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The way out from educational mess

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The government is "seriously contemplating" taking drastic measures for curbing adoption of unfair means in the secondary and higher secondary level exams and the subsequent unpleasant incidents in the educational institutions, according to sources in the Ministry of Education.

About 12,500 students have so far been expelled from the exam centers throughout the country during the ongoing Secondary School Certificate examinations which begin March 16.

In many places unpleasant incidents affected taking of exams. On the second day of the examination twenty persons including four police men were injured at Chittagong when police lobbed tear gas shells and opened blank fire to disperse about five thousand unruly people who volunteered to supply copies to the SSC examinees.

Yet in many places the holding of further SSC exams were cancelled in view of the violence and mass-cheating.

According to sources, the Ministry of Education has decided to hold a joint meeting of the officials of the four secondary and higher secondary education boards immediately after the SSC examinations are over.

The meeting will review the holding of examinations throughout the country and the post-exam situation with a view to detecting the exam centers where copying and other disturbances were rampant.

Measures will also be taken to identify the persons or groups involved with such disturbances so that similar incidents do not happen in the future.

There is a proposal to take drastic steps against students who adopted unfair means in the exam

and their collaborators including a section of teachers, invigilators and school management.

It was found on many occasions that a section of teachers and external examiners was also involved in the adoption of unfair means in the exams.

Even in some centers, the candidates were allowed to take the exam outside the centers taking help from others.

Another proposal was made to withdraw all the examination centers where unfair means were rampant. If this measure creates such a situation that the number of examination centers, particularly in the upazilla level, falls short of requirement there is an alternative proposal to transfer the centers to office buildings other than educational institutions or to merge two or more centers with a view to accommodating sufficient numbers of examinees.

The government is also contemplating taking departmental actions against the examination centers which indulged in large-scale unfair tactics and to cut down government allocations for these institutions, it is learnt.

The Ministry of Education felt that the rate of unfair means in the SSC examination this year was higher than in the previous year. Last year about seven thousand students were expelled for adopting irregular means in both the SSC and HSC examinations.

As a precautionary measure, the government this year had cancelled all the exam centers outside the upazilla headquarters and all the centers were concentrated at the district and upazilla levels. But this arrangement could not help ease the situation.