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Admission to Ctg pry schools a trauma

Chittagong Office

CHITTAGONG, Jan. 30.—About 60000 school goers in Chittagong city have been facing a baffling situation to get admitted to better schools this year.

The parents of these primary school goers are now queuing for admission forms and their wards are simultaneously working over sample questions for admission tests.

These boys and girls of primary level have been scrambling here for admission to existing primary

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schools. But these primary schools can accommodate maximum two thousand freshers. However, the rush is primarily for admission to a few good nurseries and kindergartens in the city.

The so-called good schools are broadly divided into a handful of Bengali medium schools and English medium ones. The students from higher income group families usually prefer English medium schools. The Bengali medium schools now a days draw a huge number of students too.

A recent study showed that the Government and Chittagong Municipal Corporation run primary schools usually get students from lower middle class parents. Since this year admission to most of these schools are still in process, a missionary kindergarten here issued four thousand forms for admission test for 160 seats will admit similarly, another English medium school of average fame at Panchlaish received 2000 application forms for about 100 seats in its nursery and class one. A Bengali medium Government school considered to be one of the best here received nearly three thousand applications for 90 seats in class one. Again a reputed Govt. school has got 2500 applications for 130 seats in three junior classes.

The Principal of a school said parents preferring English medium school for their children as they think "the English medium education offers greater career prospect". This according to him is a half truth. He said, "it is just a myth".

To get their wards admitted to a better school, parents here engage influential school teachers as private tutors for their children. Moreover, a section of parents believe that one cannot get ones child admitted to a better school unless one pays handsome donations. This conviction is not at all unfounded. Some schools allegedly accept donations as a precondition of admission of students. However one Principal of a reputed English medium school dismissed taking donation as totally untrue. The Principal claimed that those who failed to get their children admitted to these schools spread this canard.

A headmaster agreed that the tests by virtue of which a handful of candidates were chosen out of thousands were hardly scientific. But the authorities of these schools were helpless in the face of an unmanageable number of candidates. The only way to ensure fair competition was to have more schools so that the pressure on them could be evenly distributed.