

Admission to Ctg schools

60,000 candidates for 16,000 seats

Chittagong Office

CHITTAGONG Jan. 1:—The parents in Chittagong have been facing a baffling situation to get their children admitted to better schools. There are about 60,000 boys and girls of primary level scrambling here for admission to good schools for the next academic session, according to a survey.

The parents with primary school-goers are now found queuing before all the good schools for admission forms. And their "wards" are working over "sample" questions for admission tests.

But the maximum seats for the new admission in the port city's existing 96 primary schools are 16,000 the survey revealed. The survey was based on the rush of students

for admission to different nurseries, kindergartens and other schools in the city.

The so-called good schools are broadly divided into a handful of English-medium and Bengali-medium schools. The prominent of the English-medium schools are Espahami Public School, BWA School, Cantonment Public School, Little Jewels Sun-Shine Grammer School, St. Marry, and Silver Belt School. The students from higher income groups usually prefer English-medium schools. There is also increasing rush for admission to some good Bengali-medium schools. Only the lower middle class parents usually send their children to the Govern-

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60,000 candidates

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ment and City Corporation run schools.

Since this year's admission to most of these schools are still in the process, a missionary school here issued 300 forms for admission test for the next session. Of the candidates 175 were selected. Similarly another English-medium school of average fame in Nasirabad area received 1300 applications for 90 seats in its nursery and class one. A Bengali-medium school considered to be one of the best here received nearly 3000 applications for 120 seats in class one. Again, a reputed Government School has got 2,500 applications for about 100 seats in three junior classes.

The principal of a school summed up the feelings of the parents preparing English-medium schools for their children to Bengali-medium ones as they thought the English-medium schools help their wards to form disciplined habits. This, according to the principal, is a "half truth". As to the belief of the parents that an English-medium offers greater career prospects, he said, "It's a myth".

To get their wards admitted to a better school, parents here engage influential school teachers as private tutors for their children. Their belief that one can not get one's child admitted to a reputed school unless one pays handsome donations is also widespread. 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 was evenly distributed.

The Principal of an English-medium school dismissed the donation story as totally untrue. Those who failed to get their children admitted to these schools spread the canard, the Principal added.