

Improving SSC, HSC exam systems

The public examination system has been a widely discussed subject matter in the country. Deficiencies in the present system of public examinations have long been pointed out, but significant improvements have not come forth. At S.S.C. and H.S.C. levels the provision for improvement in the examination has been allowed since 1968. It is very unfortunate that a progressive improvement along this line has not taken place.

At both S.S.C. and H.S.C. levels, we test students on 10 subject areas for courses of duration of two years. This is too demanding a requirement. Examinations based on such exhaustive course materials have long been abandoned in advanced countries of the world. It is, therefore, no wonder that a large number of our students fail in our public examination system.

The students find the vastness of the subject matter beyond their comprehension and in the process, lose interest in learning. Given the poor level of education on the whole in S.S.C. and H.S.C. level institu-

tions, the large percentage of failure is quite natural. In fact, I would like to say that the courses are too demanding even for the best children of the country. Because of the vastness of the course material and the parental demand for high marks in the examinations, the best brains of the country are being wasted in the cram-

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ing process and selective coverage of course material.

It is necessary that the system of examination and courses be continually reviewed. I believe a national committee should be set up to make continual small changes in the examination system so that the learning process is encouraged. As a start a slight change in the S.S.C. and H.S.C. level examination systems could be brought about.

Students should be allowed to pass S.S.C. and H.S.C. examinations by appearing in three consecutive years. In these examinations, they may appear in subjects of their choices, and at no time they would require

to appear in all subjects. In addition, if they pass in a subject and do not want to improve on their performance in that subject, they do have to appear in that subject in subsequent years.

There may be many pros and cons of this method and a better method may be evolved. But a discussion should be initiated at least right now. The proposed system would allow a student to selectively upgrade his examination results, making him eventually eligible to enrol in institution of higher learning, where he could not have entered under the present system because of the probability of poorer results. This would not be unfair to students who would go for higher education through one examination. A student appearing at improvement examinations would pay a price by additional years of study.

Finally, any improved system would mean an increased paper work. But it would be a criminal offence to keep an 'inefficient' system which can be improved with some effort.