

Opting For The Best Teachers

Teachers of non-government schools, colleges and madrasahs make news for various reasons. Yesterday's news concerning them was both appalling and encouraging. One report carried in a daily alleges that teachers are falling victim to political wrath because of allegiance to the Opposition. Another report carried in several newspapers says that the managing committee's appointing authority has been withdrawn. Eligible candidates will have to sit for a test before they are inducted into a panel under the supervision of a district level committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner (DC).

The second looks to be a very good move. So far as appointment of teachers are concerned, the wings of the managing committees, against many of which charges of wilful bad selection are plenty, have effectively been clipped. But whether like their hiring authority if they have also lost their firing authority is not at all clear. In all fairness however, situation demands that their firing authority is totally withdrawn. Otherwise the political pogrom in non-government schools and colleges will continue. If teachers are removed from their service for the reason that they had allegiance to the opposition Awami League, a large number of highly qualified and competent teachers will find themselves out of job.

Now if the purpose of the new regulations for appointment of teachers is to ensure that the best qualified get the job, it is also incumbent on the authority to see that the best in the trade do not get victimised. According to the report, a good number of highly competent teachers had to quit and the process has not come to an end. We protest such political victimisation. At the same time hail the latest move aimed at creating opening for the most eligible candidates.

However, we have a lurking fear. What happens in open tender at times may also be replicated in case of holding test for the candidates seeking the job of teachers. This is alleged to have happened in case of appointment of teachers, of all places, including at Dhaka University. If this can happen at this level, at the lower level one cannot rule out the employment of both intimidation at the time of submission of applications or even snatching of the applications like the tender boxes. Indeed politics has made an ugly inroad into all spheres of our lives. Education is no exception and we are just paying a heavy price for our indiscretion.

We hope our worries will prove groundless in the end and the authorities will receive the message we have tried to convey from our concern expressed much ahead of implementation of the new rules and regulations. At least the authorities should brace for the worst and only then it can do justice to the programme of retaining and selecting the best qualified teachers.