

## Occupying playground for 'Bijoy Fair'

*Is this the best way to demonstrate  
patriotism?*

THE construction of structures for a "Bijoy Fair" on a playground shared by two schools in Chandpur does justice neither to the spirit of our glorious Liberation War nor to the students who need a playground for their overall development. According to a photo in this newspaper, construction has already begun — meaning the playground will be off-limits to the children of these two schools for over a month. We feel that in attempting to commemorate our hard-earned liberty, the organisers of the fair are in fact stealing the children's freedom to play, which, ample research shows, is necessary for their physical growth, behaviour, achievement in test scores and more importantly, their social, cognitive and creative development.

Couldn't there be a better way to celebrate our victory? Is there no other ground in that area where the fair could be organised? If no, could it not be limited to a week instead of being allowed to go on for more than a month? And if the idea is to uphold and promote the ethos of 1971, could it not be done by other means such as educating students on the history of the War and engaging the public through cultural programmes and activities that do not warrant occupying a playground for a month?

The local administration should reach out to the local community for a consensus on how to better observe one of the most important days in our nation's history.