imperatives.