

Feature Education

Curing Defects in the SSC Examination

by Ziaul Hossain Khan Majlis

THE SSC examination is considered the most important public examination in Bangladesh. If examinations are tools, designed for various purposes and to perform various operations, none of them can be perfect but some can be more precise than others, and even a good instrument can be misused. Yes, the tools used in the SSC examinations are being misused as our proclivity is to imitate others without studying the feasibility.

at the examinations. In this way the average as well as the below average students pass in the examinations without going into the depth of the subject matter. Their orientation on the subject matter is usually sketchy like that of a tangent in geometry. What is expected of a student on passing the SSC examination? Apart from the certificate, is there any true difference between a student of Class X and a student who has passed the SSC examination? That is why, it is revealed that due to mishandling, the device has almost become a deceptive one.

Objective-type Questions The demerits of the essay-type questions are the merits of the objective-type questions and vice versa. The objective-type questions include: (1)

randomly from the whole syllabus which represents an instrument with high content as well as predictive validity. As a renovation in our education system, we have introduced a combination of both the tools. Aren't the objective-type instrument misused? So, by mishandling the instruments we have introduced a defective system of examination in the name of renovation. It seems to be for the sake of 'change'. Since curriculum is a changing phenomenon, the educationists might have been tempted to get rid of monotony! But we should keep in mind that change may be good or bad. It is only the wise men who study the feasibility of bringing about a change. So, it is apparent the renovation will jeopardise our education system. In order to

and they will give their judgement on a different sheet, that is, they will not write anything on the script. The two scores can be compared statistically and if they differ significantly, a third examiner can be employed for the final judgement. In this way, the carelessness of a scrutinizer can be traced out and there must have the provision of punishment for this sort of failure or negligence. (It can be argued that the fate of a student can be by no means depend on a careless or an incompetent scrutinizer).

Since each tool has got some merits as well as demerits, a combination of both the instruments is in vogue in the developed world. The creative potentiality is nourished along with the content validity.

multiple-choice questions, (2) matching, (3) true-false, and (4) filling the gap. In order to make the instrument reliable and valid, all the four categories need to be used to the extent it is required. In Bangladesh only the multiple-choice questions represent the objective-type tests. Moreover, the students know the items with the help of the so-called question bank. What sort of reliability and validity do these question have? Is it an attempt to make the education easier?

A Combination of both the Tools

Since each tool has got some merits as well as demerits, a combination of both the instruments is in vogue in the developed world. The creative potentiality is nourished along with the content validity. The objective-type items give the opportunity to ask questions

ward off this negative trend, the following recommendations can be considered.

- 1. In order to make the essay-type questions unbiased, a point-scale can be used. For example, a question assigning 10 numerical value can have the following point-scale: Scope of content ->2, organizing the content ->3, grammatical aspect ->3, and relevance to the question asked ->2. 2. A script must be scrutinized question-wise, that is, each time a scrutinizer will be scrutinizing a particular question of all the scripts. In this way, variations in judging scripts due to various factors like mood, situation of the environment etc, can be reduced to a large extent. 3. A script must be scrutinized by two scrutinizers

false, and filling the gap should be used to the extent it is required.

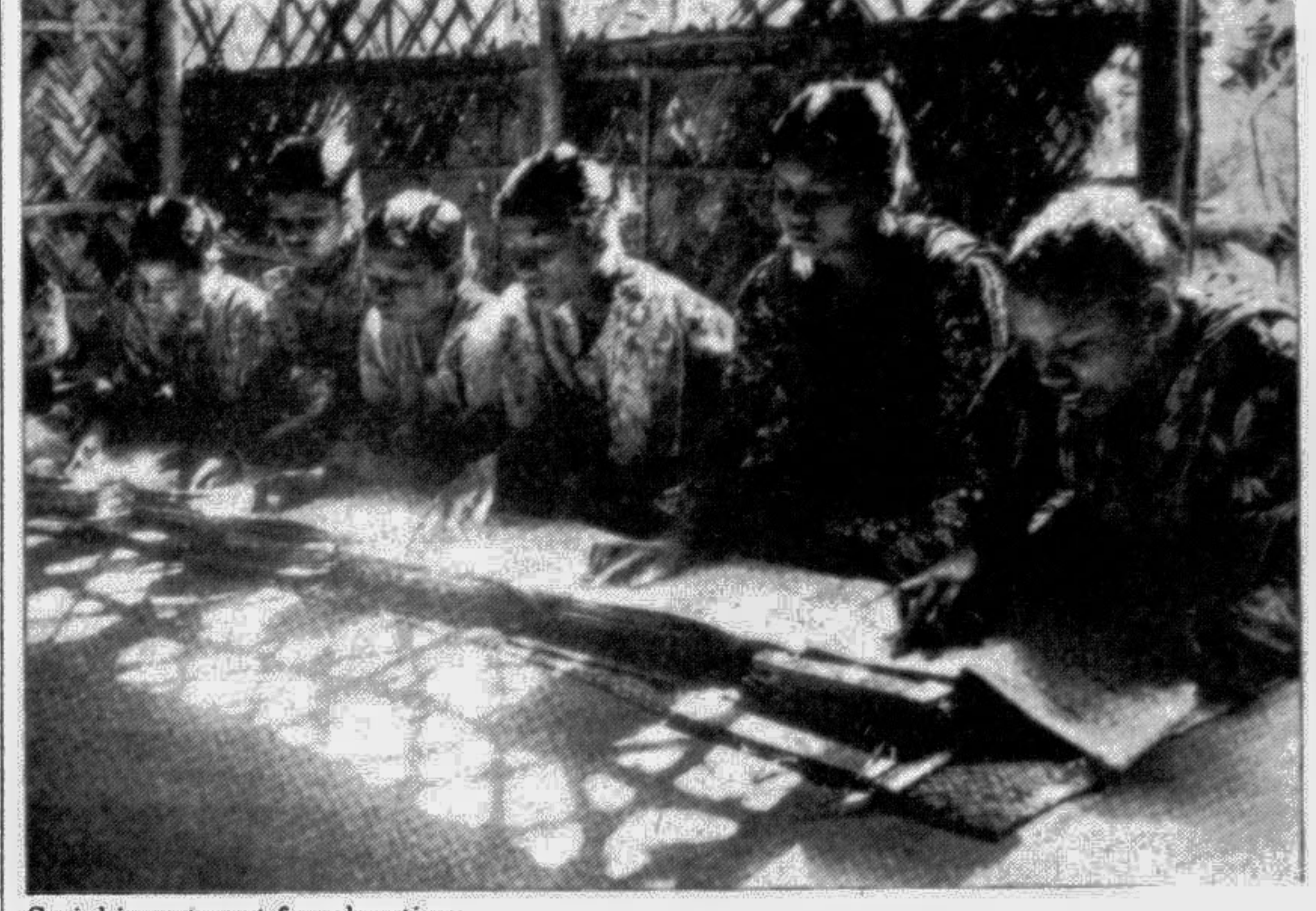
- 5. The multiple-choice question are of six categories. They are: (1) knowledge, (2) comprehension, (3) application, (4) analysis, (5) synthesis, and (6) evaluation. The questions representing analysis, synthesis and evaluation are categorized as higher than application through which the intellectual potentiality of a student is measured. A public examination must have to be standardized and in doing so there must be a good combination of all the six categories of the multiple-choice questions. 6. The stem of the multiple-choice item must be made clear, specific and short in order to avoid unnecessary confusion.

Women's Education More Profitable than Power Plants

WOULD you rather that your government build a power plant than spend for the education of girls and women?

three maternal deaths. This benefit does not include the other benefits brought about by a greater knowledge of health care, which women with some education are more likely to be able to acquire.

The primary reason for increasing the outlay for women's education is of course the women themselves, among whom a "general pattern of deprivation" is observed. Symptomatic of such deprivation is the fact that "as many as 100 million women are miss-



Social investment for education

But Lawrence Summers, chief economist of the World Bank, thinks otherwise. In a policy research paper, a brief of which was published by the World Bank, Mr Summers compares investing on women's education not only with other social investments but also with investing in economic development projects.

The World Bank's chief economist has an advice for developing countries - reexamine spending priorities (e.g. build one less power plant) and put what is saved into women's education. The returns, he assures, will be so much higher

ing," because of the higher death rates among young girls compared to boys. Rather than viewing it as a consequence of poverty or as something that is dictated by culture or religion, underinvestment in women should be seen as "an economic problem that results from a vicious cycle of distorted incentives," says Mr Summers.

Opportunities for Mining Education in Britain

by Alan Kennedy

CENTRES of education in mining and related subjects in Britain have decreased in number over the years, paralleling the decline in the country's predominantly coal-based mining industry.

and Postgraduate (DMT/MPhil/PhD) degrees in mining engineering, minerals engineering and mining/industrial geology. Entrance to undergraduate courses is with one or two "A" levels, preferably in maths, physics, chemistry or geology.

earth scientists wishing to update or extend their knowledge in a broad range of topics related to the international minerals industry, it normally lasts one year (full time).

strengthened in 1990 by merging with the Department of Mining Engineering at Newcastle, northeast England, which itself had global recognition in areas like rock mechanics.

Now, only four university departments or schools in Britain are exclusively devoted to mining and minerals education: the Camborne School of Mines, in Cornwall; the University of Nottingham Department of Mineral Resources Engineering; the University of Leeds Department of Mining & Mineral Engineering; and the Royal School of Mines (part of London University's Imperial College).

The CSM is always pleased to consider equivalent qualifications, such as the West African Examination Council's exams, and gives special consideration to overseas candidates, recognising, for example, the Diploma in Mining from Ghana's Tarkwa School of Mines, the International Baccalaureate, the BSc Science Part I of the University of Botswana, the Advanced Certificate/Diploma from the Zambia Institute of Technology, and so on.

The mining department takes an active role in European projects. For example, one in conjunction with Oviedo University, in Spain, is aimed at assisting the Polish mining industry adjust to a market economy.

Leeds claims to have the largest mining/minerals department in Britain (and possibly Europe). A variety of courses related to the minerals extractive industries are offered, including Mining Engineering, Mineral Engineering and Quarry Engineering. To gain admission to the Mining or Mineral Engineering courses candidates require a minimum of two C-grade passes at "A" level in maths and chemistry (or equivalent).

Highly Trained Modern mines and minerals engineering/coal preparation plants are now multi-million pound installations, incorporating the latest technological innovations, and the level of mechanisation in the industry is ever-increasing.

Nottingham, lies in the centre of England in an area of major coal and mineral production. The Department of Mining Engineering at the university there changed its name in August 1992 to the Department of Mineral Resources Engineering, to better reflect its broad range of activities. It offers spacious, well-equipped laboratories sited on a pleasantly landscaped campus, 5 km from the city centre.

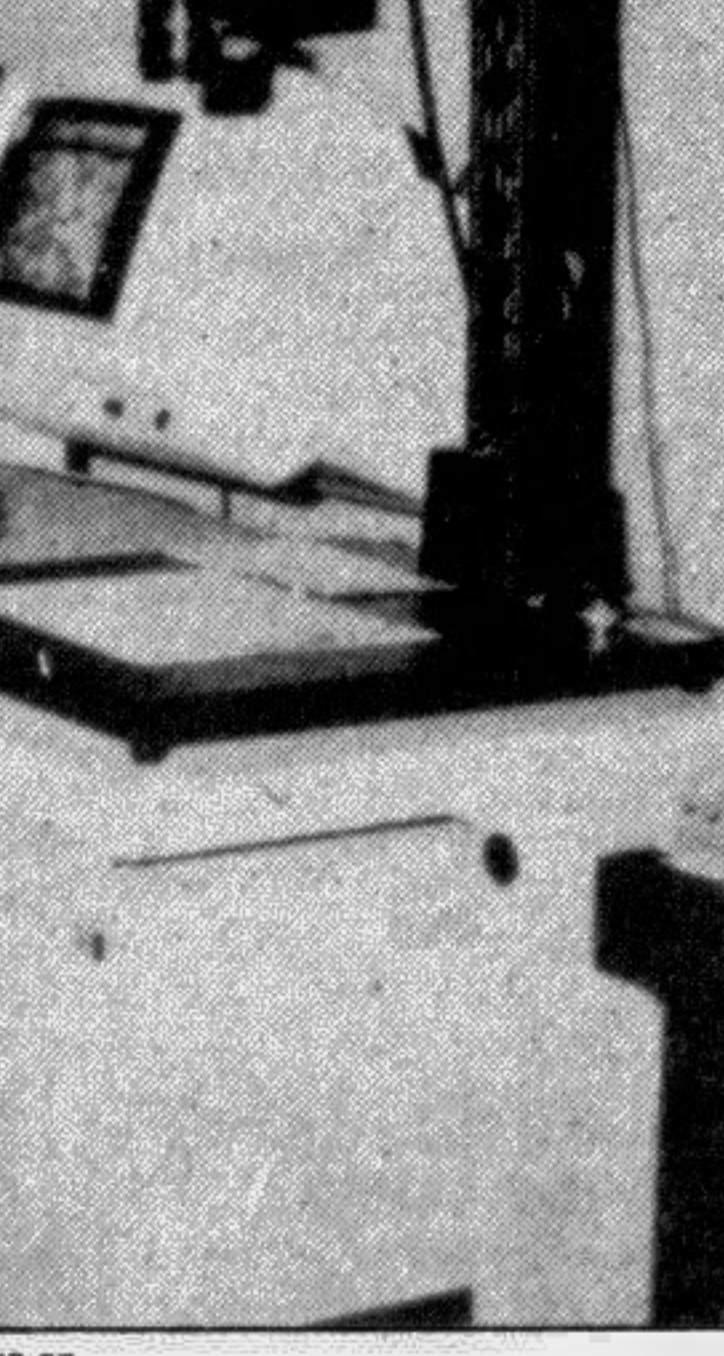
From October 1992, new entrants to the department will also be offered optional courses in European languages when "modularisation" is introduced. This acknowledges Britain's increasing ties with Europe, where the lack of another language could put British mining graduates at a severe disadvantage in relation to their continental counterparts.

Global Recognition Leeds University, in Yorkshire, northern England, is one of the largest in the country and two years ago was voted the country's most popular in a national survey of students. The Department of Mining and Mineral Engineering, already a centre of excellence, with an international reputation in such fields as geostatistics, was further

Facilities include two underground test mines, a mineral processing plant and extensive laboratories. Traditionally an independent mining school, the CSM is now merging with Exeter University, in neighbouring Devon, but will retain its name and Cornish location. Students registering from October 1992 will receive their degrees from Exeter University.

The department has a long history of academic endeavour in subjects relevant to the minerals industry. It enjoys a worldwide reputation, with academic and research staff having expertise in geology, exploration, rock mechanics,

Advanced image analysis facilities in use at Nottingham's ITCMI



Myanmar Revamps Primary Schools

by Catherine Quoyeser

DESPITE the heat and the buzz from a construction site outside, teacher and students are laughing, engrossed in a collective attempt to draw a cat on the flip chart.

These imperatives account for the drawing of the cat. An exercise in creativity, it allowed participants to learn from their peers in a joyful, "hands-on" fashion rather than merely listening to Ms Peiris given an abstract definition. And like the inspirational proverbs, quotations and cartoons about children and education displayed in the room, the flip chart demonstrated the value of learning aids in stimulating interest and reinforcing lessons.

Convinced that hierarchy is the enemy of student-centred teaching, for example, she ate lunch alongside of them daily. "We must become a band of common workers, committed to a common, noble goal," she said.

Asked to make it funny, participants have added, a 'gaungbaung' or traditional Burmese cap, spectacles, a pipe, and necktie, a T-shirt with the words "I love mice" and some droppings. Short on inspiration, the first volunteer added whiskers.

That's not funny, is it? the teacher had queried, with a trace of irritation. A primary class in session? No. It's Kamala Peiris, a 63-year-old educator from Sri Lanka, presiding over an education workshop for researchers, policy-makers and teacher-training college lecturers here in Yangon.

Though much follow-up will be required, the workshop apparently went a long way towards creating this commitment. In a farewell speech, one of the participants noted that they regularly resumed discussions on workshops issues far into the night at their hostel, and were eager to contribute to the success of CAPS.

The project's name is somewhat misleading, as the opening exercise of the week-long workshop demonstrated. Organisers and participants modelled a variety of caps to illustrate that quality education must be pursued on many fronts, and that teachers must take on many roles.

No more than 11 per cent of the people in Myanmar goes on to secondary school

For example, though it is responsible for basic education in general, his department is now considering concentrating the efforts of its curriculum unit at the primary level or, alternatively, creating a new division of primary education.