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## Restoring Schools

Educational institutions used for sheltering the flood-affected people are in a deplorable condition. On an average each school or college of the city provided shelter for about 700 people, children and old people included. For about two months these people have lived there. So it is only natural that piles of garbage have accumulated there and, worst of all, the temporary latrines and urinals erected in the open are now posing a serious threat to environment and health.

The educational institutions, on the other hand, can no longer wait. They must resume their normal academic activity, classes in particular. Already there has been a considerable loss to their academic year. Annual examinations and pre-test or test for the SSC candidates have to be completed within specific periods if the academic schedules are to be maintained. So by September 30 people of those shelters were asked to leave the place. The problem is that not all those people could return to their homes because some of them are still under water, or not suitable for human living. But return they must because of the educational compulsion.

Now what about the cleaning of the school buildings and the campuses these people are leaving behind? Neither the Dhaka City Corporation nor the agencies that carried out relief operation there are known to have given any thought to this pressing problem. If the sanitation is not restored to normalcy, students and teachers coming to schools will be exposed to a potentially great health hazard. This cannot be allowed to happen. Now that the school authorities are keen to open their institutions as soon as possible, a cleaning drive has to be launched immediately. A number of expert sanitation teams should be given the responsibility to do the job to the satisfaction of all. The sanitation has to be perfect from the medical point of view.

Some schools are doing the job on their own. A good initiative but may not be enough to ensure hundred per cent sanitation. Let there be a recommended standard for the purpose before declaring a school environment sound for starting its normal activity. The village schools short of facilities and cleaning materials must be given special attention. Otherwise, the country may confront yet another trouble of great magnitude simply because the authority did not take timely note of the situation.