

Should evaluation system of SSC, HSC exams change?

TIMES REPORT

The educational institutions, especially those at the secondary and the higher secondary levels, are filled with discussions about various problems relating to the holding of public examinations at these levels and some measures already taken by the authorities as remedies.

The Dhaka Education Board has taken punitive actions against some secondary schools and colleges for their alleged involvement in helping students to appear at examinations through irregular process.

These are undoubtedly piecemeal solutions to a big problem it appears, and probably it will not be out of place to point out here that the authorities could have relied to a great extent on the suggestions put forward by the Examination Reforms Committee.

The 25-member committee formed on October 3, 1985 with Prof. Muhammad Shamsul Huq a former Vice-Chancellor and former Foreign Minister, at its head submitted its report to the government on April 30 last year. The 11 point recommendation put in the report is yet to be accepted.

Here let us outline some of the observations made by the committee in its report. The committee was of the opinion that the existing Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examination had failed to achieve the objectives of an examination.

Even if the faults in the system of examination are removed by way of reforms, it would be impossible to achieve the objectives of an examination fully only by conducting an external examination.

The committee after a thorough analysis of the existing system and an opinion survey came to the conclusion that internal evaluation by teachers of the concerned institutions should be made an integral part of the examination system.

The committee suggested that 20 per cent of total marks should be earmarked for internal evaluation of the candidates and 80 per cent for external examinations at the centres on an experimental basis to begin with.

Acknowledging the need for enhancing the professional skills, social status of the teachers and improving the standard of the educational institutions at these levels, the committee also called for changing the social attitudes and values as prerequisites for the purpose.

About the method of examination, the committee was strongly in favour of objective

type of questions. The proportion of essay-type questions and objective-type questions should be well balanced to ensure proper evaluation of the performance of a candidate. For language and literature the proportion of essay-type and objective-type questions should be 50: 50; and for other subjects it should be 40: 60, the committee added.

The existing system of setting of questions, at SSC and HSC levels was identified to be the most serious fault in the examination system.