



SSC examination

The mainstream of the Secondary School Certificate examinations is flowing steadily on. But we cannot help point out some peripheral incidents centring on cheating attempts by a minuscule minority of students that led to troubles in places. For instance, on March 9, the day of English tests, some examination centres in Chittagong, Chuadanga and Jhenidah turned out to be scenes of regrettable happenings as outsiders tried to sneak or peddle some copying materials in, as oxygen of support, to the academically unprepared students. Brushes with the police reportedly left 50 persons injured and 79 examinees disqualified. Incidents were reported from Khulna and Perojpur, too. At the Dumuria upazila centre and the Perojpur Government College centre, police had to open fire to quell disturbances which were evidently out of proportion to the justified expulsion of only four examinees. The agitated mob, (and what a specimen of commotion for an unjust cause!) damaged the car of an on-duty magistrate and pelted stones at the policemen, seven of whom sustained injuries.

Admittedly these incidents upset the examination atmosphere on some scale, however limited it may have been. The essential thing to realise is that as years go by tighter arrangements are made by for peace and tranquility at the test centres upon which converge an overwhelming number of students prepared to sit the tests. They deserve the quiet and cool best suited to bring out their essence on the examination scripts. Any disturbance incapacitates their producing the best in a situation which, as it is, happens to be demanding for the high stakes involved.

To ensure a peaceful conduct of the examinations we have to separate the few who are hell-bent upon passing the tests without studying at all together with their ill-meaning associates and relatives from the main body of examinees. Not long ago, the educational authorities put a ban on the tactic of seeking transfers by students to schools in the outlying areas hoping to have a field-day in copying and cheating there. Apparently this measure has not been all that effective, more need to be done. To stem cheating at the tests and overcome the occasional other unfair means sprinkled over the results preparation phase, a comprehensive change in the examination system is due. The recommendations of the committee earlier set up to carry out this task are now in hand. We must take up their implementation as early as possible. Simultaneously penal provisions must be the harshest against those who dared interfere with examination proceedings, give any helping hand to cheating or even violate the sacrosance of academic tests by any indirect method.

For the present, our apathy towards making a short shrift of the examinations must build into a social resistance against the malady caused by only a few. The parents or guardians, teachers, examination authorities and law-keepers should not even unwittingly give any indulgence to anyone to whittle down the seriousness of public examinations. That way the offenders will be separated from the rest, and eventually reined in.