



cheating

editorial
in public examinations

The young generation of today is the nation builders of tomorrow. When this young generation resort to cheating as a means of excelling academically the nation is faced with a bleak future. Cheating has spread like an epidemic in our public examinations, especially in the rural areas of the country. The examinee but guardian, teachers, friends and even policemen engage themselves in the act of cheating. Teachers and guardians irrespective of their age, fail to realize that cheating is equivalent of stealing and thus equally shameful. Education is the foundation of a nation – the first and one of the most important steps to progress. Education means knowing your present and past, your society, country and the world. It gives you the ability to plan your future, to gain knowledge and humane qualities and teaches you to be innovative. Neither individuals nor nations can be successful without a concrete education. In any venture for establishing democracy, equal participation of men and women, transparency, accountability and good governance in all stages of our society and state, we first need higher education. Cheating in public examinations poses one of the major impediments in this effort.

In Bangladesh cheating in the public examinations existed even in the old days. In the nineteenth century, the Dhaka Prakash, a newspaper published from Dhaka occasionally highlighted, along with other stories, news about cheating in examinations. The Report of the Hamoodur Rahman Commission, which was formed in 1964, also expressed concern at the cheating and malpractices in examinations. The Dr. Kudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission Report of 1974 stated that “recently held examinations witnessed widespread cheating” and that cheating has turned “the examination into a farce.” The 1988 Report of the National Education Commission also commented that the continuing slide in the condition of examinations has taken on an daunting form and also the severity of such corruptions has increased greatly. A recent research survey conducted by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) states that the main challenge for the secondary education is posed by “prevalent cheating in the Board conducted examinations, leaking of question papers and such other rampant corruptions.”

The chronological picture of cheating in public examinations in Bangladesh is owing to the negative impact of several long-standing socio-economic and political factors, together with the influence of decadence and deterioration suffered by our commitment and values. Today Bangladesh is faced with both the challenges and prospects of globalization at the onset of the 21st century. This challenge cannot be taken on without honest and capable leadership. If the nation is to be developed under the leadership of competent individuals, then the foundation of education must be made stronger. National excellence can only be achieved through the enrichment of every individual. It would not be possible to strengthen the fundamentals of Bangladesh and achieve national excellence unless cheating in public examinations is stemmed, and dignity and integrity restored to the public examinations. The main responsibility of combating cheating in examinations lies with the Government. Nevertheless, it is important to have the collective efforts of students, teachers and guardians for creating a cheating-free environment for examinations—with of course the necessary measures by the concerned authorities. We must rid ourselves of this national bane so that the journey towards creating enlightened men and women is smooth and unimpeded.

Photograph: David Barikder, Shaptahik 2000.



Transparency in election

Not much time is left for the national elections. Who shall we see in the next Parliament? Honest politicians, social workers, leaders? Or shall we see retired bureaucrats, army men, smugglers, gunrunners, drug dealers, women traffickers and gold smugglers? People with vested interest will donate funds to the political parties for their nomination, clearly not for social service. They will

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undoubtedly take back, by any means, twice/thrice of what they spend. The elections must be free, fair and neutral in the interest of democracy. Thanks to TIB Newsletter Year 5 March 2001 issue for publishing an editorial on this subject.

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VIP Corruption

Even if minor cases of corruption have occasionally been brought to justice, nothing happens in the case of corruption by VIPs. One need not reiterate that the politicians patronize these corrupt people. People with illegal arms, terrorists, arms dealers and drug and gold smugglers all enjoy the blessings of politicians, direct-

ly or indirectly. These politicians are therefore unable to nab them even by enacting the Public Security Act. This is because, as the saying goes, ‘you pull the ear and the whole head comes’—in this case it is not only the head, but the neck and also the body that is bound to come. And therefore, corruption by VIPs remains under cover, and perhaps will remain

so for ever. We want an end to this..

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Institutionalising corruption

Institutionalising of corruption in Bangladesh today is very clear. Corruption in the Police, Customs, BDR, Income Tax, VAT, Excise tax, PWD, Roads and Highways related organisations has become part of the system. All parties seem to know the work-wise and level-wise rates for bribery. Corruption has become institutionalised at an unbelievable rapidity and its liability falls not so much on officials as on the politicians.

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Punishment for the corrupt

It can be seen from TIB’s listing of corrupt practices for the period July - December 2000 that corruption in the Police, health sector and by class 1 government servants has cost the Government 5500 core taka. If that be the figure for 6 months, then the total for the full term period of this Government is a matter of great concern. Corruption at this rate casts a negative influence. The Government should institute proper inquiry and punish all individuals and organisations linked to corruption.

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Want end to corruption in Police

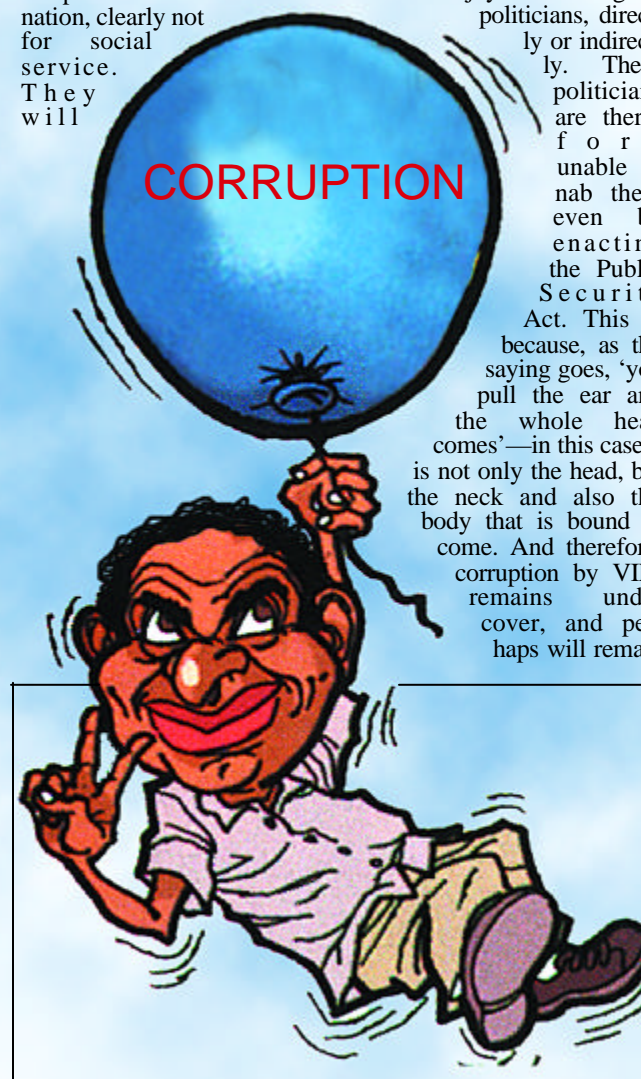
On 14 April, a TIB Report was quoted stating that the most corrupt agency in the country was the Police. When we turn the pages of a newspaper, we find reports of murder, rape, toll collection, dacoity, looting and hijacking perpetrated by the Police. It is therefore a matter of urgency that corruption in the Police be checked. Otherwise, the law and order situation will break down completely and furthermore, it will not be possible to maintain the neutrality and transparency of the judiciary.

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Corruption in Asia

The Asia-Pacific Conference on curbing corruption was held last December in Seoul, South Korea. Vice President John Lintzer of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said that the extent of corruption was very grave and he apprehended that it would have dangerous impact on the global economy. He said that the heavy burden that widespread corruption piles on poverty poses a serious challenge for ADB. However, in the context of globalisation, if we do not meet its impact, there is bound to be serious threat to the economic future of this region, affecting the region’s economic architecture.

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Accountability of the Government

Recently, the World Bank and other donor agencies have identified corruption as the main problem for Bangladesh. In some reports, it has even been said that if corruption is checked, the growth rate can be effectively doubled. There has however been no forward movement in checking corruption. TIB is working towards curbing corruption, which is undoubtedly in the greater national interest. The real issue however is the political will of the Government. The Government must be answerable to the people. Only accountability can force a Govt. to adopt effective measures to curb corruption.

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