



No Copying In H.S.C Exam?

Before each of the public examinations—Secondary School Certificate (S.S.C) and Higher Secondary Certificate (H.S.C) examinations to be precise—the authorities promise us almost everything we could ask for in connection with holding examinations. We get a long list of the do's and don't's, courtesy of the newspapers, which the Education Board and Ministry think would be enough to get rid of mass copying and other malpractices in the exam halls. The latest addition to the list is a circular meant for teachers and invigilators, and/or public notices meant for the examinees and the general public. The notices contain both warning and appeal—warning against malpractices in exam halls and appeal for co-operation from all for peacefully conducting exams.

If the recently concluded S.S.C exam is any guide, we can see that such calls fell on deaf ears. The authority failed to conduct the examinations fairly and peacefully. Thousands of examinees had to be expelled from the exam-halls for adoption of unfair means. Even teachers were found guilty of collaboration in such vile acts. Clearly neither threat nor appeal is an effective deterrent to all kinds of aberration our public examinations are vulnerable to.

Time that the authorities recognised that they are as yet thinking in terms of a cosmetic surgery not in terms of a cure from within. True, the authorities have gone for the grading system for evaluation of the students' merit both at the S.S.C and H.S.C levels. We even came across statements that the system would do away with mass copying and other aberrations associated with education. This was too much to expect. A mere change in the system of merit evaluation is not going to address all the educational ills. In all likelihood the S.S.C trend will continue and the H.S.C will follow suit.

What is needed is a thorough overhaul of our education system. The only good thing ever to happen till date is the changes brought about in the format of the question papers. But unfortunately, not many teachers are found qualified enough to make the students familiar with the new format, let alone improving their method of teaching to meet the challenges of the day.

If one has to single out the weakest spot in our education, it is the quality of teaching. So the most urgent task is to take care of it. Whatever merit the new evaluation system has will ultimately prove of little help if the students do not learn their lessons in a proper way and do not acquire knowledge according to the demand. Today's exams test special skills of the examinees not their knowledge. This should not be the case if we want to develop our education in consistent with that of the advanced countries.