

Editorial
28

HSC Examinees Deserve Better

A number of dailies yesterday carried a news item, detailing the sufferings of Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinees as a result of keeping the Mymensingh Road off limit to the public in the morning for long. This was done as part of putting in place stringent security at the time of Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed's motorcade passing the Farmgate section of that road. What is more, the examinees who were in great rush to arrive at the examination centres, many of which are located around Farmgate, in time were not even allowed to use the foot-bridge. Examinees who had to pass the crossing at Farmgate point to go to their exam centres at Dhanmondi, Lalmatia, Mohakhali etc were compelled to go through agonising moments and many of them arrived late at their examination centres. Yesterday's was as important a paper as theoretical Physics and what happens to an examinee when he arrives half an hour or 40 minutes late at the centre needs no elaboration.

No doubt that the security of the VIPs is important but no less important is a public examination like the HSC. The unforeseen delay can ruin a student's life. We like to believe that Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed who advocated a knowledge-based society never entertained the idea of causing such problems to the examinees. Nor should his government enjoy display of excessive and uncaring aura of power like the rulers in the past who loved the show perhaps because they thought it created a regal impression and left the bystanders awe-struck. This government has enjoyed full confidence of the people at the time it took over but it is now showing signs of crack as there are evidences of lack of coordination and a sense of direction. On many of the vital issues such as the price hike, it is tottering instead of taking firm control of the situation.

So far as security matters of the VIPs are concerned, the agencies are not getting their acts together. If coordinated well, the roads are not required to be kept off limit to the public for long. When the HSC examinations are on, the situation demands that the security agencies fix the timing of the VIPs' movement in a way that it does not require the closing of the roads at least half an hour before the scheduled starting time of examination. In countries like Canada even on normal days, buses carrying students are given VIP treatment and all other vehicles hurriedly make way for them to pass. We can at least make sure that on the examination days, the students are not delayed because of a VIP's movement through an important road. Those who were responsible for excessive restrictions often do so on their own in the absence of clear instructions. If an examinee produces admit cards, there is no reason why s/he be barred from using the footbridge or the road. Well coordinated security takes care of such matters.

The common people have great expectations from Fakhruddin Ahmed's government, no matter if it is elected or interim. But matters like ignoring the case of HSC examinees in the name of security will definitely erode people's confidence in the government. People want it to be caring and responsive to their needs and aspiration.