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## 18,000 SSC examinees punished last year

Education Minister Sheikh Shahidul Islain told newsmen on Wednesday that actions against about 8000 SSC candidates and 7000 HSC candidates had been taken for adopting unfairmeans in examinations in 1988. Of the total 2012 SSC and 1700 HSC candidates were under the Dhaka Board, reports BSS.

Addressing a Press conference on the eve of the Secondary School Certificate examinations beginning today, Sheikh Shahid said propensity of copying in examinations had to be stopped at any cost.

Sheikh Shahid sought active cooperation from all sections of people, particularly the teachers and guardians of the examinees, in the smooth and disciplined conduct of the examinations.

Turning to the menace of unfairmeans in the examinations, the Education Minister said socio-cultural organisations and social personalities had also been urged to cooperate with the government in eliminating the propensity of copying in the examinations.

He said leaders of Bangladesh Federation of Teachers' Association and the Dhaka University Central Students' Union had issued statements for stoppage of unfairmeans in examinations. Besides, he said, many other socio-cultural and students' organisations had also issued statements and brought out processions in support of eliminating unfairmeans in the examinations. He termed this as a good sign and congratulated the organisers for such initiatives.

The Education Minister said appropriate measures would be taken against the suppliers of copies. He said if the person involved in it, a teacher or an official connected with the examination, he would be put behind the bar and even his services may be terminated for the offence.

He said Upazila, District and local administration were taking measures for preventing adoption of unfairmeans. Even, he said, the teachers who were engaged in private tuition were debarred from being selected as

invigilators.

Sheikh Shahid said the examination system would be changed upto Class VII from this year while the system would be change at SSC level from 1992.

Sounding a strong warning, Education Minister said nobody was above law and that law would take its own course against violators.

The Education Minister said Tk. 656 crore would be spent under universal primary education programme during the Third Five-Year Plan to increase the number of school-going children from 60 per cent to 70 per cent by the end of the plan period.

For increasing literacy rate, the Minister said non-institutional educational establishments were being set up for the working children. UNICEF and other organisations also came up for setting up such institutions in the country, he said.

He said the government had successfully reduced the number of drop-out from the primary schools to 13 per cent from 22 per cent.

Sheikh Shahid said the government would set up six high schools in the capital to ease congestion in the educational institutions.

He said plans for improvement of the universities in the country had also been taken. More residential halls would be built in the universities for the accommodation of students, he added.

Replying to a question, the Education Minister said the government wanted to encourage women to take up teaching as profession and reduce the gap between man and woman in the profession.

Sheikh Shahid said the government wanted to see that democracy was established in the educational arena. With this aim in view, elections to students' union of Dhaka, Jahangirnagar and Engineering universities had already been held, he said, adding that elections in other universities of the country would also be held soon.