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Why Corrupt Education?

Enlistment of monthly pay order (MPO) for non-government educational institutions was a brisk business right from the introduction of the system. It has only reached a new high with political consideration getting the top priority for enlistment during the present regime. A report carried in a Bangla daily says that over the past three and a half years as many as 59,000 teachers and employees have been enlisted for MPO. MPOs for another 12,000 have been finalised. According to security agency reports, a teacher has to pay between Tk 10,000 to 30,000 in bribe. Then the going rate for transfer from village schools to ones in Dhaka city is between Tk 50,000 to 100,000 and to other cities is Tk 50,000. Some of the money goes to solicitation or recommendation. During this period, the local MPs or ministers have played the dominant role in solicitation with an overwhelming emphasis on party loyalty. So crores (millions) of taka have exchanged hands for MPO enlistment.

Clearly the bribe business at the Shiskha Bhaban (education building) is rampant. When the criteria for selection of teachers for schools and colleges and MPO enlistment are so questionable and a corrupt regime gets established round the controlling ministry or body, one knows for sure what quality of education these schools or colleges, will offer. Moreover forcing educational institutions or teachers to pay bribe is criminal and no wonder the criminality permeates into the fabrics of society. Teachers are supposed to mould characters of students. But when unqualified men and women get the job in exchange for huge bribe money, they cannot or are morally incapable of instilling high ideals and moral principles in their students.

True traffic sergeants, police officers, men from a few government departments figure prominently on the list of the most corrupt. But who produced the traffic sergeant who mugged Tk 14 lakh from a businessman? In the past five months as many as 13 men in uniform including seven traffic sergeants, an ASI and three members of the RAB have been terminated from service for their involvement in various criminal involvement including mugging and illegal toll collection. What about the ministers or MPS and the officers and employees in the Shiskha Bhaban who advanced the cause of unqualified candidates for teaching and then forcing them to pay bribes? No man is born a criminal; it is our system that makes most employees and officers so.

Then who turns the teachers corrupt? It is the country's vile politics with no ideals or patriotism that has been at the root of most of the problems. Corrupting influences of politics is so pervading that politicians have been on the look out to find ever newer avenues to maximise their unearned income. Practising graft is the name of politics, so much so that penniless politicians have overnight turned into wealthy businessmen and no wonder today the business people dominate our parliament. Unsurprisingly, education sector is no more immune from the bane. This explains why the standard of education is so poor in the majority of schools and colleges. We ask the politicians to leave education alone. Without proper education our large population within a small geographic boundary will prove to be a burden instead of a resource. For God's sake make it a point not to corrupt education and it will bring the country basketful dividends.