

## Corruption in education departments

*The minister's resolve to fight it is welcome*

**B**Y announcing that he would wage a campaign against corruption and graft in his ministry, the education minister has brought to the fore a problem that has bedevilled the government education sector for long.

Allegations abound about how corruption takes place during transfer and posting of the teachers or while issuing the monthly payment orders (MPOs). As far as reports go, even students' admission is not immune from the evil practice. Even the Transparency International, Bangladesh's reports had more than once identified the education department as one of the most corrupt in the country.

But it is one thing to point the finger at a problem, it is another to show a way out of it. On this score, the minister himself has admitted that to get the proper evidence of the malpractice as it takes place is the hardest part of the job. So, the question that one may raise at this point is: was any serious attempt ever made at the official level to collect such evidence of graft and bribery in the education ministry?

Reassuringly though, the education minister has decided to put his foot down in the matter. A note of caution, hopefully, would not be out of place here. For we have had enough of pledges and even crusades to root out administrative corruption in the past.

To all appearances, the education minister means business. And to address the problem at its source, it would be necessary to set up a strong monitoring mechanism within the different departments under the ministry. If run effectively, this would go a long way in collecting necessary evidences against instances of wrongdoing within the ministry. Apart from oversight from within, members of the public, or other victims, affected by corruption should also be encouraged to come out with their grievances to the appropriate authorities created for the purpose. The media can also play an important role.

After all is said and done, it is now the time to take action. It is hoped the education minister will really blaze a trail in his ministry for other government departments to follow.