

Stopping question paper leaks

New measures can be effective

WE welcome the health ministry's appointment of an independent expert to administer this year's medical admission test and its decision to introduce digital tracking devices to fend off question paper leak. Leaking of question papers can do immeasurable damage to the country. First, it allows individuals lacking proper qualifications to enter the medical profession, literally endangering people's lives. Second, it sets the wheels of corruption in motion and, most importantly, denies those with merit the chance to enter the medical profession and provide good health services to citizens. After widespread allegations of leaks last year especially, it is encouraging to see the authorities finally attempting to stop the menace with more vigour.

The fact that the entire admission process this year, starting from preparing the question papers, printing and distributing them to students' and others, will be under the supervision of a moderator appointed by the ministry, as per the recommendation of a special committee, is heartening. The committee includes journalists, medical educationists, information technologists and representatives of Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council and Bangladesh Medical Association. Moreover, tracking devices will allow the authorities to centrally locate transports moving the question papers, reducing chances of them falling into the wrong hands.

But while all these measures sound good on paper, without a change in people's tendency to resort to corruption, which in particular allowed for leaks in the past; ways to circumvent even the most sophisticated system can always be found. We hope the authorities do not allow laxity to set in again but continues to intensely pursue an end to the menace.