



## Education Reform Priorities And Politics

The 51-member Expert Committee on Education reform formed last December, avowedly to identify problems that need to be addressed urgently, recommended banning teachers and students from involving themselves directly or indirectly in politics. Need for attention that much of what passes for political activity among teachers and their disciples, is nothing but reflection of the rent-seeking and patronage-doll culture entrenched in national level politics? Its spillover effects—mafia-type maastanism and its multi-pronged attacks—have hardly anything to do with what is meant by politics in the real sense of the term.

One may be thoroughly non-political, yet be politically conscientious. Indeed, no reasonably civilized and properly developing country's citizens can avoid being so, if intellectual, economic and political growth is an aspiration. The nation at large would be grateful if sick student politics under the overt or covert patronage of parties could be banished, and the campus rescued from assorted self-seekers. But that would require cleaning parent-politics in the first place. And only a miraculous consensus among the political godfathers and godmothers can do that.

Other recommendations include reducing teacher-student ratio, upgrading educational requirements for governing body members, instituting advisory committees to supervise all educational institutions, banning private coaching and 'notebooks', reducing disparity between the syllabi of English and Madrasah education, guaranteeing universal free primary education and other such points, many of which are not new. Our hope is, the exercise does not end up downgrading the syllabi of seeded institutions on the pretext of establishing parity among various types of education. It must be said though, that even the best of the English and Bangla medium schools and colleges, and madrasahs, could improve by making 'Health Science/Human Biology' a compulsory subject. Given the appalling health status in Bangladesh this is an imperative.

Numerous studies over the past decades have pointed to the declining standard of education in Bangladesh at every level. Recommendations to arrest the trend and enhance the quality and quantity of schools, colleges and universities however seem to be confined within files. The issue is diverted by blaming a 'mushroom growth' of low quality schools, colleges and madrasahs rather than identifying the root-cause behind this proliferation of poor quality curricula and teaching methods. Isn't it more the failure of government policy towards education over the years?

The proliferation of 'learning-shops' are but symptoms of a graver disease at the very heart of the national education sector. A survey on post-primary education reportedly found that many of the thousands of institutions that...

**Photography exhibition**  
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**Tree fair**  
The judge pronounced judgement after examining witnesses and evidence in section 6 (1) of the W and Child Repression Act. APP Nazmun Nahar Mirza quashed the case on behalf of state while Advocate Reza appeared for the accused.

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