

THREATENED SSC EXAMINATIONS

For hundreds of thousands of young people in this country the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination is a long cherished dream. The event marks the end of the first phase in their endeavours towards higher education and traditionally this first major public examination always enjoyed a great deal of deferential treatment in its holding and all other aspects. The young pupils who take this examination are at the threshold of realising their great expectations. After passing this examination they would be eligible for college level study.

The great enthusiasm with which both the students and their guardians take this examination is proof enough of its importance in our national life. Any setback in the holding of this vital examination is almost unthinkable to young people who come to the SSC stage after ten years of painstaking schooling. The SSC examination comes as the culmination of their education endeavours at school level. Any upset in this examination, is, therefore, a great disappointment. But no one can recollect such a disappointment descending down on the young hopefuls in the Bangladesh period. But, for the first time, the holding of the SSC examination in the present year has become uncertain. The SSC examination, scheduled to be held from the last week of the current month, is most likely to be postponed for an indefinite period due to the so-called non-cooperation movement of some political parties.

The SSC examination, understandably involves elaborate preparations. Over half a million students are to take this examination this year. For them, as many number of question papers under conditions of complete security and secrecy need to be despatched to many thousands of examination centres.

Many of these centres are in remote rural areas. The mobilization of invigilators and other paraphernalia for the examination involve huge tasks the accomplishment of which look practically impossible under the present paralytic conditions. Students have to reach examination centres often from far flung areas. With transports completely immobilized, they would be precluded from reaching the centres. The same problem would confront invigilators and others associated with the examination. As a matter of fact, it has

not been possible to send question papers, writing papers, etc. to the centres due to the all round crippling situation. Such preparations were found taken care of long ago in previous years.

Out of desperation those who have a stake in the holding of the examination, appealed to the leader of the Awami League, Sheikh Hasina, to relax her non-cooperation so that this crucial examination can be held. Sheikh Hasina in reply called for postponement of the examination by another two weeks. But everybody should realize that her call for two weeks postponement is only a ruse for she cannot, after all, declare that there is no certainty about this examination. The two weeks postponement is only a stratagem for avoiding blame that she is totally insensitive to request. But the reality is that she is completely unmoved by requests to relax the non-cooperation programme. Had she been sincere about the request, then she would respond right away and call off the non-cooperation for the period of the examination.

The gross insensitivity of political quarters to the needs of SSC examinees lays bare their unconcerned attitude. The country's economy, the future of its youth, etc. can all go to the dogs. But they must have their murderous programmes run without stop to fulfil their power ambitions.

Session jams and other related problems were eased considerably through holding examinations with regularity. But session-jams and all other attendant ills will reappear with full force to harass the students and their future due to the scuttling of this year's SSC examinations.