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Holding Exam In Summer Has No Rationale

A Bangla daily has painted a most appalling picture of a HSC examination centre right in the heart of the city. It is Dr. Shahidullah College centre at Bakshi Bazar. The condition in the college rooms is so deplorable and awe-inspiring that no one in his or her right senses can think of holding exam there, especially in the sweltering heat-waves that had been mercilessly sweeping the country until the soothing rain appeared on Thursday. Imagine a crowded room of at least 50 examinees with two fans whirling and just two bulbs desperately fighting against the gathering darkness. Windows are small and ventilation is almost next to nothing. The picture is so gloomy and dispiriting that one can only pray for the examinees who sit for their second public examination in life.

If condition can be so bad in an exam centre in the city, it is not unlikely to come across a few worse cases in some of the towns and outlying areas. The heat has been so intense over the past few weeks that people have fallen sick and even there are reported cases of death due to heat stroke. Now may we ask what prompts the authority to take an examination like the HSC particularly at this time of the year?

To our mind, there is no good reason for subjecting the young examinees to such a travail. They cannot be blamed if they underperform. The demand for electricity goes up at this time of the year. Loadshedding is so common both at day and night that it has a direct impact on the preparation of the examinees for exam. Then if they are not so lucky and are huddled into a centre like the Shahidullah College, life becomes hellish. It is very demanding on the examinees to perform to their full potential.

So can we suggest a little shift in the academic year of the secondary and higher secondary education? If both exams are finished by February or March or April at the latest, there is not much to complain about—so far as the weather's hostility is concerned. Under no circumstances should the examinees be put to their maximum physical endurance test. It is a test of talent, not of physique.

Then of course, the Board authority should be careful in selecting exam centres. Their minimalist theory can be effective anywhere else but not in case of physical infrastructure. If light is insufficient in a room, it is always an inconvenience—no matter at what time of the year you hold the exam. What a shame, the examinees had to carry candle-sticks to the hall before sitting for exams! They were wise enough to do so, but when will our bigwigs come to realise that some of the centres are really unfit for taking exams? The timing of examination is a proof that they are not caring enough.